



REPORT 7

**New trends
in museums
of the 21st century**

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Photo 1 – Exhibition project “Connecting the Pieces: Dialogues on the Amache Archaeology Collection.”
A collaborative exhibition about Colorado’s Japanese American Internment Camp at the University of
Denver Museum of Anthropology, May – July 2012. © Denver Museum of Anthropology.
Photo 2 – Modern wing for temporary exhibitions in the museum garden (1996) at the Teylers Museum.
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LEM - The Learning Museum

Margherita Sani

‘New trends in museums of the 21st century’ is one of the seven reports which are published within the framework of the EU funded project LEM – The Learning Museum, which aims to create a permanent network of museums and cultural heritage organisations, to ensure that they can exploit their potential as learning places and play an active role with regard to lifelong learning in a knowledge-based Europe.

The project is funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme Grundtvig for the period 2010-2013 and can be regarded as the arrival point of a number of previous EU projects carried out between 2007-2010, which dealt with lifelong learning in museums (LLML and MuMAE), intercultural dialogue (MAP for ID) and volunteering (VoCH), all of which are documented on the LEM website.

LEM not only draws from the materials collected, the lessons learned and the contacts established by its forerunners, but moves one step further in the direction of establishing a permanent space for museum professionals and adult educators to meet, exchange experiences and good practices, and to learn from each other, therefore contributing to the creation of a European community of professionals interested in heritage education and lifelong learning in museums. The network started with 23 partners from 17 European countries, plus one partner from the United States of America - the Museum of Anthropology of the University of Denver - taking advantage of the

possibility opened in 2010 for the first time by the Lifelong Learning Programme, to involve third country organisations.

As a network, LEM aims in the first place to grow and acquire new associate members which, in May 2013, had already tripled the founding institutions. A wide range of museums, heritage organisations, academies, institutes for learning and universities are now part of the network, representing 23 countries. There are Ministries, Museum Associations and other umbrella organisations, individual museums, small and large, institutions active in the education field, all working on an equal level and engaged in sharing information, making it available to a wider public and learning from one another.

The philosophy of LEM indeed is that of considering museums not only as learning places, where educational activities are delivered, but as learning organisations themselves, learning from the public, the local community, other agencies and, of course, from other museums.

The idea of peer learning is core in LEM and, in order to support it fully, work has been divided into working groups, each led by a LEM partner.

The research subjects have been chosen by the working groups themselves:

- New trends in museums in the 21st century
- Museums and the ageing population
- Audience research, learning styles and visitor relation management

- Museums as learning places - learning spaces in museums
- Museums and intercultural dialogue

'New trends in museums of the 21st century' is the main outcome of Working Group 1.

In addition to collecting materials, sharing them on the website and eventually producing a report on the theme researched, working groups undertake study visits to each other or to third institutions, to come in contact with working practices of other colleagues throughout Europe.

This idea of learning by being directly exposed to other people's practices and experiencing different work environments represents an important added value to the project, not only with regard to the members of the working groups, but more widely, through the LEM mobility scheme which is open to partners and associate partners and provides the possibility of spending some time working in another institution. In fact, some of the project partners, initially five, but increasingly more, have offered placements to other LEM members for periods lasting from a few days to two weeks to three months. This results not only in the strengthening of ties within the network at a personal, professional and institutional level, but allows individuals to actually learn by being exposed to different working situations

Dissemination is another important aspect of LEM. International conferences, seminars and round tables are being organised regularly and attract a wide European audience. They are occasions for intensive networking and learning, offer plenty of social events and are combined with visits to local institutions to meet stakeholders. Where possible, they are also live

streamed to reach an even wider public worldwide. A number of smaller dissemination events are organised, also at local or national level.

Finally, the website is the digital platform where all the knowledge acquired by the project is kept and made available. It is a dynamic and interactive forum, first of all to receive and exchange materials about the subject area 'museums and lifelong learning', and secondly to provide information about the project. It is a virtual learning environment providing information on existing literature, projects and actors and is kept updated through continuous research, data analysis and provision of new information by an international editorial team and by the project partners. Everyone is invited to send materials to be published on the LEM website, and participation is favoured through the use of web 2.0 tools. At the beginning of each month an electronic newsletter is sent out to all those who have subscribed to it.

The website therefore functions as a community-building tool for all those who are interested in the topics addressed by LEM. Through the networking activities of its partners and associates, the website and the dissemination events, LEM expects to reach the whole museum and heritage community and a large part of the adult education sector.

www.lemproject.eu

The Report

Marie Bourke

This Report explores the outcomes of research undertaken of: *New Trends in Museums of the 21st century*, representing the work of the LEM Working Group 1. The Report comprises a series of essays, the first one examining the processes undertaken by Working Group 1 to reach their outcomes. This is followed by an article by Massimo Negri of the European Museum Academy, who looks at the broad issue of Europe as a dynamic concept in a global context and outlines his concerns over sustainability in museums before looking at the development of collections, new technologies and the virtual museum. His article summarises a number of case histories of European museums. There follows a series of individual case studies describing a range of museums that illustrate various trends: one representing an old traditional museum that has been updated, '*The Teylers Museum, Haarlem*' by Margherita Sani; another representing an early 20th century museum that has been modernised: '*A worksite of ideas, perceptions and proposals*': *embracing change at the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens* from Sofia Tsilidou of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture & Tourism – Directorate of Museums; and the third representing a brand new museum in Waterford, '*A Cultural Quarter reflecting urban renewal in Ireland: how a city can revitalize itself through museums*' by Marie Bourke. Details of the outcomes of the 2012 survey are outlined by Caoilte O'Mahony of the National Gallery of Ireland. In order to place the results of this research into an overall

framework, Christina Kreps, associate professor of the University of Denver, was invited to write an article, '*Participation, Museums, and Civic Engagement*', on the growing trend of greater public engagement and interaction with museums and the nature of that engagement. Her opening sentence sums up the main underlying trend: "Participation is a key concept in approach in current museological discourse". To give balance to this framework, Eiji Mizushima professor of museology at the University of Tsukuba was invited to provide an outline of the '*Key Trends in Museums in East Asia in the 21st Century*', in which he highlights the growing internationalization of museums, digitization of the collections and increased educational activities in East Asia. For the purposes of this essay Eastern Asia is defined as Japan, China, South Korea and Taiwan. These latter essays by distinguished scholars enable developments in Europe to be examined and understood in a wider world framework. The conclusion attempts to draw some of the diverse trends together.



INTRODUCTION: WORKING GROUP 1

New Trends in Museums of the 21st century

Marie Bourke

The LEM Working Group: *New Trends in Museums of the 21st century*, is one of five groups set up by LEM under the auspices of the EU-funded LEM Learning Museums Network Project, to explore different aspects of contemporary adult lifelong learning. Each Working Group had a leader whose role was to give direction and devise a work plan that enabled the group to achieve its aims within the designated time frame. This particular group benefited from a wide cross-section of members, who came from diverse museums from widespread European countries: Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Sweden, USA (and elsewhere). Communication was by means of the virtual and physical: emails/phone calls/conference calls and meetings in different countries. The LEM Co-ordinator, Margerita Sani, ensured the work plan was fitted in with the overall LEM programme.

The theme *New Trends in Museums of the 21st century* turned out to be timely because of the need to navigate a path through the current crises and challenges that are the outcome of a world-wide economic downturn. The group had to identify emergent trends in the museum world at a time of rapidly changing circumstances. It

was felt that charting some of the developments could help museums to strategise for the future.

The group's work plan was devised at meetings in Bologna 2010 and Cardiff 2011:

- Compilation of new research on museums of the 21st century logged into a reserved area on the LEM website (www.lemproject.eu);
- Survey to ascertain declining areas, ongoing services and emergent trends;
- Symposium to open discussion and debate;
- Roundtable to draw together the outcomes;
- Live streaming of both events to engage worldwide audiences;
- Hard copy and online publication of the symposium and roundtable proceedings (www.nationalgallery.ie under 'learning');
- Field trip to view practices at new and traditional museums;
- Report to document the project.

It is a mark of the determination of the group members that their work plan was achieved within the time frame. They quickly realized that while museums matter

to people, any museum that is not founded on an economically sustainable basis cannot survive. The nature of the survival process is described in the articles and surveys outlined in this report. What it demonstrates is the fact that some museums have had to close, a considerable number of museums have restricted their opening hours and cut services and many museums have reduced staff numbers (permanent, temporary, full-time, part-time and seasonal). These issues have become more serious since the inception of this project. It is noted that museum practitioners are increasingly concerned about their ability to ensure access, engagement and outreach, “in such a world, educators are forced to consider with renewed urgency their purposes and their methods”.¹

Underpinning this project are the worldwide trends that are reflecting similar experiences to Europe with the current economic uncertainty forcing many museums to re-assess, re-evaluate and in some cases re-invent themselves. There are at least 38,000 European museums drawing over 250 million visitors a year (over 50% of which did not exist before World War II).² This is an impressive statistic that reflects a European-wide desire to create greater access to culture and heritage, but is it sustainable? In order to chart a way forward through a growing sense of uncertainty and concern that people are experiencing, the group set in motion a survey: ‘Key trends in museums of the future’ as a way to identify areas of the museum operation that are declining, ongoing, and new emerging trends.

The next stage focused on a symposium: ‘Future Forecasting: the challenges facing museums and cultural institutions in the 21st century’, held at the National Gallery of Ireland in 2011. Chaired by key cultural figures, with seven guest speakers, and discussion panels joined by some young museum practitioners, it was attended by 143 people, with LEM members coming from Greece, Italy, Norway and Sweden. As it was live streamed between 10.a.m. and 8 p.m., it gained 322 unique viewers from across Europe, Scandinavia, Japan and the USA. Meanwhile, the group input new research on the reserved area of the LEM website. The roundtable that followed: ‘The challenges facing museums on-site and online in the 21st century’, held at the National Gallery of Ireland in 2012, involving three keynote presentations and chaired by a distinguished academic, led to an on-site and online discussion. It was attended by 135 people, with LEM members coming from Greece, Ireland, Italy, Romania and Sweden, and as it was live streamed between 10.00 a.m. - 1.30 p.m., it gained 1,408 unique online participants from Europe, South Africa, Russia, Scandinavia, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, the USA and Canada, who sent questions/comments to the email: futureforecasting@ngi.ie, while the hashtag on Twitter: #Roundtable2012 was a top trending tag in Dublin that day. A journalist tweeted from the event and the *Irish Times* subsequently devoted a page of its weekend supplement to the Roundtable (14/4/2012). A LEM Forum also formed part of this work to finalise the Survey and place it on ‘monkey survey’ online. The

proceedings of the symposium and roundtable were published in hard copy and online in 2013 – all of this work supported by the Learning Museums Network, in association with the Network of European Museum Organizations and the Irish Museums Association, under the auspices of ICOM CECA – representing the pan-European nature of this project.

The outcomes of the main survey ‘Key trends in museums of the future’ were analysed in 2013, highlighting issues familiar to the group, including reduced opening hours; the changing role of the curator; the requirement to engage the public through more temporary exhibitions and cultural activities; the use of volunteers; and the hugely increasing significance of digital media and social networking. The results were put on the reserved area of the LEM website.

The final stage was a field trip-study visit in 2013 to: the Imperial War Museum North, the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester Museum and Manchester Art Gallery.

The Imperial War Museum North represented a new outpost (2002) within the Imperial War Museum structure. The award-winning building was designed by the architect Daniel Libeskind, with displays and exhibitions reflecting the experience of war. Every service and facility is employed to help visitors to understand aspects of a world torn apart by conflict. The museum ticked all the boxes; excellent directional signage and visitor services, café, shop and taxi drivers familiar with the location, as it included other destination venues (theatre, cafés and the new People’s History Museum). The group was struck by the beauty of the older area of Manchester, for

example the Victorian bridges, canal infrastructure and industrial buildings. The museum is open daily from 10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m., admission is free, donation boxes are strategically placed and fees are charged to help defray the cost of running it. This museum relies on striking presentations to engage its visitors in the exhibits and it makes for an exhilarating experience. There is a learning studio with tablets (limited numbers) so that teachers can use them on a large screen and draw on individual stories about World War I. The new history curriculum is causing concerns because it is broadening the range of subject matter, posing challenges for existing museum displays. Improvements have been made that include new signage; more interactive tours; veteran volunteers to enhance the visit; popular learning and storytelling sessions for schools. The experience of war and a world in conflict can be overpowering, visitors are alerted to sensitive material and the ever-present impact of audio-visual effects does not make for a quiet visit. However, this is a new museum and staff work hard (our guide was excellent) to enhance the overall experience. It is popular with families and school groups.

Manchester Museum is a traditional Victorian museum (established 1821), which has seen many changes resulting in a busy institution determined to move with the times and the needs of its public. It was an interesting experience to observe this Museum, set within the Manchester University structure, the largest of the UK’s university museums. The museum is open daily from 10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. and admission is free. We viewed the new ‘Ancient Worlds’ galleries, guided by a group of curators, educators and

¹ Seamus Heaney, ‘Foreword’ in J. Dunne and J. Kelly, *Childhood and its Discontents* (Dublin: Liffey Press, 2002), pp. xiii–xvi.

² *Newsletter of the Network of European Museum Organizations*, German Museums Association, vol. 2, 2009. p. 1.

designers who were as enthusiastic as the hordes of school children visiting that day. The research connection was to the fore in the 'Ancient Worlds' display, with about 16,000 objects to draw upon for the Egyptian Galleries, a selection of which were provided in scholarly displays. Presentations on screens employed a wide range of figures, including scientists, historians and conservators, interspersed with images of explorers and archaeologists, which helped to bring stories from past centuries alive. A user-friendly App (mobile site hosted on the website) is easy to access and has many points of entry: objects, dates, sites and stories. Our attention was drawn by a child on a screen giving a simple introduction (ideal for schools),



helping to direct the teachers who guide the students through the exhibits. The Museum is child-friendly, staff work hard to engage visitors and to encourage students to use the Life Laboratory Education Space and Collection Study Centre. It is also appealing to older visitors and people with special needs. It is harder to update an older building than to create a new museum. Considerable thought and funding has gone into introducing new approaches to ensure Manchester Museum is firmly part of Manchester life.

Whitworth Art Gallery also forms part of the Manchester University structure and is in the final stage of a refurbishment programme that is extending a building, untouched since 1889 (a sculpture court was installed in 1995). The Gallery is immediately accessible as everything is centred in the entrance rotunda (shop, café, toilets, information desk and access to the galleries). It is open from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday to Saturday, 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. on Sundays, with free admission. It employs a small team of permanent attendant staff and a large cohort of seasonal staff, all relatively young and skilled at monitoring the collection and assisting the public. They direct visitors to the collections, comprising 55,000 watercolours, sculptures, wallpapers and textiles. Our host was the Head of Collections Care and Access, a former conservator, who spent time explaining details of the building programme and how they plan to extend into the park. This is an unpretentious museum at which there is a genuine desire to engage its visitors in the collections and maximise the potential of the spaces in order to encourage participation by all ages. The close working relationship between the learning team, curators and conservation team should prove productive in creating new learning studios, viewing

corridors and collection access galleries, which will be underpinned by activities provided by creative practitioners. The group was struck by the relaxed approach to visitors as college students, mothers with babies and lunchtime business people rubbed shoulders with each other in the informal atmosphere of the Gallery.

Manchester Art Gallery, whose sister institution is the Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall, was established in 1824 and houses a collection of 25,000 objects from Pre-Raphaelite paintings to contemporary art. A small compact city art gallery, it has free admission and is open seven days a week from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with late nights on Thursdays to 9:00 p.m.. The museum provides a wide range of activities relating to its collection (tours, workshops, talks) every day. The aim of the visit was to view the Clore Interactive Centre, which closed in 2012 for refurbishment and is due to re-open in 2013. Located close to the main entrance, toilets and at the junction of the first floor stairs and galleries, the Centre proved to be a generous area awaiting redevelopment. Formerly an interactive space, experience had shown the need for greater creative spaces. The planned approach is to create the idea of an artist's studio with a greater emphasis on inviting visitors to be innovative and creative, augmented by sessions led by practitioners. It will be interesting to watch how these spaces encourage visitors to engage with the collections and discover their own creativity. The easy access to the permanent collection and exhibition galleries should enhance the engagement.

The Concluding Remarks will draw together some of the outcomes of *New Trends in Museums of the 21st century* and the essays in this Report.

Members of LEM Working Group 1:

Marie Bourke,
National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin (leader)
mbourke@ngi.ie

Ann Siri Hegseth Garberg,
Sverresborg, Norway
annsiri.garberg@sverresborg.no

Sara Grut,
Nordic Centre of Heritage Learning and Creativity/Jamtli, Sweden
sara.grut@nckultur.org

Hanna Mellemsether,
Sverresborg, Norway
Hanna.Mellemsether@sverresborg.no

Dragos Eduard Neamu,
National Network of Romanian Museums, Romania
dragos.eduard.neamu@gmail.com

Massimo Negri,
European Museum Academy, The Netherlands
director@europeanmuseumacademy.eu

Margherita Sani,
The Istituto Beni Culturali (Tutor), Italy
masani@regione.emilia-romagna.it

Gita Sapranauskaite,
Estate Academy of Museums Rumsiskes, Lithuania
gita.sapranauskaite@lfbm.lt

Sofia Tsilidou,
Hellenic Ministry of Culture & Tourism - Directorate of Museums, Athens, Greece
stsilidou@culture.gr

Henrik Zipsane
Nordic Centre of Heritage Learning and Creativity/Jamtli, Sweden
henrik.zipsane@jamtli.com

Christina Kreps,
Museum of Anthropology at the University of Denver, USA
Christina.Kreps@du.edu



Emerging new trends in the European museum panorama

Massimo Negri

The aim of this paper is to describe the main features of the present situation of European museums and the main trends of the evolution which is reasonable to forecast for the coming years. Such an effort to interpret the future of museums in the light of the more general social and cultural situation has been also at the basis of several publications and recently organised conferences. To give an idea of the variety of approaches and of the national backgrounds involved, it is enough to quote from a few documents such as the proceedings of the round-table and symposium organised at the National Gallery of Ireland in 2012 - 'The challenges facing museums on-site and online in the 21st century' and 'Future Forecasting: the challenge facing museums and cultural institutions', the 'Museums 2020 discussion paper' published by the UK Museums Association in July 2012, the 'Agenda 2026: Study of the Future of Dutch Museum Sector' of the Nederlandse Museumvereniging and, in the United States, the study 'Museums, Libraries and 21st Century Skills', produced by the Institute of Museum and Library Services in 2009. It was once said that nobody has a crystal ball in which our future can be read, and that the economic situation is unstable, the political situation volatile, the social situation quickly changing and difficult to interpret. The most serious and reliable method of investigation is to monitor emerging trends and compare them with consolidated trends (if any), and try to define processes involving the museum sector. So this is the method that we have followed in compiling materials used for writing this paper.

The European Context: Europe as a dynamic concept

"In the last decades the term 'Europe' has been adapted to different changing realities. The usual geographical borders have been crossed and a multiplicity of organisations has grown up defining different kinds of 'Europe'.

The oldest European organisation - the Council of Europe, founded in 1949 - now comprises 41 member states (about 25 before 1989), which are still only a part of a continental area. With the enlargement of the Council of Europe membership, at the beginning of the new millennium Europe stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the Arctic to the Mediterranean. In the meantime, other European organisations have grouped together various states from the geographical area of Europe into different forms of mutual co-operation. The European Union, for example, gathers 15 countries, while the Euro or Schengen communities include only some of them. Another group of countries are involved in UEO (Western European Union).

Some states belong at the same time to all of these, others only to some. Others again are still waiting to be part of some form of more structured co-operation scheme.

In conclusion *we all belong to Europe and the idea of Europe has become a 'dynamic concept' with the status of European citizenship having to be adapted continuously."*

This is the *incipit* of the Conclusions of 'The Spirit of Europe' 5th European Museum Forum (EMF) Workshop, Autumn 2000, which underlines the fast growth of the notion of Europe in recent times. People who were 'others' in comparison with a given idea of Europe, say, ten years ago, are now part of the family although often in the difficult position of newcomers. The number of EU Member States has grown by 28 in the last decade. If we add to this the notion of the 'Eurozone', identifying the group of states which have adopted the Euro as their currency, we can say that the geographical idea of Europe does not correspond at all to the distinct political, economic and social profiles of our continent. In this sense we can agree that Europe is a dynamic concept with certain elements of contradiction as well as a comparative concept. As Kenneth Hudson¹ used to say: "When we are in the United States, we all feel European, but when we are in Europe what does this mean?" Probably the most tangible unifying factor is the European cultural heritage, the physical legacy of the past plus the intangible heritage formed by traditions, stories and knowledge. Museums are active agents in the context of the European cultural heritage and in this respect they play a special role in the dialectic process of safeguard of diversities (of languages, of beliefs, etc.) and enhancement of common European characteristics.

Local cultures which can be seen as the pillars of a possible future European culture are strictly connected

with the European heritage which comprises monuments, sites and historic objects, as well as memories, ways of living, working, eating, etc. They can be in conflict, but cannot ignore each other.

We have spoken in terms of a vast common heritage produced by a common European civilisation. But when we speak about cultural heritage, we inevitably enter the area of museums. European cultural heritage is reflected in the European museum landscape, a mirror of a situation in constant movement. Museums can be identified as agents of special significance in the process of reshaping Europe for two reasons: their mission is to preserve cultural heritage and to make it accessible to the people; the variety of their stakeholders gives them a special role in terms of cultural and social influence.

But any interpretation of the European museum situation has to be matched with the global context, where worldwide trends are giving a new shape to existing institutions as well as a new breed of museums.

The global context

If we try to summarise the distinctive factors of the current global situation as far as the elements with direct influence on the situation of museums are concerned, six key issues are emerging as of primary importance in defining the profile of museums in the coming years.

1 The century of centenarians: at the moment one out of every nine inhabitants of our planet is over 60, in 2012 the number of people over 100 was 316,000; in 2050 there will be 3,200,000.- this means that in 2050 people aged over 60 will outnumber people aged under 14.

2 The millennium of cities: in 2007 more than 53% of our planet's population lived in a town (with fewer than 500,000 inhabitants), while 22% lived in a town with from one to five million inhabitants (UN Habitat Report). It is the first time in human history that the majority of the world's population lives in a town.

3 The age of networking and ICT: in 2010 the Internet counted 487 million IP addresses in the world with a rate of growth in penetration of 16% every three months. At the moment there are 4,294,967,296 (2³²) possible unique addresses. Facebook users have passed from 664 million to 835 million in one year (March 2011-March 2012). One in every seven inhabitants of our planet holds a smart phone (more than 1 billion in total). 40-42 billions of apps have been downloaded so far.

4 The growth of population: projections recently issued by the United Nations suggest that the world population by 2050 could reach 8.9 billion, but in alternative scenarios it could be as high as 10.6 billion or as low as 7.4 billion.²

5 The era of mobility: migration and globalisation: The total number of international migrants worldwide in

2010 was estimated to be 214 million persons. This figure has remained relatively stable as a share of the global population, increasing only by 0.1 per cent, from 3.0 per cent to 3.1 per cent, between 2005 and 2010 (UN DESA, 2009). Cultural heritage is affected by this phenomenon, especially in relation to the general growth of tourism, which includes a relevant portion of travellers interested in historic sites and cultural institutions such as museums. According to international forecasts the number of incoming European tourists should increase from 8 million in 2009 to more than 11 million in 2020³.

6 Focus on sustainability: The economic recession, growing environmental awareness and the effects of climate change are forcing public institutions as well as private organisations to focus greater attention on the problem of the sustainability of their business.

It is in this framework that new characteristics have to be defined when developing museum programmes for the near future. With reference to point (2) for instance, we can reconsider the relationship between museums and the urban context, with the emerging notion of what we can call the '*expanded museum*', i.e. museums on an urban scale, with a new role for city museums as a hub for heritage. Similarly point (1), museums seem to be more and more focused on the *intergenerational dialogue* in a society where up to four generations are frequently active at the same time. The complex implications connected with the impact of the Internet on museum communication policy with the redefinition of the idea of the 'virtual museum' is

¹ The great museologist and the most authoritative expert of industrial archaeology, was the founder of the European Museum of the Year Award scheme in 1977, which later developed its activities into the European Museum Forum. He died in 1999. Among his rich production of books I want to mention two books which are still very interesting in relation with the subjects discussed here: *A Social History of Museums*, Macmillan, London 1975, and *Museums of Influence*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1987.

² <http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/longrange2/WorldPop2300final.pdf>

³ Agenda 2026: Study on the future of the Dutch museum sector, Netherlands Museums Association, 2012.



also a consequence of the global changes in society outlined above, point (3). Although there is no direct relationship between the growth of population, point (4) and the growth in the number of museums, it is true that the last decades have witnessed so far an endless quantitative growth.

According to the definition of the term 'Museologie' in the *Encyclopaedia Universalis* (which is the French version of the Encyclopaedia Britannica): "... In 1970 the total of museums in the world were estimated in the

area of 17,000-18,000 - France 1,183, URSS 1,012, Italy 972, the UK 964 and Canada 764. The country with the highest figure is the USA, with about 6,000. But today we know that there are 38,000 museums in Europe alone and 17,500 in the USA. Today ICOM indicates the total number of museums in the world to be 55,000, which means a spectacular quantitative development of the museum sector. Similarly, we have seen an endless diversification (new types of museums emerging: the museum of psychiatry, the museum of broken relationship, the museum of innocence,

interpretation centres, etc.), as well as an endless qualitative growth (innovation in display techniques, new interpretation devices, new museum scenography and new multimedia environments). It is perfectly legitimate to question whether this phenomenon of endless expansion is destined to go on, or if it has come to an end. This reflection leads us to the question of sustainability of museums in the future global changing context. It has been nearly a quarter of a century since the Norwegian Prime Minister, Gro Harlem Brundtland formulated in 1987 what has become probably the most widely accepted definition of the term *sustainability* and published the document of what was then known as the United Nations World Commission on Environmental Development: 'Our Common Future' (Oxford University Press, 1987): "... sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need".

In the following decades the definition of sustainability has become very complex, giving rise to a very wide editorial production which prompted the broad equivalence between sustainability and environmental issues. The impact of the global financial crisis forced us to rebalance this vision, reminding us all in a brutal way that sustainable means compatible with the environment. But that within the concept of sustainability is also the problem of financial and social sustainability and the quality of service provided, or the more or less tangible result of the production process (in the case of an industrial activity or manufacturing).

Museums and sustainability

The idea of development compatible with the protection of environmental values had already brought

to light a complex of acute contradictions between costs and benefits in the short, rather than in the long term, and posed the question of the 'financial sustainability of environmental sustainability'. This rarely resulted in a balanced solution of the problem (just think of the discussions on the costs and benefits of renewable energy, which is still open in virtually every European country). In addition, the global financial crisis questioned the same idea of continuous development, continued growth, thus generating more or less bizarre theories on 'de-growth' and its advantages in terms of social benefits and quality of life.

As if this were not enough, a third element has entered into play: climate change. Whatever the true extent of the relationship between human behaviour and climate change (also a much debated topic, without conclusive results), for now it is a fact that climate change has a significant impact on cultural heritage in general. This is obvious in the case of catastrophic events: hence the growth of the studies, regulatory and training actions in the staff of cultural organisations in all European countries to stimulate the growth of a culture of risk management, related both to movable and immovable assets, including museum collections.

The Final Document of the Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) of the European Union, 'Cultural heritage, climate change and security', published 4 November 2009, reads in this regard:

"Most European cities live in or around cultural heritage with which they identify closely.....climate change impacts severely on cultural heritage leading to irreversible damage and losses because of its age and fragility.....The ways in which cultural heritage is

adapted can mitigate climate change (through modest use of energy, sustainable materials and passive design). This in turn also opens up new avenues for mitigation and adaptation measures across all sectors from construction to transport through re-learning of old traditions and practices”.

The same document underlines the importance of the relationship between the protection of cultural heritage and the cultural practices in use, giving origin to what is called ‘transformational challenge of cultural heritage’.

“The new relationship between cultural heritage and its meaning, history, value, significance, composition, conservation and use are community related issues that will *drive* cultural heritage more strongly under conditions of environmental changes because communities are faced with cultural as well as economic decisions on what to save and what to lose.”

When underlining parts of the text above, I wanted to draw the attention to the issue of the unlimited growth of the collections in the context of possible sustainable development of museums as organisations.

Three momentous issues characterising the first decade of the 21st century have come to the fore at the same time and involve everyone, individuals and organisations: sustainable development, global financial crisis, climate change, leaving aside the issue of global political instability which obviously has huge consequences on museums (e.g. in the Middle East during the recent political upheavals or military conflicts).

It must be said that until recently the world of museums in general was held to be far enough away from these

issues. A special case of foresight was 10 years ago when Museums Australia published a set of guidelines for the definition of policies and practices aimed at ensuring a sustainable future for museums and galleries in Australia, under the title ‘Museums and Sustainability’. This was approved by the National Council of Museums Australia on 26 February 2003 on the basis of a collective elaboration started in 2001, where three aspects of the role of museums in this field were particularly emphasised:

- 1** The educational function in respect of civil society to contribute to a growing personal and collective commitment to the issue of sustainability.
- 2** The ability of the organisation-museum to serve as a model of virtuous behaviour both with regard to the management of the resources and to the specific policies of sustainable development.
- 3** The responsibility of the museum to conserve and manage its collections for the benefit of future generations and in a perspective of sustainable growth and shared goals with those same beneficiaries.

The first aspect is the most traditional: the museum as an educational institution clearly cannot escape the mission to encourage its audience in environmentally friendly behaviour, regardless of whether it is directly related to this theme. This means that it need not be a science centre or a museum of natural history to have a moral obligation to launch cultural and clear messages to the visitor which contribute to the pursuit of policies of eco-sustainability.

The second is linked to a vision which is less common in the museum world, i.e. the idea of the museum not only as a learning environment, but as a learning

organisation, a theme which is fundamental to LEM- The Learning Museum Project.

But while these first two issues could be related to any organisation, the third aspect, namely the management of collections - and I would add the management of the museum itself (the building, equipment, infrastructure and interpretative communication) - is typical of and specific to museums. When I mentioned earlier ‘shared goals’ in relation to the management of collections for the benefit of future generations, I meant that a policy of quality in the management of the collections cannot be separated from one looking constantly to the future, including the involvement of the local communities in the decision-making process. Up to now, museums have not sufficiently addressed this problem, but if the fate of the planet at least - as we know it today - is in question, perhaps even the idea of continuing the process of accumulation of the collections is more problematic than in the past. Indeed, it is only in recent years that many members of the international museum community have begun to address the issue of sustainable development, beginning to perceive it as a ‘core issue’ and capturing it in its full complexity⁴.

This increase of sustainability awareness within the museum world has coincided significantly with the unfolding of the effects of the global financial crisis that

has started to affect museums directly only recently. This is in part because of a certain slowness of the mechanisms of public administrations - to which the great majority of European museums belong - to implement measures to reduce spending. In the Kenneth Hudson Seminar organised by the European Museum Academy and the Scuola Normale of Pisa in Volterra on 19 November 2010, ‘European Museums and the Global Economic Crisis: Impact, Problems, Reactions’, it was documented that at the time in Europe only a few Nordic countries (especially Norway and Sweden) were not involved in stringent measures to cut spending in the cultural sector. On the contrary, these cuts involved virtually the entire continent, ranging from an average of 10%, up to 50% for the state museums in Latvia, and 30% in the UK and Greece. In some cases these cuts were directly aimed at the museum sector, at other times indirectly, as in the case of a 25% reduction in government salaries in Romania, or in the freezing of salaries (in Italy it is a mix of the two, especially because of the reduction of funds transferred by the State to local authorities on which most museums depend). ‘The Cuts’ have quickly become the main topics of discussion among museums and nobody is able to predict their consistency and duration, even in the short term. With a very modest economic growth for most European economies, in addition the availability of resources

⁴ The many materials published on this subject range from short articles to raise awareness (such as the cover story written by Margriet de Jong for the NEMO Newsletter 1, 2010) and ‘Penser Vert’, a case study on the building of the Academy of Sciences California created in San Francisco by Renzo Piano (Nouvelles de l’ICOM, vol.64, n.1. February 2011) to books that are intended to address the issue in a comprehensive way such as Sustainable Museums: Strategies of the 21st Century written by Rachel Madan, who is also founder of Greener Museums “... a sustainability company that serves museums and the cultural sectors. ...to help accelerate progress towards sustainability”. This is a mission which is simply unimaginable for an international consulting firm even 10 or 20 years ago. “This is not a book about changing light bulbs ...” is the key phrase in the commercial presentation of the book by Rachel Maden, and is a very clear clue compared to the methodological approach of the text, which aims to go beyond the question of savings energy, a practice which is predominantly associated with the public discourse on sustainability.

provided by sponsors and private donors is shrinking, and competition with other sectors (theatre, music, media in general) to win these resources will become increasingly difficult. It follows that the two aspects of environmental and financial sustainability are more than ever interdependent and form the backdrop against which any other discourse on the 'social' sustainability of the museum should be placed.

The issue of sustainable development in the museum sector also coincides with the conclusion of a cycle of expansion in the number of museums which has gone on for several decades, regardless of the state of the different local economies. Romania is a clear example of this trend. Coming out of the Communist era in very difficult economic conditions (to put it mildly), for a long time it was considered the most deprived among the economies of the continent, with long periods of stagnation or even with moments of 'development in reverse', i.e. with only negative economic indicators. Romania - like all the post Communist countries - also had to deal with a long and complicated period of transition during which its social composition changed greatly, combined with a substantial amount of emigration. The current global economic situation is again putting to the test many areas that were just reaching a certain level of strength and stability in the market. Nevertheless, the number of museums in Romania has been growing steadily. There were 453 museums in 1995, 667 ten years later, 694 in 2009. The number of objects making up the collections has reached nearly 16 million, taken care of by 4,800 specialists employed by the State and with the number of visitors rising from nearly eight million in 1994 to 12 million in 2007. In ten years, therefore, the number of Romanian museums increased by almost



50%, regardless the not always brilliant economic situation.

As explained elsewhere in this paper, the number of museums worldwide has grown drastically. In 20 years Europe alone doubled the number of the world's museums. If we add to these new museums, the number of museums that have undergone substantial renovation in buildings and equipment through processes that made them virtually 'new', we realise they have enjoyed nearly 50 years of uninterrupted growth that made the museum sector one of the most dynamic 'cultural industries' in Europe, in spite of the static image conveyed by the media. Of late the level of capital investment has become very popular, especially in the United Kingdom, Germany and France, more recently in The Netherlands and also in Spain at certain times. However, in the last two years some major projects have been halted including at the Victoria & Albert Museum, with the postponement of the project 'The Spiral' by Daniel Libeskind. On the other hand though, some demanding programmes were launched recently, such as the V & A Exhibition Road project, won by the architect Amanda Levete. Significant investments have included very diverse projects such as the major rearrangement of the Museum of London for £20 million, the MAXXI in Rome and the new National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design in Oslo (Forum Artis) winner of an international architectural competition, which will probably involve an investment of approximately 25 million Euros.

We are then speaking of sustainable development in the context of a very long period of expansion, uninterrupted growth and significant investments, especially in the capital account. In this period

emphasis was placed more on environmental sustainability - energy saving, the 'green' message addressed to the public – than on a wider concept of organisational and managerial sustainability in the long term. In a sense, this may seem strange because, in hindsight, the concept of sustainability is embedded in the very nature of the museum, whose essential task is that of preserving heritage for the benefit of future generations.

“We observed that because of their work transmitting collections and knowledge from the past to the future, and their social purpose, museums are deeply involved in sustainability and yet rarely think about their overall contribution to it”.⁵

It must be said that many old and new museums have recently found themselves facing three problems closely related to the concept of sustainability:

1 The first is the issue of obsolescence of technological equipment, primarily lighting and multimedia. In both these fields, we are witnessing a continuous and rapid development of the technologies that make even the most sophisticated instrumentation totally outdated in a few months. The extraordinary development of the possibilities offered by LED lighting in the last two years, for example, makes it less competitive in terms of performance than fibre optic systems or halogen lamps of recent manufacture. It is almost useless to talk about multimedia devices, since each of us as a consumer experiences their very short life cycle.

2 The other problem with which museums have been confronted in recent years in terms of rapid obsolescence, is completely different and concerns the fast and ever-changing social context in which museums operate, mainly as a result of the phenomenon of globalisation. The sustainability and effectiveness even in the medium term of a 'social' museum programme has become a thorny issue, with an ever-changing social demand and composition of the public, even with a changing 'anthropological' profile of the visitor.

3 A third, but no less important issue in terms of sustainability is the transition to digital, the digital preservation of heritage and its accessibility in a world which is increasingly hungry for digital content. Museums are struggling to deliver this digital content on time and meeting the needs of their users. The 10 million contacts which caused the Europeana site to collapse when it was launched are, on the one hand, an encouraging sign, but on the other give an idea of the dimension of the processes under way. How to support the development of the digital heritage generated by the museum? How to document history, how to make it accessible and keep pace with the constant technological updates both in terms of software and hardware? These are just some of the questions that haunt the contemporary museum.

A checklist for a museum aiming at sustainability

On the methodological side, I will put forward a set of 10 questions which a museum is bound to pose itself

in the near future and which help define the profile of a sustainable museum:

- 1** Has the museum a clear notion of its environmental footprint?
- 2** Does it know and document its energy consumption in terms of the impact on the environment?
- 3** Has the museum developed its own vision on sustainability? Has it developed its own specific programme and its strategy of long-term survival?
- 4** Has the museum a clear vision of how to build or possibly maintain its relevance in the context in which it operates?
- 5** What does it do to be perceived as an essential service, not only for what it preserves and exhibits, but also for the role it plays in society in general?
- 6** What does it do to be influential?
- 7** Is the museum prepared to manage its collections with a long term strategy and a clear policy of acquisitions and disposals (possibly to other museums or cultural organisations, public or private if and when necessary)?
- 8** Is it a well-recognised authority in a collective decision-making process of what should be kept and what will inevitably be lost in the course of history?
- 9** Does it have a collection review programme, so that it always has a clear idea of the size and status of its collections?

10 Does the museum have a rolling programme of investment in human resources in order to increase its awareness of sustainability, and is it able to engage its stakeholders in a process of cultural and behavioural growth?

In addition to these questions, which merely serve to orientate a museum in its self-awareness analysis with regard to sustainability, we can identify what can already be seen as an emerging notion of sustainability in the museum field:

- a greater willingness to co-operate and network, which goes as far as considering the possibility of merging with other museums or cultural institutions. This concerns mainly small and medium-sized museums.
- the pooling of spaces and services, generated from the current experience of museum systems - especially the sharing of common service areas: warehouses, educational areas, for instance, as well as ICT facilities.
- greater mobility of collections: the museum of the future will use the potential of its collections as much as possible: rotation, rent, sharing practices may become widespread and also result in the creation of places of an unexpected appearance, halfway between stores and exhibition centres, overcoming today's situation where collections which are not on display represent a burden which is increasingly difficult to bear.
- integration of different experiences proposed for an increasingly 'multi-tasking' public: the virtual museum on the Internet, exhibitions online (the latter defined as 'Low cost, Big results' by Magnus Ericsson of the

⁵ Museums Association, 'Museums and Sustainability – Report on Consultation', January 2009.

Jamtli Museum at Östersund in Sweden and co-ordinator of the Digital Exhibition European Training Project), smart phones apps. The same high quality offered by Google Art creates the conditions for the integration of the tangible and the digital, whose consequences still have to be explored.

- revision of standards and accreditation schemes which have prompted the creation of museum systems on different scales everywhere in Europe, starting from the UK Registration Scheme widely imitated in many countries. According to the above-mentioned Report of the Museums Association, museums will have to "... have more flexible collections-care requirements and use air conditioning

less". It will be difficult to reconcile such a policy with the standards set by many accreditation schemes and certainly with the standards for loans agreed upon by the Association of Registrars.

- moving from the notion of visitor to that of user: though in recent decades the shift has been from the idea of a collection-oriented museum to that of a visitor-oriented one, it is now time to move to that of a user-oriented one, in which the relationship between the museum and individuals (which in a short time will all be 'digital native') goes well beyond the specific moment when he/she visits the exhibition. The slogan 'Museums as Meeting Places' that we find in many contexts clearly indicates the direction of evolution



of the museum as a forum of public discourse and narrative.

- simplification of interpretation tools, maybe with a more minimalist approach to the design of the displays, also in the choice of materials. It will be difficult to find the resources to equal those spent over the last 20 years, thanks to which a new generation of museum environments has been created, which radically changed the perception of museums and developed new and effective means of communication. The British Galleries at the Victoria & Albert Museum required an expenditure of £31 million for 3,400 m²; the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam for 1,430 m² has invested 4.3 million Euros; the Leeds City Museum for 2,300 m², £6 million; the City Museum in Reykjavik for 800 m², 1.9 million Euros. These are just some of the figures which, however, indicate the level of spending necessary to ensure a quality experience for the visitor, together with an adequate level of conservation. It is significant that the Museums and Heritage Show in London in May 2011 staged some seminars entitled 'Design and Interpretation That Will not Cost the Earth'.

- from quantity to quality. Quality Management will increasingly be embraced by museums which can no longer postpone achieving the highest efficiency in management and therefore adopt the conceptual tools and procedures to achieve this objective. A clear indication of this trend is the fact that, on the websites of museums a Sustainability Statement has begun to appear next to a Mission Statement - as in the case of the renewed website of the Museum of London.

But we cannot hide the consequences this will have

on the communication philosophy of the contemporary museum, which is increasingly based on a plurality of languages and a complex contextualisation of the object. The perhaps most obvious problem is provided by multimedia devices, from the simplest touch screen to the most complex immersive multimedia. In terms of sustainability this means 'more air conditioning' - to refer to an earlier quote - constant and increasing investment in new technologies given the rapid obsolescence of these devices, increasing expenditure for maintenance and disposal of spare parts, etc. On the other hand, the effectiveness of these tools is essential and the digitisation of heritage creates the conditions for long-term sustainability for the growth of the organisational culture, as well as for a better user access. In which direction the museum of the future will move with regard to this dilemma, is impossible to say. The idea of a virtual museum, which is still rather confused, could finally find a more precise definition, no longer as a mere duplicate of the tangible museum or as a temporary solution to the lack of the 'real' museum, but as a communicative structure of a different nature, complementary to the traditional version. This would result in a museum which is very different from what we know today, maybe 'lighter' and therefore flexible and able to adapt to the circumstances of a world that is changing too fast. It would be more sustainable, not only because it is less expensive, but also because it is more easily adaptable to social demand which is in flux.

The museum, under pressure due to the unfavourable economic circumstances, has two options, both respectable: either to return to its core business by defining a minimum set of services consistent with

its mission, or to 'reinvent itself radically'. We will probably see both phenomena, with some museums undertaking the most creative initiative and others, which will re-model their activities on the basis of available resources, maybe waiting for better times.

A typical example is provided by the evaluation of temporary exhibitions, considered by many as no longer financially viable (especially with regard to the so-called blockbusters) and by others more necessary than ever, not to lose 'market share', opportunities for visibility, possibilities to involve new players in the life of the museum from the financial point of view.

At present no one is able to make accurate and reliable predictions on prevailing trends, but I feel compelled to share the comment made by Jorge Wagensberg, Scientific Director of the 'la Caixa' Foundation in Barcelona and creator of CosmoCaixa, during a recent European conference at the DASA Museum in Dortmund: "Facing new challenges, museums should not confuse scientific rigor with rigor mortis". This is a timely reminder of the need for greater intellectual openness and willingness to take risks in imagining new ways, in order to answer the question posed in a recent book by Robert Janes, Editor-in-Chief of Museum Management and Curatorship, *Museums in a Troubled World. Renewal, Irrelevance or Collapse?* (Routledge, Abingdon, 2009).

From growth to recession

If we look at the situation in one of the Western countries which has invested more and with more continuity in the museum sector in the first decade of this century, the United Kingdom, we can say that the phenomenon of the expansion of the number

of museums as well as the renovation of existing institutions is passing a sudden and brutal transition from growth to recession. Sara Selwood, in her essay 'Practical futurism, the value of culture and key cultural trends of the future' in 'The challenges facing museums on-site and online in the 21st century' and 'Future Forecasting: the challenge facing museums and cultural institutions' (2012), estimates that the support for museums went up by around 95% in the UK in the period 1998-2010. Since 1994 "museum and gallery projects have benefitted from £1.42 billion from the Heritage Lottery Fund alone". The former Prime Minister Tony Blair spoke of this period in terms of 'a Golden Age for the arts'. But the Museum Association's survey about cuts in public spending and museums estimates that between April 2010 and June 2011 the recession had already led to closures. "They found that nearly a quarter of museums have reduced their opening hours" (Sara Selwood, *ibidem*). Looking at the future, "on the basis of the current situation it has been estimated that by 2020, about a quarter of the 650 local authority museums in England will close or merge with another organization" (S.S.). In other terms, in a period of two years it seems that the Golden Age has been archived and the whole sector has fallen into a dramatic condition of reduction of the services offered to the public. Unfortunately the situation is not very different in the rest of Europe, apart from the fact that in some countries the effects of cuts in public spending have been diluted in time and the impact consequently has been a bit less traumatic, but the trend is clear and the consequences seem to be unavoidable.

"In Latvia state subsidies for museums in 2010 were reduced by an average of 15%", *Nemo News* 1/2010.

"The Prado, Spain's leading art museum, will receive 30 percent less state funding this year. The Reina Sofia, home to Picasso's 20th century masterpiece *Guernica*, will get 25 percent less and the Thyssen-Bornemisza 33 percent less. Spain's conservative government has slashed spending on culture by nearly 20 percent this year to 722 million Euros (\$940 million) as part of the steepest budget cuts since the country returned to democracy following the death of dictator Francisco Franco in 1975", (*Global Post*, March 2013).

"The French Ministry of Culture and Communication has recently announced its budget for the year 2013: a €7.363 billion fund will be allocated to culture and communication; €3.55 billion for the cultural field (museums, heritage, archaeology, etc.). This means a 2.3% drop, compared to the total budget of the year 2012, and a 4.3% drop for the cultural budget", (Fédération internationale des coalitions pour la diversité culturelle, October 2012). France announced last month that it was cutting cultural spending next year by 4.5 percent, *Le Journal des Arts*. In 2011 the Louvre's state subsidy had drastically decreased to just over half of the museum's 2010 budget.

In The Netherlands "When federal, provincial and regional budgets for 2013 were finally set, the combined effect was a reduction of about 22 percent, or a loss of about \$632 million from the country's cultural sector".

"Faced with about \$2.5 trillion of debt, the Italian government has implemented widespread austerity measures, and shrank its cultural budget by a third in the last three years, to \$1.86 billion".

"Perhaps the most devastating European cultural

funding cuts have been in Portugal, where the debt-laden government in 2011 reduced federal operational grants by 30% and then simply dissolved its ministry of culture", (Nina Siegal, 5 March 2013 in *Art in America Magazine*).

In this panorama, the only country which seems to go against the tide is obviously Germany:

"The German culture budget will rise by 8 percent, even as the country's overall federal budget is decreased by 3.1 percent. However, France's culture budget of €2.43 billion (\$3.09 billion) is almost twice Germany's culture budget of €1.28 billion (\$1.63 billion) even though Germany has about 20 million more inhabitants". (*Blouinartinfo*, 13 November 2012).

The undeniable trend towards a reduction of public spending in the cultural field - and more specifically in favour of museums which frequently also suffer because of the competition of performing arts which in many countries are considered more appealing for the public - seems to be a distinctive character of our historical period all over Europe.

But this is not true in a global perspective. The Chinese government has announced its intention to open 1,000 new museums in the next 10 years. "Museums — big, small, government-backed, privately bankrolled — are opening like mad. In 2011 alone, some 390 new ones appeared. And the numbers are holding. China is opening museums on a surreal scale", (Holland Cotter, *New York Times*, 20 March 2013).

The Louvre in Abu Dhabi is estimated to make an investment of \$1.3 billion and the new Guggenheim

Museum designed by Frank Gehry will cost in the area of \$600 million within a three-year budget. In Doha (Qatar) the Museum of Islamic Art, designed by I. M. Pei, opens to the public this year at an overall cost of around \$300m. At 45,000 m² it is the world's largest Islamic museum, and will attract scholars, academics and visitors from all over the globe.

Within the total area of 64,000 m², dedicated to the great names of the world, there will be other museums: the Sheikh Zayed National Museum, designed by Foster and Partners and the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, which will be the Guggenheim's largest outpost in the world and the only one in the Middle East, designed by Frank Gehry, a center for performing arts and entertainment designed by Zaha Hadid, and a maritime museum by Tadao Ando. The Louvre Abu Dhabi, according to the project, will borrow the works of several French museums - 300 in the first year, 250 in the fourth year and 200 from the seventh to the tenth year - and for 15 years France will provide four exhibitions annually. Finally, the museum will help to create a collection that will progressively replace the works of the French with its own collection. The United Arab Emirates, in turn, are committed to pay approximately €700 million in 30 years, that will benefit the Louvre and other museums participating in the operation.

To what extent the economic recession will influence the apparently endless proliferation of museums which has characterised the European panorama in the last decades is too soon to know.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall there were similar worries about the future of museums in the Communist countries, where the role of public spending and of

public institutions were under scrutiny and frequently led to privatisation, with the effect of depriving the public sector of a part of its assets. To this it has to be added the discussion about restitution which also affected the possible destiny of some museums' collections. However, in the end, in spite of the temporary economic difficulties of post-Communist societies in the transition era and in spite of the political and cultural earthquake which affected those communities, we witnessed a large movement of re-adaptation of museums (namely museums of history previously focused on the regime propaganda) as well as the birth of a relatively large number of new institutions. We could even say that the trend of establishing new museums was not directly affected by the financial shortages.

Therefore we can say that in principle the future of European museums is not necessarily severely affected by the recession in quantitative terms, but in practice there are at least three elements which put possible future evolution in a different perspective from the recent past. The first element is the depth of the recession, which is very heavy - perhaps even more serious than the Great Depression of the 1930s. Secondly, its persistency, which is affecting European economies for a long time. Thirdly, the change in the cultural climate, which reflects the sense of uncertainty and anguish inspired by the recession process. After the fall of the Berlin Wall creative energies were liberated and the new political freedom encouraged a process of rediscovery of cultural identities which implied also a certain public interest for the enhancement of museums as cultural agents in a new democratic society. But in today's Europe we are facing a cultural stagnation linked to a widely spread sense of instability and political uncertainty which is not very encouraging for the growth of a



new breed of museums, although with some notable exceptions. However, museums have proved to be animals with several lives and we cannot exclude the possibility that the current crisis could generate not only **more** museums in quantitative terms, but **new** museums in terms of their qualities. For instance, we can take for granted that the next generation of museums will give special attention to their sustainability both with regard to their organisation and to their tangible assets. Sustainability as a mark of quality will not necessarily improve the quality of the visitors' experience and equally will not be visibly perceived by museum's users, but it will be an intrinsic feature of the museums of the coming decades.

According to some economists, however, the economic crisis can also offer opportunities to museums. Ilde Rizzo in her contribution to the Kenneth Hudson Seminar 2010⁶ identifies the following three areas for developing a new fruitful approach to crisis management:

“Relationship with the public. There is an increasing debate about promoting active citizen participation, not just to get an economic advantage through the volunteers, but as a programme for involving citizens in the museum activities...

Relationships across institutions. An emerging tendency is the enhancement of partnership; it may

⁶ Proceedings are available on www.europeanmuseumacademy.eu

be helpful for large as well as small museums to reduce the existing excess of capacity. Kaufman (2009b) reports that 5 of 63 museum directors surveyed by the American Association of Museums take into consideration mergers with other institutions or groups. Collaboration generates benefits in terms of economies of scale and cost control, deriving by grouping purchases and by reducing contracting out. Collaboration develops synergies and improves processes and practices such as for instance, coordinating exhibition schedules and openings, enlarging the opportunities for region-wide collaboration and creating centres of excellence to provide services to other nonpartner museums... *Attitudes toward society*. Museums will enlarge their role meeting the demands of new social and economic categories and enlarging as much as possible their audience with targeted programs..."

The response to uncontrolled proliferation of collections: deaccessioning

In an article published in Summer 2003 in *Museum Practice magazine*, Wim van der Weiden, at that time director of Naturalis in Leiden, expressed the opinion that "deaccessioning artifacts and specimens will enable museums not just to survive in the 21st century, but to thrive". His opinion was based on the awareness of the serious problem of ever-growing collections packed into over-full storerooms, a solution to which was not the typical curator's attitude of "if in doubt, say no", opposing any form of deaccessioning or de-placement of collections. van der Weiden's statement was also based on the opinion of Keith Thomson, Director of the University of Oxford's Museum of Natural History, who said that "in the future museums will no longer be defined by

their collections, but collections will be defined by museums".

An example of this intellectual process is offered by the possible different museological uses of industrial heritage (a comparatively recent notion in itself). A collection of industrial items can be presented as a document of social history or as a resource for a museum of history, science and technology as well as a design museum, which is more focused on an aesthetic approach. But industrial objects can also play a role in a museum of military or political history. In other terms the same category of physical resources can be used and interpreted according to very different lines of interpretation and can be the core material of very different categories of museums. In this sense it is true that the meaning of these objects is determined by the philosophy of museums and not vice versa. This qualitative process will probably be interconnected in the next future with the need for clear policy as far as the quantitative aspects of a collection are concerned. Both for economic reasons (less money for collection management) and for museological reasons (a line of storytelling not necessarily based on a large amount of objects in show). This trend towards a 'more stories with fewer objects' approach is also encouraged by a certain inclination of contemporary exhibition design in favour of maximising the aura of individual objects more than impressing the public with the quantity of items assembled. Consequently we could say that for the moment the era of showcases with up to 70-80 archaeological fragments is declining in favour of a more selective exhibition philosophy. The overwhelming growth of collections and of objects which are worth collecting as a document of the consumer society inevitably leads us to the question of "what to save and what to lose".

It is a matter of fact that many museums during their life have lost a clear vision of their collecting policy. Acquisitions are frequently determined by personal cultural interests of the director or some passionate initiatives of the Board or of the Friends of the museum. Donations with strong obligations to be observed (such as the integrity of a collection, where a certain number of pieces are of minor interest) frequently represent more of a problem than the enrichment of the cultural assets of the museum. Storages are filled beyond their physical capacities, generating serious problems of conservation and access. The lack of financial resources limits the efficiency of conservation programmes, also due to the large number of items which will never be put in show. The lack of expertise within the curatorial staff of the museum leads to a situation where certain collections are 'parked' in the storage without being studied and interpreted adequately.

Hans Lochmann (Museumsverband für Niedersachsen und Bremen) describes in the following terms the German state of the debate about deaccessioning:

- Selection criteria are rarely transparent
- Too little consideration is given to the question of which criteria should hold: the age of an object perhaps, or its beauty, its rarity, its symbolic significance?
- Evaluation criteria are subject to change (...)
- Planned acquisitions are the exception

Federal Regional museum advisors (Länder) have reservations about a general directive on disposal, and even about disposal *per se*:

- Hardly any museums have a collections concept
- Dispersal (i.e. giving collection items to other museums) is a rare practice
- Concern about decisions that reflect nothing more than current trends
- Fear of irreversible decisions
- Fear of political malpractice⁷

But the question of deaccessioning can be also related to the emerging difficulties in the financial situation of public institutions. In this respect, an episode reported by the *Museums Journal* in May 2013 is very meaningful, where Patrick Steele writes:

"Northampton Borough Council (NBC) is facing a legal challenge from Spencer Compton, the 7th Marquis of Northampton, over the ownership of its Egyptian and geological collections, which include a statue of Sekhemka dating from 2400 BC.

Compton has requested that the council return the collections, including the statue, to him, under the terms of a deed of gift, signed by Northampton's town clerk and the 4th Marquis in 1880. The *Museums Journal* understands the council is disputing whether the statue of Sekhemka, which it is looking to sell, is included in the deed, as it is not mentioned specifically. "An NBC spokesman said: "We still wish to sell the statue of Sekhemka and are working with Arts Council England to achieve an ethical disposal."

Meanwhile, cuts to the Northampton Museum's budget will see the post of collections officer merge with that of museum development officer, while the roles of museum manager, senior education officer, education

⁷ Proceedings of the Kenneth Hudson Seminars 2009-2010, edited by EMA, available on www.europeanmuseumacademy.eu

officer, and development officer will work from offices in the Guildhall rather than being based at the museum.”

The virtual museum and the survival of museums

The increasing importance of the virtual dimension of museums has been already discussed in the first report of the LEM Project, 'The virtual museum'. The first assumption of the debate was focused on the shift in meaning of the actual definition of 'virtual museum'.

From the original definition dated January 1997, written by Jamie McKenzie and published by the *Technology & Learning* magazine:



‘A virtual museum is a collection of electronic artifacts and information resources - virtually anything which can be digitalized. The collection may include paintings, drawings, photographs, diagrams, recordings, video segments, newspaper articles, transcripts of interviews, numerical databases and a host of other items which may be saved

on the virtual museum's file server. It may also offer pointers to great resources around the world relevant to the museum's main focus.’



where, interestingly enough, the Internet was not explicitly mentioned. The idea of a virtual museum has evolved from a sort of museum showcase reproducing reality on the web or on an electronic device, to a complex independent museum dimension which lives its life in a variety of digital media. The virtual dimension offers spaces and experiences that go beyond architectural spaces and beyond collections' limits. Let us try to list very shortly some of the functions that a virtual museum can specifically fulfil:

- Exhibitions on line
- Active role of users in building their own collections
- Visual archives of past temporary exhibitions
- Experiencing the backstage of the museum (storages, restoration workshops, etc.) via a webcam
- Exhibitions of objects destined to disappear in a short time and digitally recorded for 'eternity'
- Enrichment of users' experience: closer access to masterpieces...but at distance (Google Art), augmented reality, 3D modelling....
- RSS: following history in the making
- Objects on show coming from any possible point of the world at the same time

- The possibility to compare digital objects of very different physical natures

The recent initiative about the First World War by Europeana has shown the dramatic potential of the creation of 'virtual collections' on the web in a worldwide dimension which has also interestingly brought to light evidence of previously historical facts.

It is true that digital resources are also proving to have a pervasive potential in the context of the museum environment, with the consequence that the virtual museum is also present **inside** the 'real' museum environment, offering visitors and users 'virtual experiences'. Museums, by definition the kingdom of real, physical objects, are nowadays increasingly going digital, on one hand because they exhibit or make a variety of digital objects accessible, and on the other hand because visitors and users of museums can experience 'de-materialised' objects **inside** the museum and **outside** the museum, on the web, or via one's digital devices in the heart of the exhibition or very far from it. Digital objects are on show, digital experiences everywhere. De-materialised objects, and de-materialised museological interpretation of them is a phenomenon we are living with, but without a clear perspective of the possible influence of this on the future shape and role of museums. In the end a legitimate question arises: is the 'real' museum also becoming a mostly digital world, in some sense independent from its physical dimension?

A Cyber Museology?

We have just entered an era of rapidly growing

integration between the physical and virtual dimension as well as of growing *contradictions and frictions* between these two spheres of human experience. This is not a temporary condition, but a permanent and long-term process. Museums are deeply involved in it and have still a lot to learn... but also a lot to offer to enrich the museum' role and prevent them becoming irrelevant or perceived as such by the community.

The 'real museum' becomes a combination of all these elements which are also involved in an endless process of 'becoming', due to the fast changing technological scene...

What is certain is that a sentence said at the first 'Museum and the Web' international conference in 1998 is no longer possible. It sounded like this -



Let the museum be the museum and the web be the web



The two dimensions are inextricably connected, and the notion of the virtual museum finds its possible evolution in the development of the relationship between these two entities, one quite tangible (the museum environment) and the other (the Internet) totally immaterial but enormously influential also in terms of museological thinking for the coming decades.

Professor Paolo Paolini offers a very interesting example of this change of paradigm when illustrating the case of the Modern Art Museum of San Francisco: “Let us consider for example the case of SFMOMA, the Modern Art Museum of San Francisco, with its award winning website (www.sfmoma.org). The museum was founded in 1935, and currently owns more than 27,000 artworks. The overall budget is about 30 million Euros per year, with something like 600,000 visitors per year. The cost of the first version of the website, created in 1995 (when most of the cultural institutions did not even know the existence of web technology!) was approximately 7,000 Euros. The latest revision, completed in 2008, cost 400,000 Euros (not including the costs for revising the content, which was taken up by the departments involved, employing about 17 staff). The current version of the website is impressive: more than 9,000 objects available for search, more than 5,000 interactive visualizations, 350 video files, 200 audio files, educational resources for teachers, an online bimonthly magazine, an online press room, a blog, an online store, downloadable Apps (iTunes and Apple store), and presence on social spaces (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr). It is relevant to notice that the financial resources for maintaining and further developing the website is included in the ordinary budget of the Museum, and not from other sources or within the frame of special projects. This implies that communicating through a website has become part of the mission of the Museum, and not something additional. Internet users were 2.8 million per year - 4.5 times the number of physical visitors! Can any

cultural institution consider this community of Internet users as less relevant than the community of actual visitors?”

(Report 1 – The Virtual Museum. The Learning Museum Network Project, 2012)

The Happy Museum?

The British Happy Museum Project⁸ has recently launched a manifesto “to re-imagine the purpose of museums”.

The Happy Museum:the initiative’s ideals draw on a manifesto for wellbeing written by the New Economics Foundation exploring the impact museums can have in creating a happier society.

It encourages museums to re-imagine key aspects of their role and leave a legacy of cultural change within their organisation and the local community.

Alongside the commissioned projects, Happy Museum fosters peer-learning and innovative thinking through meetings, workshops, mentoring and creating tools and guidance.

In this round, the initiative is particularly looking to commission projects in science and technology, industrial heritage, natural history and fine art collections.

It is also seeking to support work that promotes engagement with craft skills; examines the interface between digital practice and social innovation; or focuses on wellness and pre-prevention rather than clinical practice.

Happy Museum recently collaborated with economist Daniel Fujiwara to produce a report demonstrating that visiting museums was associated with higher levels of happiness and wellbeing.

Museums Association 22.5.2013

⁸ www.happymuseumproject.org

The essence of this approach can be summarised in these three points:

- how museums might cement the link between well-being and environmental sustainability
- how they might pursue more mutual relationships within the civic society
- how they might better articulate the possibilities of a good life to help people in the transition to a low-carbon world.

Curiously enough, the same slogan ‘Happy Museum’ was used in the period 2011-2012 by the Italian Marche Region Department of Culture to launch a marketing campaign in favour of museums as a visitor attraction, addressed to different target groups - from the elementary school pupils to third-age citizens. Apart from the huge differences between the two different kinds of activities which are labelled with the term ‘Happy Museum’, there is one point in common and it is to offer a more appealing image of contemporary museums as institutions which can contribute to the well-being of their users. Kenneth Hudson used to say that a good museum is the one where at the end of the visit you feel better than when you entered. In other terms he believed in a sort of ‘therapeutic’ effect on visitors. All these remarks go together with the repositioning of museums in society as meeting places more than educational institutions where you go strictly in order to contemplate exhibits and learn. Of course educating is and will be forever one of the main goals of any museum programme, but it is also true that the fully comprehensive package of services that the best modern museums are able to offer to their visitors adds more value to the museum experience than in the past in terms of socialising, enjoying and relaxing. Museums as safe places where

you can have a free dialogue with other people of different backgrounds and of different generations or alternatively you can wander in almost perfect solitude, museums where you can eat well, find clean toilets and facilities for your baby, museums where you can go just for a cup of coffee and perhaps simply for a very special shopping, are becoming both in an urban context and in a rural milieu points of reference for social life. It is not only fashionable but simply nice and practical to celebrate corporate conventions, birthday parties, family gatherings and even weddings in a museum. This implies more physical space for these kinds of activities and better quality customer services in museums, which are equally important as the exhibition activities. A new breed of visitors is emerging, oriented to a multitask dimension, inclined to a diversity of experiences and with a more flexible attitude to learning and intellectual discovery, which requires a new framework in museum planning, in museum design and in museum management. This new breed of visitors has many different faces, sometimes even contradictory: younger kids in their pre-school age together with elderly people whose venerable age goes even beyond the usual definition of ‘third age’.

“How can the inspiring public spaces on offer in museums, libraries and archives be used to reduce the isolation and loneliness of some older people and encourage greater community participation and well-being? (...)

Museums, libraries and archives provide a network of welcoming, neutral spaces providing a wide variety of information and activities, whose reach extends into every community. This local presence means they are well placed to help reduce isolation and loneliness and encourage greater community participation and

wellbeing through welcoming and involving older people in their services.

Responses to this question can be categorized into three main elements:

- What museums, libraries and archives offer for older people within their facilities;
- How the use of museums, libraries and archives facilities by others benefit older people;
- How the museums, libraries and archives can use



other community spaces to reduce isolation and increase community participation”⁹

The expanding participatory dimension of the museum nowadays and in the future is linked to this welcoming philosophy, which is also reflected in the physical design of contemporary museums but also in technological development. It has a growing influence on museum life of the social media which can enable visitors to receive contents, to share knowledge, to stimulate new lines of interpretation and research. Participation is a key word of our social life in general and in some sense it is symbolised by the overused phrase, ‘have your say’. Meanwhile, it is relatively easy to initiate dialogue with visitors in a direct form or via a digital medium, but it is more difficult to put into practice the results of such a dialogue, which can frequently raise expectations that a museum cannot always meet. One could say that participation is a value in itself, even if for practical reasons it has little consequence on a museum environment strictly speaking. We could also underline a certain contradiction between the rigidity of the exhibition environment and the changing and sometimes volatile attitude of the public towards the museum as an institution and as a physical space.

“Participation is useful shorthand for opening up museums to a range of voices. At the simplest level, it’s the event or exhibition organized with a community group, something that’s now common practice in many museums. At the next level, it might encompass

⁹ “Building a society for all ages: Benefits for older people from learning in museums, libraries and archives. A report to the Museum Libraries and Archives Council” by Fiona Aldridge and Yanina Dutton, NIACE 2009.

¹⁰ “Museums 2020 discussion paper”, Museums Association, July 2012.

community advisory groups or exhibitions initiated by community groups.”¹⁰

This new societal challenge to museums requires a new set of skills where global awareness, civic and environmental literacy, ICT literacy and a strong inclination to cross disciplinary thinking will be the prerequisites for the innovative and creative museum practices necessary to be adequately equipped to build the skills that a museum needs in the 21st century. An interesting overview of these themes is available on ‘Museums, Libraries and 21st century skills’ published by the American Institute of Museums and Library Services in July 2009.

To go back to our primary question about the perspective of a so called ‘Happy Museum’ incorporating a vision of the purpose of the museum in present and future times, at least as far as the coming two decades are concerned we could say that if museums want to be competitive and authoritative not only on the leisure market, but in general in the social services offer, the shift from museums which are collection-oriented to museums which are visitor-oriented has to evolve towards a comprehensive approach to the visitors which can satisfy diverse needs and adapt to frequent changes in the users’ behaviour. Without overestimating the potential of museums and their role in society, we can at least say that a ‘Happy Museum’ cannot exist without happy visitors.



CASE STUDIES

Museums of influence: five breakthrough European museums

Massimo Negri

The main goal of this paper has been to identify the crucial themes which are facing European museums in the current situation and the possible emerging trends for museums development in the next future. The multifaceted panorama of European museums offers a lot of study cases which could be considered a useful integration of our analysis. Therefore we think it is of a certain interest to examine a few of these cases which have brought relevant innovations in the European museum panorama in recent times.

They have been selected adopting the following criteria:

- they marked a turning point in the evolutive line of their individual disciplinary field, offering a tangible example of new typologies of museums;
- they have proved to be sustainable over the years and not only successful cases at the experimental level;
- they offer a diversified range of areas of interest, nationality, size, forms of organisation and legal status (private/ public, foundation, state, local authority, etc.);
- they have been well accepted by the public and by the professional community.

To use a brilliant definition by Kenneth Hudson, they

can be considered 'museums of influence', destined to inspire future museum thinking and practice in a significant way.

CosmoCaixa, Barcelona¹ (Spain)

The Barcelona Science Museum was founded 32 years ago by the Fundació 'la Caixa', as the first interactive museum in Spain. New scientific discoveries and a substantial rise in visitor numbers led to the construction of a new museum, situated at the foot of Tibidabo on the site of the older museum, comprising nine storeys, six of which are underground. Opened in September 2004, the new museum's philosophy is not only to illustrate its subject by interactive exhibits, but also to offer mental and emotional interactivity, using all five senses.

The museum consists of the Art Nouveau Building dating from the beginning of the 20th century and built as the Asylum for the Blind, housing the administration and the café/restaurant and a huge complex of a new building with a lot of glass, aluminium and steel which leads to a wide-open area and goes five floors deep into the ground. This houses the exhibition halls. In 30,000 m² it offers enough space for all needs to be met: a big entrance area with the typical facilities,

¹ The description below is mainly taken from the presentation of EMYA candidates 2006.

a really big biotope of a flooded forest, a huge hall for permanent exhibitions, the height for a Foucault pendulum and an enormous tree sculpture, a big auditorium for 100 persons and six other smaller lecture rooms. The museum features a variety of exhibitions, permanent and temporary, that showcase the environment, nature, science, and space.

CosmoCaixa also has a planetarium and exhibitions devoted to interaction such as touch and play for small children. It also has a bookstore, gift shop, library, teaching centre and café. The museum is sponsored by 'la Caixa'.

The permanent exhibition, the Matter Room, traces a journey through the history of matter from Big Bang to the present day and is divided into four sections: Inert Matter, Living Matter, Intelligent Matter and Civilised Matter. Visitors can see a Geological Wall with a surface of 310 m², consisting of seven huge slices of rock of diverse origin. Part of the Amazon has been recreated in the Flooded Forest area, which incorporates 52 different animal species (piranhas, crocodiles and other animal and plant species typical for the zone) and recreates 1,000 m² of an Amazonian rainforest ecosystem.

As well as a large programme of temporary exhibitions, space has been set aside for discussion on current concerns and questions of social interest in the Agora, the auditorium, workshop classrooms and the planetarium, which invites you to take a journey through space and time, past the stars and planets of the firmament. Educational activities range from programmes for schools, young and very young people, to family activities and programmes designed

specifically for older people. Arscientificum is a collection of musical and theatrical shows, while outside the museum building the Plaça de la Ciència is a space with views over the city where visitors can take part in programmes of activities within five huge modules.

The museum building is just as fascinating as its contents. CosmoCaixa is a beautiful example of *modernista* architecture, designed and built between 1904 and 1909 by Josep Domènech i Estapà. The modern extension completed in 2004 highlights the value of the century-old building while placing it in a new context.

CosmoCaixa can be considered a prototype of a new breed of institutions which share some aspects of a science centre as well as a natural history museum with a linguistics mutated from most different sources including contemporary art. Of great interest is also the architectural side, where the reconversion of an old industrial building with contemporary extensions creates a very well planned 'museum machinery'.

<http://obrasocial.lacaixa.es/nuestroscentros/cosmoaixabarcelona>

Imperial War Museum North, Manchester² (UK)

This new branch of the Imperial War Museum opened in July 2002 on the banks of the Manchester Ship Canal, a former industrial area which has been regenerated. The aluminium-clad building was designed by Daniel Libeskind. It symbolises the effects of the war and is based on the concept of a world shattered by conflict, a fragmented globe reassembled in three interlocking shards. These shards represent

conflict on land, in the air, and on and under the water. The building is an absolute masterpiece of contemporary architecture. It is unusual, expressive and functional, both outside and inside. It conveys the museum's message and at the same time serves as a comfortable venue for the museum's activities.

The Imperial War Museum North has huge collections covering British and Commonwealth citizens' experiences of war since 1914. The exhibition space is 2,600 m². The aim of IWM North is to combine conventional displays with newer methods, to highlight the powerful individual stories behind the collections. A Time Line uses showcases and graphics to illustrate the history of conflict in the 20th century. The Silos, six flexible themed exhibitions areas, deal with subjects such as 'Women and War' and 'Impressions of War'. Changing exhibitions explore themes such as entertainment or sport in wartime. New techniques include The Big Picture, where the main exhibition space is transformed into a massive auditorium for 360-degree audiovisual shows held at hourly intervals. TimeStacks have been built into the walls of two of the six Silos, industrial storage retrieval systems with large trays that can hold up to 20 mini-exhibitions which visitors can select at the touch of a button.

Staff known as Interactors answer visitors' questions, lead regular handling sessions at the TimeStacks and deliver performances after the Big Picture Shows. These Interactors change the programmes according to the day, addressing themselves to families during the weekend when these form the majority of visitors, or preparing actions for school parties, etc. An extensive educational programme is based partly on the school National Curriculum but also provides a range of lifelong learning opportunities. A structured Volunteer Programme offers people from local communities work

experience with training and support for a qualification in Cultural Heritage.

The IWM North is a National Museum. The total cost of the building was nearly £20 million and the cost of the exhibition about £3.3 million. The funding of IWM North was a two-phase development. Phase One began in 1997 with the development and construction of the Museum. Peel Holdings, owners of the Manchester Ship Canal provided £12.5 million. This contribution did not include the value of the site, which was donated by the company. The remainder came from the European Regional Development Fund, English Partnerships/ North West Development Agency and Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council and the IWM itself as well as benefactors and sponsors. For Phase Two, the Imperial War Museum North Appeal was launched to fund the fit-out of the building, together with the implementation of the exhibition and display strategy. An active programme of fundraising from individuals, corporations and trusts raised the required funds to meet the appeal target of approximately £2.5 million. IWM North is part of the Imperial War Museums, which includes other four museums: IWM London; IWM Duxford (near Cambridge); the Cabinet War Rooms in Whitehall, London; and the historic ship HMS Belfast, moored in the Pool of London on the River Thames. The IWMs are partially government-funded but constantly look for sponsorship and donations to sustain their programmes.

Since opening, the IWM North has won nearly 30 awards, including the European Museum of the Year Award in 2004.

This museum is a rare case of good use in exhibition terms of a contemporary architecture with very strong character. The large pictures especially represent an example of outstanding creative use of the

² The description below is mainly taken from the presentation of EMYA candidates 2004.

large surfaces made available by Daniel Libeskind's design and are a powerful tool of interpretation and communication of the museum's collections. Other interactive devices like the Time Stacks remain of great interest to visitors after more than 10 years since the opening of the museum. Last but not least, the philosophy which underlines the whole project puts in a totally new perspective the concept of museums dealing with military history.

<http://www.iwm.org.uk/visits/iwm-north>

Tom Tits Experiment, Södertälje, near Stockholm³ (Sweden)

This is Sweden's largest science centre of its kind (4 levels, two building spaces, 6,500 m² inside, 9,500 m² outside), having expanded dramatically since its opening in 1987. Its focus is on education and the exhibition has interactive exhibits around which the educational programmes and outreach activities are built. There has been a continuous programme of improvement and updating and new exhibits have been added on the human body, the brain, chemistry, machines and illusions, as well as a large outdoor exhibit park, which opened in 1992. There are also specially-designed areas for less able visitors. Experienced teachers as well as young students at teacher training colleges already attend courses at Tom Tit and number over 600 every year.

Tom Tits Experiment is housed in a large factory site (the Alfa-Laval factory) where three factories are located. The exterior of two of these factories has not changed in any way, and they represent splendid examples of industrial archaeology. The factories were



built in the 19th century and they were in use until 1956. The area around the factories is transformed into a garden with lots of flowers, trees and various exhibits. The centre's name dates from the 19th century as well, when the French magazine *L'Illustration* published a series of articles describing do-it-yourself scientific experiments for children. Pseudonymously written by 'Tom Tit', these articles were published in a volume entitled *La Science Amusante* (1890), which

was quickly translated into several languages. When the centre itself was established in 1987 its educational ambitions seemed to resonate with those of *L'Illustration's* fictional author. Hence the unusual name.⁴ Fifteen years of working on the design and architecture of the exhibition have been invaluable in the planning, design and building of the latest addition to the

museum site – a permanent nursery school. It opened in April 2004 and now has 60 pupils between the age of two and five, with a waiting list of 120. The school gives extra room for exploration and play closely associated with the science of everyday activities that have an important role in the development of small children. By placing the school on the premises of the museum, extra educational materials are easily available. Future plans include building a permanent exhibition on mathematics and genetics, as well as the expansion of the school to cover all ages. Talks are in progress with the Swedish school authorities for the necessary formal permits.

At Tom Tits Experiment there are 610 exhibits that span a wide spectrum from tiny simple things that sit on a window sill, to amusement park style thrill rides. This museum hardly possesses a collection in the traditional sense of the word. In fact the ever changing exhibits are considered 'the collection'. These exhibits of course have ceased to exist for the largest part, as the museum opened back in 1987, but they are extensively documented.

The owner of the museum is the Municipality of Södertälje and the museum is a limited company. The museum and science centre is mainly (between 80% and 90%) financed by visitors' entrance fees together with incomes from educational programmes, outreach activities, special events and conferences and the museum shop (the average budget for the running costs is 4,5 million Euros per year). Other visitor facilities include a cafeteria, a restaurant and generous picnic areas, both indoors and outdoors. The science

³ The description below is mainly taken from the presentation of EMYA candidates 2006.

⁴ Anna Storm and Nina Wormbs , Exhibit Review, Tom Tits Experiment, Södertälje, Sweden. http://www.historyoftechnology.org/eTC/v48no4/storm_wormbs.html

centre also receives a yearly grant that amounts to nearly 10% of the budget from the national agency for higher education.

In 2006, Tom Tits Experiment received the European Museum Forum's Micheletti Award, a prize established in 1996 that goes to the year's most promising technical or industrial museum. The award citation explains that Tom Tits deserves attention not only because of its content, judged to be "amongst the most exciting in Europe," but also because of its new nursery school, its activities and tours for older children, and its excellent and dedicated staff.

<http://www.tomtit.se/>

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (The Netherlands)⁵

The Rijksmuseum is a Dutch national museum dedicated to arts and history. The museum is located in the Museum Square in the Amsterdam South borough. Founded in The Hague in 1800, it moved to Amsterdam in 1808, where it was first located in the Royal Palace and later in the Trippenhuus. The current main building was designed by Pierre Cuypers and was originally opened in 1885. The Rijksmuseum has been recently reopened after a radical makeover. In the year 2000, the government gave the go-ahead for the project, and after a lengthy period of preparation, work finally started in 2004. On 13 April 2013 the main building was reopened by Queen Beatrix after the 10-year renovation which cost €375 million (financed by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Rijksmuseum itself).

The renovated Rijksmuseum displays over 8,000 of

art and history, from a total collection of one million objects. These objects tell the story of 800 years of Dutch history, from the year 1200 right up to the present day. The collection includes masterpieces by Rembrandt, Frans Hals, and Johannes Vermeer. The architects of the renovation works were Antonio Cruz and Antonio Ortiz from Seville, Spain. They were chosen by a committee chaired by the chief government architect. The architects stripped the building of its later additions and restored Cuypers' clear layout. According to their design, the two inner courtyards which were added in the post-war years were broken open, creating a two-part Atrium linked by the passageway, open as in the original design. The Asian Pavilion has been renovated as well. Between the Cuypers Villa and the Teekenschool, Cruz y Ortiz placed a small new building - the new service entrance - offering access to the museum via an underground passage. There are also visitor facilities such as a museum café, restaurant and a shop. The restoration works were addressed also to ensure climate-control and security features in line with today's requirements. The restoration also included the galleries: only the *Night Watch* by Rembrandt remained in its old position at the centre of the building. The renovation of the interiors was the responsibility of Jean-Michel Wilmotte, the Paris museological designer, famous for the interior of the Musée du Louvre. He has designed display cases, ornament lighting, plinths and determined the interior colour scheme. The museum has chosen the motto 'a feel for beauty, a sense of time', for this new setting.

The Rijksmuseum is a huge museum: the walking

distance through the 80 galleries at the museum is a total of around 1.5 km; the overall surface area is almost 30,000 m²; the exhibition space is about 12,000 m², the garden is 14,418 m² and the new atrium 2,250 m².

To deal with the radical renovation of such a building complex and with a collection of worldwide importance is an extremely arduous challenge from any point of view, in terms of architecture, interior design, interpretation of the collection and museography. The balance between old and new, tradition and innovation is a must but at the same time a very risky goal. The result in this case is extremely well balanced and represents an example for all the big European museums wanting to renovate in depth their offer to the public and their environment.

<https://www.rijksmuseum.nl>

PIOP, Piraeus Bank Cultural Foundation, Athens (Greece)⁶

The Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation (PIOP) organises and manages a network of thematic museums, located in different regions, which study, preserve and promote Greece's heritage and cultural identity.

The Silk Museum in Soufli (Thrace) presents all the phases and the stages of the pre-industrial process of rearing silkworms (sericulture) and of silk processing (silk manufacturing) within the socio-economic context that made the region a major silk-producing centre in Greece (late 19th-mid-20th century). It is the first of the Network's museums to have functioned, as early as the 1980s, on the basis of the high level

scientific standards imposed by the first director of the Foundation, Stelios Papadopoulos.

The Open-Air Water-Power Museum in Dimitsana (Peloponnese) is a restored complex of water-powered artisan installations in the region of the Loussios River, comprising a flourmill, a fulling mill, a tannery and a gunpowder mill. In the carefully restored workshops, the visitors develop an experiential relation with the artisan buildings and their machinery, which is set in motion. They have the possibility, for instance, of filling the hollow of their hand with the flour milled before their eyes, while in the corresponding workshops they can watch documentaries on the processing of gunpowder and leather.

The Museum of the Olive and Greek Olive Oil in Sparta (Peloponnese) presents the varied economic, usability and symbolic aspects of the olive and olive oil, as well as the technology of olive production from ancient times through the present. The infokiosks in the museum's interior offer further information, while in the context of educational programmes olive oil is produced in the presses of the Prehistoric, Hellenistic and Byzantine periods installed in covered outdoor areas.

The Museum of Industrial Production of Olive Oil on the island of Lesbos is, in fact, a 'museum in its own right', as it is the fully rehabilitated Communal Olive Press of the village of Aghia Paraskevi, and complements the Museum of the Olive and Greek Olive Oil in Sparta. Here, there is an emphasis on digital productions that allow the visitor to grasp how the machinery worked (steam boiler and engine, transmission axle, pulleys, compression and decanting machines) and discover

⁵ The description below is mainly taken from the website of the museum <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/>

⁶ The description below is taken from Banks and museums beyond sponsorship. An overview of European museums created by bank foundations, edited by Graziano Campanini and Massimo Negri, Bononia University Press, Bologna, 2011.

the process of crushing and compressing the olive paste and decanting of the olive oil in a steam-powered olive mill. Lastly, the old storage rooms for olives now function as additional exhibition areas.

In the *Roof tile and Brickworks Museum in Volos (Thessaly)*, which is also a 'museum in its own right', the museological trajectory is based on the sequences of the production line manufacturing tiles and bricks with steam-powered machines and the firing of the

bricks in the Hoffman kiln. The visitor is attracted by mobile models that explain the functioning of the surrounding evocative space with its mechanical equipment, inactive conveyor belts and pallet-trucks laden with unbaked bricks and tiles.

The Museum of Marble Crafts in the island of Tinos presents the traditional techniques, the craftsmen's implements and the broader context in which the Tinian marble workshops evolved. The representation



of a quarry and a workshop and the collection of drawings by master marble carvers, together with films that are projected on the premises, bring to life the quarrying and carving techniques that were developed on Tinos to work with marble.

Finally, *the Museum of Environment and Traditional Occupations in Stymphalia (Peloponnese)* focuses on the interaction between human activity and the surrounding natural habitat. The museum's ambition is to heighten the public's environmental awareness while simultaneously stressing the region's pre-industrial way of life, thanks to innovative multimedia applications (aquarium, fishing boats).

Each of the Foundation's museums also constitutes a live cultural nucleus, which contributes to strengthening the Greek provinces in collaboration with the local society and the regional and municipal authorities. All of the Foundation's museums have multi-purpose halls, conceived as the museum's heartbeat, which can be felt through the hosting of educational programmes, temporary exhibitions, conferences, seminars and other activities.

The extended museum network of the Piraeus Bank Cultural Foundation is funded mainly by the European Union's Community Programmes, after the previous financing by the Foundation itself, of the various studies (technical, research workers, museological, museographical) needed for the project to be 'mature'. The museums do not belong either to the Foundation or to the Bank. They belong to local communities or to the state. The museum's operational costs are the Foundation's responsibility for 50 years (ensured by the Bank). For this period of time, PIOP pledges to cover not only the museum's operational costs, but also its high level promotion, conservation, organisation of activities, renewal of collections and publications,

with the knowledge that the expected revenues from their full functioning will not be in a position, in the best cases, to cover more than 20% of the expenses.

PIOP has adopted a management model that makes use of structure and personnel of its departments, which are based in Athens. The Department of Museums coordinates the functioning and promotion of the museums, the organisation of educational programmes and the hosting of various activities in the Multipurpose Halls. The buildings' conservation is covered by the Foundation's Technical Service, staffed by engineers from the Technical Service of the Piraeus Bank Group. The financial management of each museum is monitored closely and in detail by the Foundation's accounting department. Legal support is ensured by the Piraeus Bank Group. The management, the scheduling of the museum's activities, their functioning and their annual reports are monitored by a five-member committee, composed of two Local Community representatives, two representatives from PIOP and the representative of the Ministry of Culture's competent Department.

The experience of PIOP is for the moment unique in Europe and represents a possible model in a period of shortage of public funds. The book, *Banks and museums beyond sponsorship. An overview of European museums created by bank foundations* has documented a very limited number of cases which can be compared with PIOP. But none of them has a national dimension and such a coherent museological thinking which is due to the cohesion of the group of professional which is responsible of museum development inside PIOP. It is also for this reason that PIOP is seriously influencing the coming of an innovative museological approach in Greece.

<http://www.piop.gr>



Combining old and new: the challenge facing traditional museums in the 21st century¹

Margherita Sani

Being 'contemporary' and able to speak to today's audiences is for sure a bigger challenge for those museums which hold very old collections dating back to the 18th century and having remained unaltered in their arrangement and displays, sort of cabinets of curiosities or Wunderkammer transported from the 1700s or 1800s directly into the 21st century. Creating the conditions for these museums to entertain a meaningful conversation with the public is a challenging but fascinating task.

In their report 'Agenda 2026 - Study on the future of the Dutch museum sector'², the Netherlands Museums Association highlights the most important developments that the museum sector is likely to face in that country.

After identifying four relevant processes (related to demographics, ecology, geopolitics, technology) and setting them off against four social domains (society, economy, spatial planning and politics), the study singled out six major trends which are predicted to be

relevant to the museum sector. Among these are the retirement of baby boomers, the growth of international cultural tourism, cuts in subsidies and the digitised society. The effects of these six forecasted possible trends were then investigated with regard to small, medium-sized and large museums.

What is said with regard to smaller museums is particularly interesting in the present context: "The number of small-scale museums is likely to decline. This category of museums is facing a very tough time indeed. Only the strongest ones with distinctive profiles, products and a strong basis of support will survive... small-scale museums will have to choose whether to profile themselves as authentic, old-fashioned museums or as exciting contemporary museums. Any attempts to combine these two profiles are unlikely to succeed."³

It sounds as if very traditional, long-standing institutions are doomed to be cut off from a contemporary discourse. On the contrary, my attempt will be to investigate how they can be modernised and which

¹ Among the many institutions which have exhibits dating back to the previous centuries, the Teylers Museum has been chosen as a paradigmatic example of how to address the issue of conservation and innovation.

² Nederlandse Museumvereniging, 'Agenda 2026 - Study on the future of the Dutch museum sector', 2010.

³ Ibid. p. 18.

strategies they should adopt to be relevant at the present time.

If we take the Teylers Museum in Haarlem (NL), we have an example of a museum which has made of its historic building and the 18th and 19th century arrangement of its rooms its 'Unique Selling Proposition', to put it in marketing terms.

The Teylers Museum was established in 1778, thanks to the bequest of a wealthy banker and silk merchant, Pieter Teyler, who left his fortune for the furtherance of arts and sciences. Teyler's will made no mention of a museum. Instead it gave instructions to establish a foundation for the promotion of the arts and sciences, as well as for researching the relationships between religion and society, truly reflecting the spirit of the Dutch Enlightenment. The idea of building a large room intended as a laboratory to perform scientific experiments originated only later, with his executors. In 1784 the Oval Room, a magnificent neoclassical space, was opened to the public: under a single roof it housed books, scientific instruments, drawings, fossils and minerals. These collections were bought not to impress the public, but for research and study purposes. The 35 volumes of Diderot and D'Alembert's *Encyclopédie* were among the first books to be purchased, scientific instruments were bought from famous instrument makers, the world's largest electrostatic generator was commissioned and housed there, drawings – including 25 by Michelangelo - and paintings by old masters and contemporary artists were bought at home and abroad to inspire artists.

Until the 1920s the Teylers Museum functioned primarily as a laboratory and a knowledge centre, with famous scientists and Nobel prize winners visiting it and

conducting research there.

In parallel however, since the Oval Room soon proved not to be fit for scientific experiments, which were moved elsewhere in the building, it also started functioning as a museum.

From the 1830s, with the growth of the collections, the increase in visitor numbers, and the need to accommodate new activities, additional galleries were built next to the existing ones and a new entrance was opened. The same happened at the end of the 1990s with the building of a new wing housing a café, an educational centre and a multimedia room. The juxtaposing of new spaces during three centuries without interfering with the existing layout, has left the Teylers Museum with assets that other museums have lost. And this is the reason why Teylers describes itself as "the world's best preserved eighteenth-century public knowledge centre for the arts and sciences". Indeed, when entering the first rooms, filled with fossils and scientific instruments in the original wooden showcases, visitors feel as if they had stepped back in time. The appeal of the Teylers Museum lies in the fact that it has been able to retain its historical character. No alteration has been made in the oldest rooms, although precautions are taken – windows have been changed, shutters have been added – to keep the objects in the best possible conditions, strict surveys are regularly conducted by the museum conservators and some areas have undergone extensive restoration, like the Oval Room, which reopened to the public in 2011.

So, if over the years no major changes have been made to the fittings and all has been kept intact, which avenues is this museum exploring to be able to call itself contemporary? The museum director indicates

two areas in which they are working to keep in line with the needs and expectations of today's visitors: technology and public programming.

First of all, there is the use of technology. If fossils and scientific instruments are displayed exactly as they were in the 1780s with their original labels, on the Internet 3D models allow a closer look, taking them apart and understanding their functioning. In the museum, audio guides provide a comment for each specimen, and sometimes not only a comment, but a whole story resulting from the thorough and in-depth research the museum has conducted on its collections in recent years. "After entering the museum, nearly every object was stored with the documentation which accompanied it. Thousands of invoices and letters – not to mention the minutes of many, many meetings – testify to the commitment and passion of the museum's staff and board. Together, collections and archives provide us with unique opportunities for a detailed reconstruction of the interests and tastes of those times. For over the years, while other eighteenth-century universal collections were broken up throughout Europe, Teylers Museum consistently maintained the coherence between the arts and sciences."⁴

And it is from this research that many stories have been reconstructed and made available to the public on the museum website: the visit paid to the museum by Napoleon in October 1811; the items acquired after De Saussure's first expedition to the tip of the Mont Blanc in 1787; the design of the first fan to improve air

circulation and ventilation in buildings, and so on. And if the website is important, so are other digital means of communication like Twitter, Facebook, blogs and the co-operation of the museums with Wikipedia.

The history behind the objects and their acquisition is also shown when staging an exhibition. Exhibitions and public programming is certainly something on which the museum relies to keep the public interested. Every year three different exhibitions are staged: on art, on natural history and on cultural history, each targeting a different public. The exhibition organised during the summer is addressed to families and presented with a programme of events for that specific target group.

When planning and designing an exhibition, special attention is given to linking the objects to contemporary issues. With this policy, the museum tries to give to today's objects the same relevance they had in the past so that the public can easily relate to them. For example, in an exhibition about Romantic paintings, the paintings themselves were associated with romantic ballads sung by contemporary popular singers to find signs of escapism. In another project, about 'human zoos' in the 19th century, modern works of art by artists from India, Africa, America, Aboriginal Australia, etc. (the same countries of the peoples featuring in the exhibition) were included in the show to avoid a one-sided narration, expressing only the European perspective. Some very popular television programmes about changing houses in the Netherlands and third world countries accompanied the exhibition.

⁴ M. Scharloo (ed.), *Teylers Museum. A journey in time*, 2010, p. 8.

In addition, during the summer holidays and in cooperation with local secondary schools, youngsters aged 16-17 conduct physics labs for younger children in the educational pavilion, an extension to the museum built in 1996. Efforts are made to organise social activities in the museum and make it a meeting place especially for families and older people.

This line of action seems to yield good results, with visitors ranging between 100,000 and 120,000 a year with a peak of 147,000 in 2012 (Haarlem has a population of 150,000) with 40% of the museum's income being earned by the museum itself, regardless of a 20% budgetary cut in the Government's subventions since 2009.

So, what is the Teylers' recipe in short? Original buildings, rooms and fittings kept intact but restored and well taken care of, and especially researched for interesting stories about the objects to emerge

and be shared with the public via the Internet (public access to the collections on line has increased after the implementation of the new website); a varied and interesting public programme, but first and most of all a clear profile. And the profile of this museum, which in 2012 submitted papers to be included in the UNESCO World Heritage List, is summed up in its mission:

"In perpetuation of the ideals of the Enlightenment, Teylers Museum wishes to serve society by stimulating people to discover the world for themselves and to find pleasure in art and science".

To do so, the museum wishes to encourage the public to visit what is the world's best preserved eighteenth-century public knowledge institute for the arts and sciences.

The fittings and presentation of objects in the historic buildings are designed to provide a historically accurate experience, and also to transfer knowledge".

<http://www.teylersmuseum.eu/>



"A worksite of ideas, perceptions and proposals": embracing change at the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens

Sofia Tsilidou

Founded as early as 1914 but inaugurated in 1930, when it moved to its permanent premises¹, the Byzantine and Christian Museum in Athens is a major state-owned museum operating as an autonomous administrative unit under the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, Culture and Sports. The BCM holds collections of national importance comprising over 30,000 objects, such as icons, sculptures, ceramics, textiles, manuscripts and printed books, mosaics and wall-paintings, which span the period from the 3rd century A.D. to the 20th century and originate from all over Greece, as well as from the wider Balkan peninsula, Asia Minor and other areas which were once part of the Byzantine Empire. Being one of the oldest national museums in Greece with almost 100 years of history and heavily dependent on state policy and funding, the BCM has entered the 21st century with a strong and clearly expressed commitment to changing its social profile and transforming itself into "a worksite of ideas, perceptions and proposals", "a vibrant cultural and educational centre open and responsive to challenges in contemporary society"². After the completion of renovation work which lasted

from the beginning of the 1980s through to the end of the 1990s, adding an underground extension of 13,000 square meters to the museum space, the BCM embarked on a conscious and systematic effort to reorganise itself at all levels with a view to becoming more accessible, more relevant and inclusive. This effort, which continues unabated today, has become predominantly manifest in areas such as exhibitions, educational and communication policy and the provision of visitor services.

The first part of a major redisplay project was completed in the summer of 2004 just before the Athens Olympics, while the remaining new galleries reopened to the public in 2010. In redesigning its permanent exhibition galleries, the museum clearly shifted away from previously dominant exhibition practices, placing the emphasis on the aesthetic value or confined within the limits of a uniform national narrative, and rather adopted a fresh and more visitor-friendly interpretative approach. In parallel to the permanent display, the museum has been very keen to put on temporary shows, including exhibitions of modern and contemporary art such as, for instance,

¹ The museum is housed in the so-called 'Villa Ilissia', a complex located in the city centre and built in the mid-19th century in the Neo-Renaissance architectural style for the Duchess of Plaisance. After her death, it was granted to the Greek state and was later modified to house the museum.

² In the words of its former director, Demetrios Konstantios, who managed the museum from 1999 until his death in 2010.



the 'Warhol/Icon' exhibition centred on the theme of worship, a trend gaining ground among public archeological museums lately. It also runs a changing programme of free events to stimulate visitors. Interestingly enough, its number of visitors has doubled since 2009. Yet, in the absence of a comprehensive and consistent approach to data collection, the museum still misses detailed and updated information on the profile, needs and experiences of both its visitors and non-visitors. This has not prevented the museum from showing a great and ongoing commitment to forging close bonds with previously unengaged audiences including various vulnerable groups. From 2000 onwards, the BCM has actively sought to initiate collaboration with ethnic minorities, senior care homes, schools or associations of people with disabilities, mental health institutions, rehabilitation centres and other stakeholders and to develop activities adapted to the special needs of the relevant social groups.

In this context, the BCM has recently sought to

reach out to Greek Roma communities and design projects aimed at combating discrimination and social exclusion faced by Roma. As part of its involvement in the European project 'Roma Routes', the museum designed educational activities for groups of children, youth or adult Roma to engage them with its permanent and temporary exhibitions. In addition, a series of events (exhibitions, film shows, discussions etc.) took place at the museum, in which members of the Roma communities were invited to participate as co-curators or co-organisers. Pilot training activities for young Roma to act as cultural mediators between the museum and the communities were also carried out. A follow-up project, jointly developed with the Hellenic Film Centre, is currently under way to sustain and extend outcomes at national level.

It is also worth including details of the design of an haptic route for blind and visually impaired visitors through the museum's permanent exhibition - the first of its kind applied in Greece (in Greek) at an archaeological museum, making use of original objects with Braille and sound labels.

The on-line version of the BCM is under way: having already digitalised 80% of its collection, the museum is now working to develop virtual thematic exhibitions, learning resources, a self-guided walking tour mobile app which users will be able to download or use live on site, Web 2.0 apps to support social networking, as well as web based applications for museum management (e.g. e-ticketing).

In the 21st c., the BCM has learned how to critically reappraise its practices and reshape itself into a more extrovert, transparent and open to change institution. Keeping this learning process open and ongoing will be crucial in determining its future.

<http://www.byzantinemuseum.gr/en/>

A Cultural Quarter reflecting urban renewal: how a city can revitalise itself through museums

Marie Bourke

Waterford city's new Medieval Museum, the first in Ireland, is located at the heart of the historic city centre in an area known as the Viking Triangle, where the Viking founders of the city first settled. The city is undergoing a museum-led urban regeneration project prior to celebrating in 2014 the 1100th anniversary of its foundation. The Medieval Museum is the last of three museums that are part of the revitalisation and regeneration of the neglected core of the city. Located to the rear of the 18th century Church of Ireland Cathedral, the museum is on a triangular site bordered by the 18th century City Hall and former 18th century Deanery building with a 13th century Choristers' Hall below ground. In the words of the Director, Eamonn McEneaney "It was essential to retain the surrounding views that give access to the Cathedral and Bishop's Palace".

The Medieval Museum is part of a city museum, 'Waterford Museum of Treasures', comprising three museums aligned in chronological order to allow visitors to explore 1100 years of Waterford's history in sequence, each one architecturally linked to the material on display. *Reginald's Tower* houses the

treasures of Viking Waterford.¹ The *Medieval Museum*, built over the 13th century Choristers' Hall and 15th century Mayor's Wine Vault, houses treasures from the Anglo-Norman invasion of 1170 to the 17th century. The *Bishop's Palace Museum*, built in 1743 designed by Richard Castle, is an authentic 18th century Bishop's grand residence housing 18th, 19th and 20th century treasures of Waterford.

The Museum opened in 2013, designed by Rupert Maddock and his Waterford City Council team at a cost of €5.5m, forming an enlightened project of an economic downturn that was built on time on budget. The architects consulted with museum staff in selecting the building materials: pale yellow oolitic limestone that was sourced in the Dundry quarries near Bristol in England, drawing on the medieval builders of the Choristers' Hall, who used Dundry stone to dress that building.² The exterior forms a sweeping stepped façade as its yellow stone contrasts with the grey surroundings, its gable end featuring a sculpture inspired by a 13th century belt mount from the collection.³ McEneaney says, "the appearance of the museum exterior forms a metaphor for the Middle Ages

¹ Reginald's Tower is a 12th century mural tower named after the Viking founder of the city.

² The pale yellow stone contrasts with the grey limestone of the surrounding 18th century buildings.

³ Created by Stephen Burke, the sculpture is inspired by a 13th century bronze belt mount from the collection.

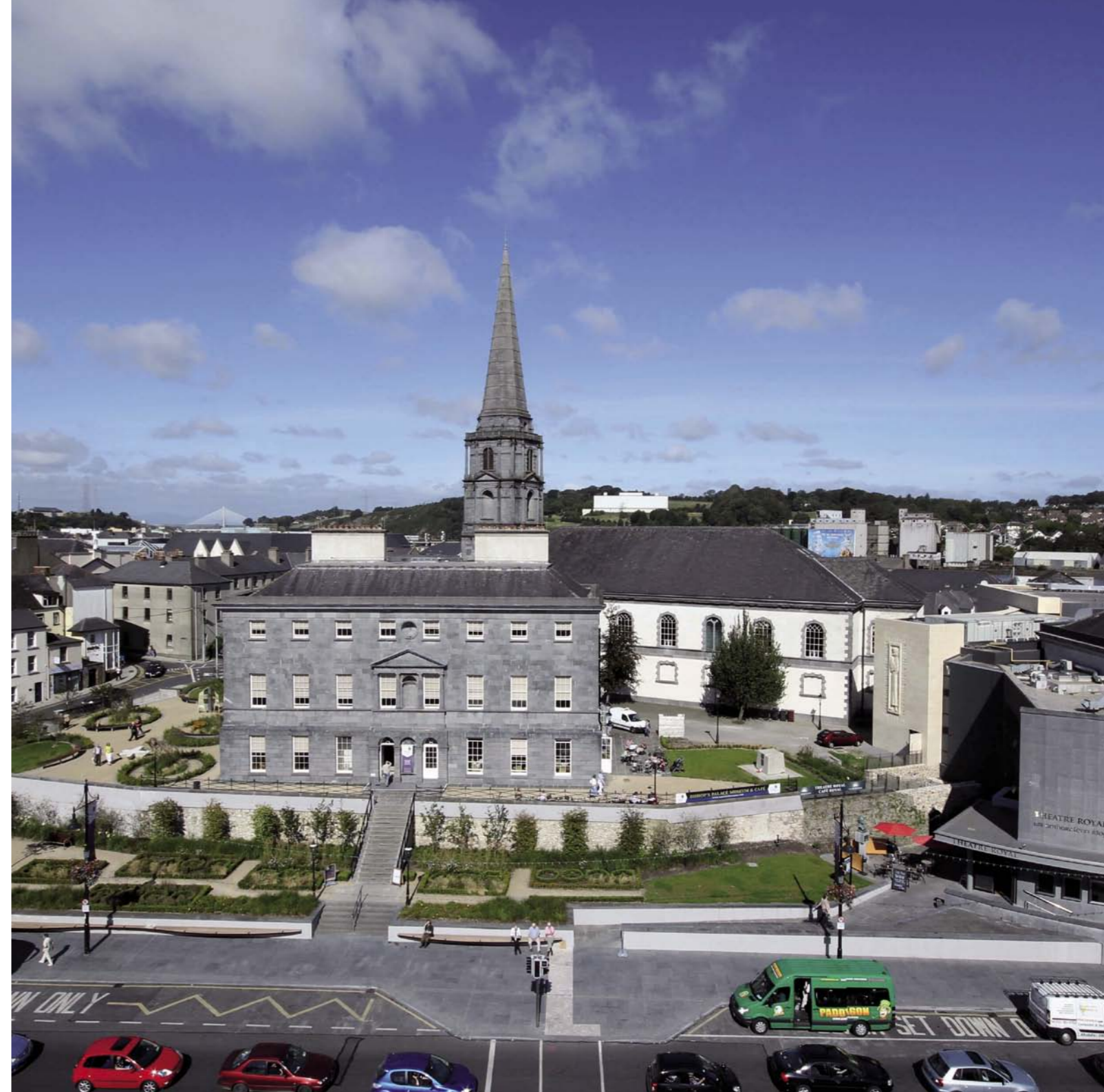
as it pushes the Medieval Museum out into an 18th environment". The interior surfaces are of oak panel combined with smooth grey raw concrete and rough blocks of stone.

Key features of the new Museum include a glazed panel on the pavement outside providing a view of the Choristers' Hall wall underneath, and a welcoming entrance with an audiovisual display screened on its glass door, enabling visitors to view the collections inside. At the ground floor reception (the shop located close by) visitors are offered an audio guide or conducted tour. The tour brings visitors down the 13th century spiral stairs to the Choristers' Hall and Wine Vault (ideal for small receptions), which has a small display of medieval treasures. To the rear of the Hall, is a multi-purpose area with underfloor heating that is used by school groups for picnic lunches, and in the evenings for lectures, concerts (Sunday monthly music recitals), and films (the audiovisual presentation chronicles archaeological excavations undertaken prior to building the museum). Taking the lift to the top floor, visitors access the first gallery, which deals with the history of the port city and its trade. It is dominated by the 1275 Charter Roll and portraits of five English kings, just as wooden carvings, archaeological and historic objects bring the stories to life. On the first floor is the ecclesiastical story of the city, where wooden sculptures of saints and the *Madonna Lactans* are carefully arranged, together with models of the city at various dates, forming a colourful interactive learning space that is engaging for children and families. The cloth-of-gold vestments are displayed in a dedicated gallery, dramatically lit with the vestments suspended in glass cases, allowing the visitor to study the 'paintings in silk' formed of Florentine cloth and Flemish

embroidered scenes from the life of Jesus and the Virgin.

The collections range from the 1373 Great Charter Roll of Waterford, viewed by Queen Elizabeth on her 2011 visit to Ireland, and the magnificent 15th century exquisitely embroidered cloth-of-gold vestments, to domestic objects such as coins, pins and archery material, illuminated manuscripts and church plate. The majority of the collections are owned by Waterford City Council, forming one of the best medieval collections in Ireland. The vestments are loaned by the Bishop of Waterford (both Anglican and Catholic churches have been generous in lending objects), and a number of items are lent by private collectors.

Visitor services include, panels with well-written information, labels in four languages, digital aids and six three-dimensional scale models of the medieval city. Both the Medieval Museum and Bishop's Palace are accessible to people with disabilities (the website is nearing completion). The admission charge is €5 (a €10 ticket gives access to all three venues with children accompanied by adults free), the Bishop's Palace and Medieval Museum are open seven days a week, while the Bishop's Palace restaurant caters for all three museums. These sites are popular with schools because of the team of re-enactors, who provide imaginative tours that help to explain the cultural concept, featuring key figures, such as Mayor Wyse in the Medieval Museum, and Mrs Rickards, a gossipy housekeeper, who has just returned from the public hanging of a man found guilty of murdering the head gardener at the Bishop's Palace. Children and families love the colourfully designed displays with tactile objects, digital access to information and short films



about the Charter Roll and story of the vestments that were hidden underground for 123 years.

Waterford City Council has shown great foresight in investing in cultural facilities, which form a model of good practice and cultural tourism for other cities and towns to emulate. Considerable thought and planning went into developing this cultural quarter (McEneaney + Rupert Maddock conceived the Viking Triangle project), with its primary aim of urban regeneration, having been funded by Fáilte Ireland (the Irish tourism development agency) and Waterford City Council. The quaysides form part of this urban renewal, as they have been adapted to enable craft to sail into the centre of Waterford and gain access to the museums within minutes. It is obvious how much visitors enjoy having

these cultural attractions in the Viking Triangle so easily accessible: Christ Church Cathedral, Theatre Royal, City Hall, craft design studios, Waterford City Archives, House of Waterford Crystal and Waterford Municipal Art Collection.⁴ Figures for the three museums are currently 60,000 per annum. However, with Irish tourist figures on the rise it is easy to see how they will achieve their aim of 100,000-120,000 visitors. In the words of the energetic Director, Eamonn McEneaney, “Waterford’s Viking Triangle cultural quarter, with its architectural heritage and high quality museums that are attracting visitors and enriching the local economy, is also preserving the historic city core and injecting life into it”. This new museum is addressing many of the key trends emerging in museums of the 21st century. <http://waterfordtreasures.com/medieval-museum/>



⁴ The Municipal Art Collection is located in a Victorian church in Greyfriars.

WORKING GROUP ‘NEW TRENDS IN MUSEUMS OF THE 21ST CENTURY’

SURVEY 2012 ‘Key Trends in Museums’¹

Caoilte O’Mahony

INTRODUCTION

The Learning Museum Network Project/LEM, Working Group ‘New trends in the museums of the 21st Century’ first undertook a pilot survey, *Key Trends in Museums of the Future*, in 2011 to test the response of European museums to a number of questions: (1) what activities in the museum were declining (2) what events and activities in the museum were continuing-ongoing, and (3) what were the key new trends in museums. Following the gathering of the results of the pilot survey and discussion in 2011, it was decided that there was an urgent need to compile a revised updated Survey and to make it available to museums online. This was to facilitate a greater response to the Survey, to make it more accessible and to enable the gathering of information in a more systematic form. The Working Group discussed the initial findings at the NEMO

annual meeting in Dublin in November 2012 in order to alert the sector to future trends and to help the Working Group in the planning of future research. A summary of the findings of this Pilot Survey 2011 can be found in the National Gallery of Ireland’s proceedings of the Roundtable & Symposium, published in 2012. www.nationalgallery.ie/en/Learning/Lifelong_Learning/Proceedings.aspx

A year after the pilot survey had been undertaken, the main Survey 2012 was created, *Key Trends in Museums of the Future* and disseminated online, using the online survey tool SurveyMonkey. The Survey 2012 included respondents from the pilot survey and museum/collection based stakeholders in Europe and further afield and it was available to everyone from 1 July 2012 to 31 October 2012 – a four month period.

¹ The Pilot Survey was undertaken by Caoilte O’Mahony on behalf of the LEM Working Group ‘New Trends in Museums of the 21st Century’. Caoilte O’Mahony assisted in the organization of the Symposium 2011 and Round Table 2012 (both supported by LEM and attended by members of the Working Group), acting as a rapporteur at both events. When the Working Group decided to look for a more widespread response to the revised Survey, Caoilte was requested to take charge of sourcing and placing the Survey 2012 on an online system, SurveyMonkey, to monitor the level of response to the Survey (so that regular reminders could be sent by members of the Working Group); through to closure of the survey following a 4 month period in 2012. In conclusion, he was asked to chart the outcomes of Survey 2012 in 2013.

The main Survey 2012 included additional areas that related to volunteering, funding, and collections management. This summary report is accompanied by the questionnaire together with a listing of all the institutions surveyed.

The LEM Working Group 'New trends in the museums of the 21st Century' hope that this report will stimulate further discussion and debate about the future of the sector and encourage a continued analysis of evolving trends in museums, both on a European and International level.

PILOT SURVEY 2011

This summary highlights some of the key issues that emanated from the 2011 pilot survey. A combination of quantitative and qualitative questions was asked in the questionnaire in order to complement the complexity and diversity of the international museum sector. Directors, curators, conservators, heads of collections, collections managers, registrars, central museum service providers, store managers, educators, librarians and interns were among those museum and gallery professionals who returned completed questionnaires in 2011.

The activity not in use by the vast majority of respondents was audio guides. Few respondents used hand on exhibits in their institutions in 2011. The main reasons given for the decline in these activities were funding restrictions and reduced numbers of staff. Others cited the complicated transition to using audio guides and similar digital devices as a barrier that is preventing their use.

The activities that showed the greatest levels of growth in popularity in 2011 were exhibitions and

the use of social media, with close to two thirds of all respondents citing these activities. The museum activities, events or programmes that continued to be most essential in engaging the public with respondents' collections were exhibitions, the use of different social media and outreach activities. In contrast, a third of all respondents cited audio guides and/or handsets as being of little importance by rating this activity between 8 and 10 on the same scale.

This pilot survey also sought to collect qualitative data in order for respondents to comment on and provide a further context and reason for their replies. From this data, supplementary areas of focus for the Survey 2012 were identified in this data. These included Temporary/ Permanent Exhibitions; Collections and the ways that museums are collecting (passively or actively); Visitor numbers; Development: Fundraising and sponsorship (Funding Streams); Volunteers and Signs of Economic Distress.

SURVEY 2012

Summary of key findings:

- (No. 1) Replies to the questionnaire were received from 185 respondents, from Europe (north and south), North America, South America and Asia.
- (No. 2 & 3) The area showing the greatest level of decline was conducted tours and talks/lectures and the main reason for this decline was (a) lack of funding and budget cuts listed by 44.8% of respondents; (b) a reduction in staff listed by 34.8% of respondents as the primary cause of the decline in these activities. Social media and the use of digital interactive/displays showed the lowest level of decline. It is important to note that audio guides are

being listed by a huge 94% as not in use any more – a very clear trend.

- (No. 4) The area of greatest development in museum facilities was new technologies. 64.4% of all respondents identified social media as the activity that showed the greatest increase and largest growth in popularity in their institution. Technology was also seen to impact across the institution, notably in the area of documenting the collection and research services. Next to that, the greatest growth area was listed by 43% as exhibitions, workshops, evening events/late opening – clear key trends.
- (No. 5) 75.8% of respondents identified exhibitions/ displays as being one of the most essential ways of continuing to engage the public, with a number noting exhibitions being important in developing partnerships with other museums in order to mount new shows. Next to that, conducted tours were identified by 64% of respondents as being essential to engage the public, followed by 58% noting social media, 54/52% listing workshops & talks/lectures and 50% listing evening events/late openings – this accords with the response to No 4 – these are clear key trends.
- (No. 6) The main sources of funding were listed as: 83% government; 41% entry charge; 39/8% donations and fundraising and 34% private events/ hire of spaces. Other funding sources listed included self-financing operations e.g. commercial activities and corporate events; EU sponsorship; University funding; and Research Grants.
- (No. 7) The proportion of volunteer activity in museums was highest 35% in community relations;

34% fundraising/special events; 31% in visitor services/behind the scenes; and 28% on public programming.

- (No. 8 & 9) Re collections: while 58% listed core funding as the barrier to collecting, 56% listed lack of space; 51% noted there was no change in the demand for/and access to the collection; while 44% noted there was increased demand.
- (No. 10) A summary of the range of 'new' museum ideas/practices suggested
Social media, greater use of ipads, interactives etc in the museum. More exhibitions, events/ activities in the museum. Online availability of collections; Digital/ Multimedia/ Interactive exhibits, potential ability of curators to communicate more with visitors on website. Environmental concerns and sustainability.
- (No. 11) Additional points on declining trends/ ongoing trends, key 'new trends'
A cross section to somewhat personalised views listed under this question below.

LEM Survey 2012

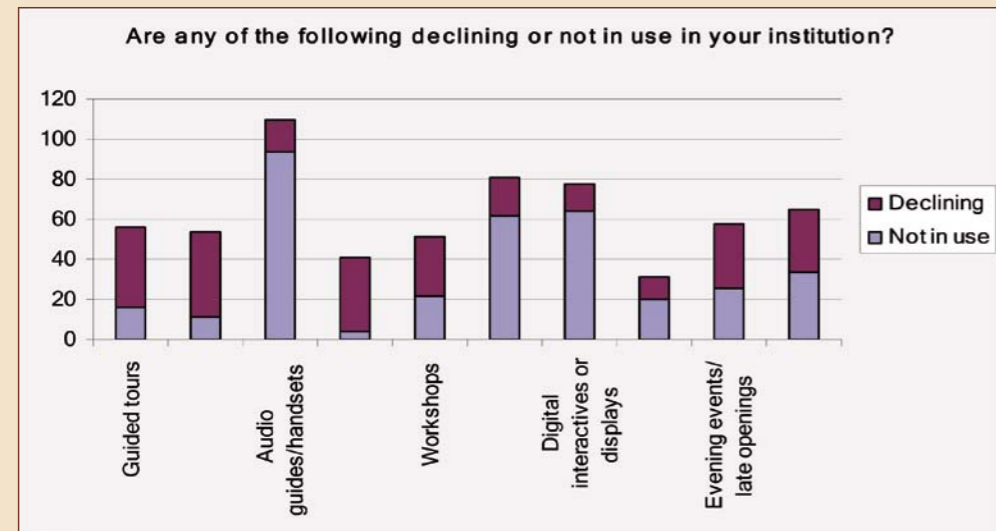
Question 1

General information was provided by each respondent.

This included contact name, Institution, job title, country, and email address.

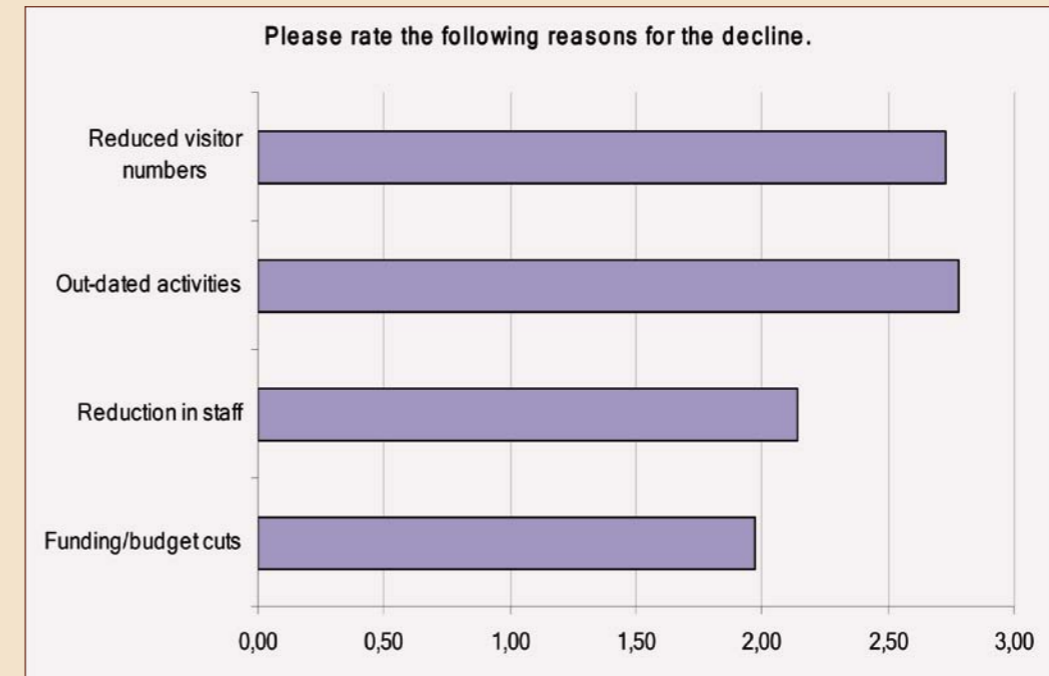
Question 2

Are any of the following declining or not in use in your institution?			
Answer Options	Declining	Not in use	Response Count
Guided tours	40	16	56
Lectures/talks	43	11	54
Audio guides/handsets	16	94	110
Exhibitions	37	4	41
Workshops	29	22	51
Hands-on exhibits	19	62	81
Digital interactives or displays	14	64	78
Social media	11	20	31
Evening events/ late openings	32	26	58
Outreach/access activities	31	34	65
	<i>answered question</i>		172
	<i>skipped question</i>		16



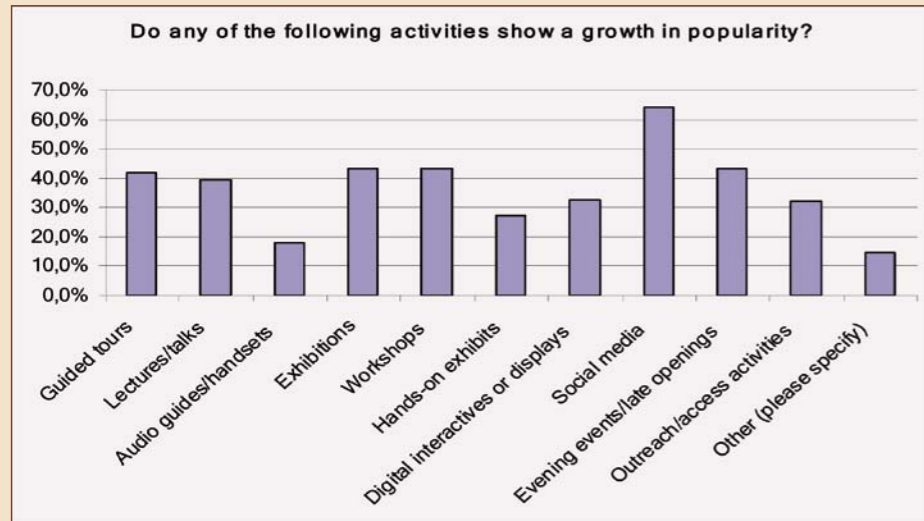
Question 3

Please rate the following reasons for the decline.						
	Main reason	Important reason	Not so important	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
Funding/budget cuts	44.8% (56)	28.8% (36)	11.2% (14)	15.2% (19)	1.97	125
Reduction in staff	33.0% (38)	34.8% (40)	17.4% (20)	14.8% (17)	2.14	115
Out-dated activities	15.5% (16)	23.3% (24)	29.1% (30)	32.0% (33)	2.78	103
Reduced visitor numbers	17.0% (17)	28.0% (28)	20.0% (20)	35.0% (35)	2.73	100
Other (please specify)						40
answered question						142
skipped question						46



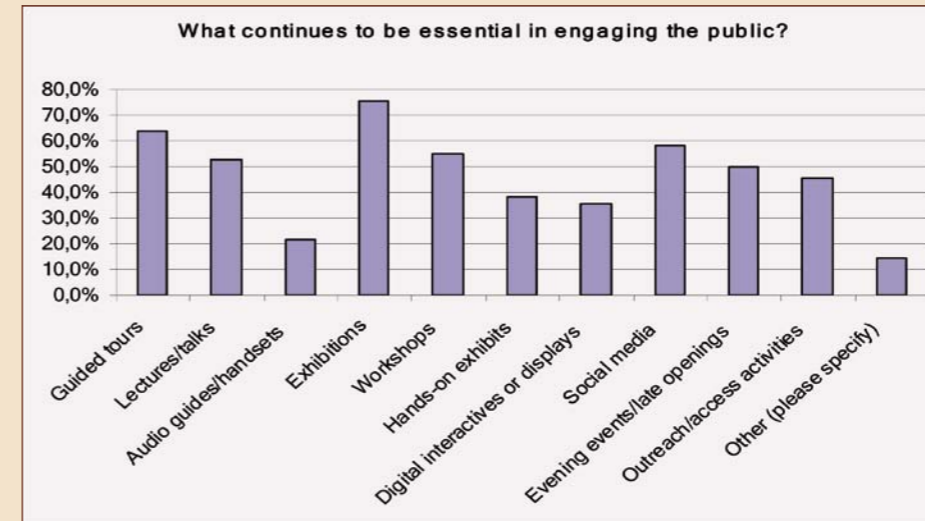
Question 4

Do any of the following activities show a growth in popularity?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Guided tours		41.7%	75
Lectures/talks		39.4%	71
Audio guides/handsets		17.8%	32
Exhibitions		43.3%	78
Workshops		43.3%	78
Hands-on exhibits		27.2%	49
Digital interactives or displays		32.8%	59
Social media		64.4%	116
Evening events/late openings		43.3%	78
Outreach/access activities		32.2%	58
Other (please specify)		14.4%	26
answered question			180
skipped question			8



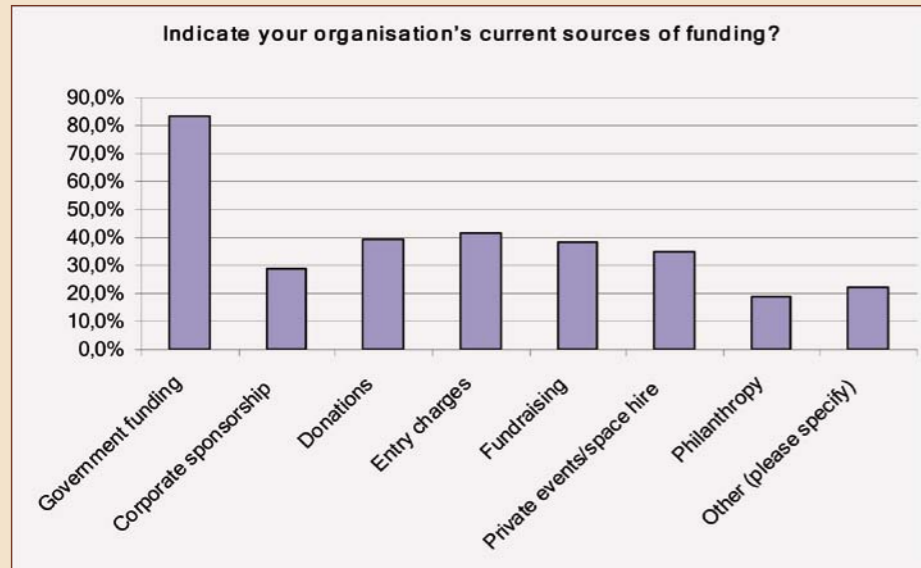
Question 5

What continues to be essential in engaging the public?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Guided tours		64.0%	119
Lectures/talks		52.7%	98
Audio guides/handsets		21.5%	40
Exhibitions		75.8%	141
Workshops		54.8%	102
Hands-on exhibits		38.2%	71
Digital interactives or displays		35.5%	66
Social media		58.1%	108
Evening events/late openings		50.0%	93
Outreach/access activities		45.7%	85
Other (please specify)		14.5%	27
answered question			186
skipped question			2



Question 6

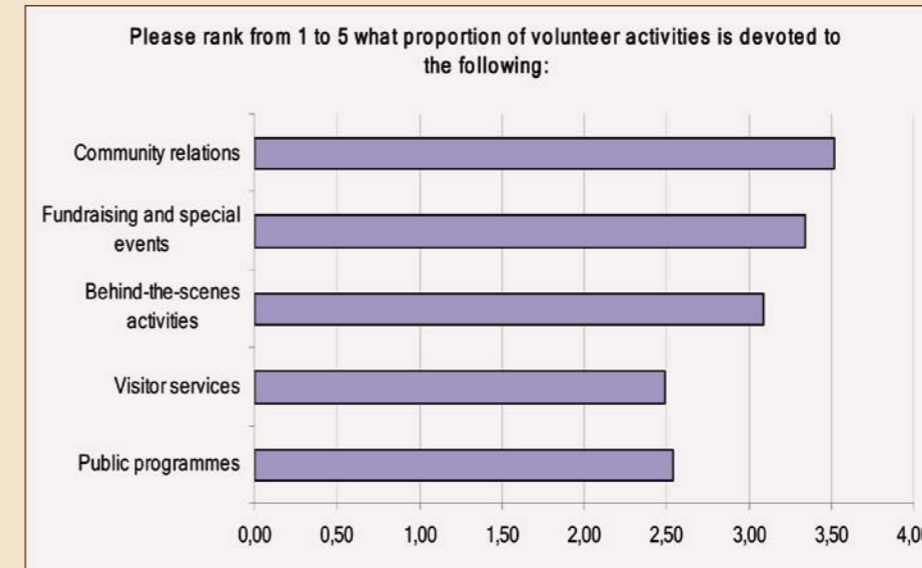
Indicate your organisation's current sources of funding?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Government funding		83.3%	155
Corporate sponsorship		29.0%	54
Donations		39.2%	73
Entry charges		41.4%	77
Fundraising		38.2%	71
Private events/space hire		34.9%	65
Philanthropy		18.8%	35
Other (please specify)		22.0%	41
answered question			186
skipped question			2



Other sources of funding identified by respondents included self-financing operations such as commercial activities and corporate events; EU sponsorship; University funding; and Research Grants.

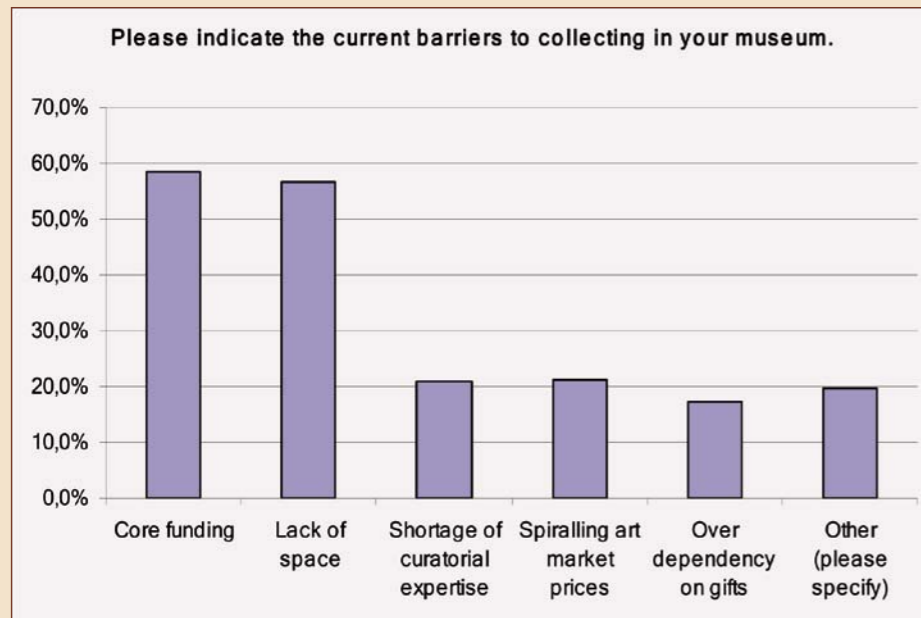
Question 7

Please rank from 1 to 5 what proportion of volunteer activities is devoted to the following:							
	1	2	3	4	5	Rating Average	Response Count
Public programmes	25.0% (41)	28.7% (47)	23.2% (38)	14.0% (23)	9.1% (15)	2.54	164
Visitor services	31.9% (52)	24.5% (40)	19.0% (31)	11.7% (19)	12.9% (21)	2.49	163
Behind-the-scenes activities	12.2% (20)	20.1% (33)	31.1% (51)	19.5% (32)	17.1% (28)	3.09	164
Fundraising and special events	19.5% (32)	11.0% (18)	10.4% (17)	34.1% (56)	25.0% (41)	3.34	164
Community relations	11.6% (19)	15.9% (26)	16.5% (27)	20.7% (34)	35.4% (58)	3.52	164
answered question							164
skipped question							24



Question 8

Please indicate the current barriers to collecting in your museum.			Response Percent	Response Count
Core funding			58.4%	104
Lack of space			56.7%	101
Shortage of curatorial expertise			20.8%	37
Spiralling art market prices			21.3%	38
Over dependency on gifts			17.4%	31
Other (please specify)			19.7%	35
answered question				178
skipped question				10



Other responses included a lack of interest; other focuses; disagreement over what to collect; a need to de-accession; and limited availability of suitable objects.

Question 9

Has demand for use of/access to the collections changed?			Response Percent	Response Count
Increased			44.9%	80
Decreased			3.9%	7
No change			51.1%	91
If it has changed, please explain.				60
answered question				178
skipped question				10

A selection of explanations for this change:

- Increasing demand for the collections online, and for the permanent collections to rotate.
- Increasing requests for short term displays and in focus shows.
- The museum participates in a greater number of temporary exhibitions.
- Loans for exhibitions abroad have increased.
- The public has been made aware that they can ask to see collections which are in store by appointment - this has proved increasingly popular in all sectors.
- More students making use of the collection for research and study purposes (we are a university museum).
- More lending to other museums/exhibitions.
- Digitisation has helped us in being seen.
- As soon as the public is aware of what can be seen, they want to see it.
- Increased demand from the research sector.
- Worldwide increasing interest in media art.
- Increased content online has generated increased awareness and therefore demand.
- More programmes (school programmes and vacation programmes) for children and one day events with specific topics.
- We are developing communication campaigns and the number of visitors is increasing.
- We have been focusing far more on devising events and workshops which are related to our permanent collections.
- Our attendance has never been driven by interest in our permanent collection-more by changing exhibitions, public programs, and our permanent hands-on children's and family destination.

Question 10

What “new” museum ideas/activities/practices are developing?

- *Social media, Art events in the premises of the museum, online availability of material, Digital/Multimedia/Interactive exhibits.*
- *Outreach, personalised museums, participation, focus on the social Space of the exhibition.*
- *Virtual 3D theatre. Concerts and poetry evenings and events.*
- *Trying to engage with international visitors by creating welcome cards in different languages; more arts for health activities; bringing new technology into gallery e.g. using iPads on tours.*
- *Museums’ future lies on the internet. The relationship between institutions and their audiences would be transformed by the internet. Museums would become more like multimedia organisations. The possibility for a greater level of communication between curators and visitors is the challenge now.*
- *We have a new night-time programme. Two telescopes are used (40 and 80 cm in diameter) for sky object observation.*
- *Exhibitions with new artists and new partnerships with other museums.*
- *New curriculum linked school and public programmes have been designed.*
- *Increase of outreach programmes and participation - museum as a vivid ‘forum’. New target groups: ‘silver ager’ 50+ and people with immigration background. New activities: Social media.*
- *Growing environmental sustainability agenda in programming (revision of traditional natural history) and social media.*
- *We have a new collections resource centre, similar to the Ulster Museum and various other museums, this will increase access to the collections and improve collections management, through a centralised storage facility supported by a relational collections management database, ultimately aimed at creating an online catalogue. This will make research easier and allow interested parties to visit by appointment and view material we cannot afford to display in traditional exhibitions.*
- *More outreach internet activities: Wiki - apps. We would like to implement more interactive features in the exhibits.*
- *Social/on-line media interactions Museum interactions and activities for young professionals.*
- *First of all the use of social media and new technologies is developing museums, and secondly museums in the 21st century should become educational centres, here they can use life long learning elements.*
- *New technologies are shaping the museum’s practices; however, the real, long-term effects are in flux.*

Question 11

Is there anything you wish to add on the subject of declining trends, ongoing trends, or key “new” trends in museums?

- *Decline in tourism impacts on numbers. Our museum is new and it is still evolving its modus operandi.*
- *Trust is declining – that is more serious than anything else.*

- *The museum of digital screens and heavily curated experience feels very old fashioned (ironically)... Technology does not appear to be capable of surpassing the genuine attraction we see in the youngest visitors for physical objects whose stories are told well by a human being.*
- *New media seem to offer an exciting new way of promoting interest in museums and museum objects, particularly in exploring the diversity of different meanings objects can have. Social media seem set to take off in a big way in museums, allowing people to share objects and interpretation in a more creative way.*
- *Decline in interest in the visit to the museum is not only a result of the poor economic situation (lot of people are out of work), but also of a bad school system that does not encourage students to visit museums.*
- *There has been an increase in Irish families and tourists taking part in our free museum public programme and a decrease in school bookings, due to lack of teaching staff and funding for transport.*
- *In Natural History, there seems to be a worrying trend toward use of interactive and digital displays, which require special maintenance, and impose upon the atmosphere of the museum. Audio guides are excellent, particularly those in the Frick Collection and The Metropolitan Museum in New York.*
- *It is difficult for a private museum to compete with the public sector in advertising, due to cost, and therefore numbers through the door. Its difficult to enthuse teachers who know little about the subject matter of early technology and its modern consequences, to bring their classes to the Steam Museum.*
- *The rise of individual visitors, who organise trips on their own rather than using travel agencies. This leads to a different focus for visitor information, guided tours, and interactives.*
- *Severe lack of government funding, and moratorium on recruitment.*
- *Importance of sustainability - all three legs of a stool - environmental, economic and social; increased use of volunteers; entrepreneurship; importance of reducing dependence on public funding.*

Survey 2012 Key Trends in Museums of the Future

This survey aims at identifying new trends in museums. Could you take a few seconds to complete it, listing areas of the museum operation that are (a) declining (b) activities that are ongoing (c) any 'new trends' emerging. See www.lemproject.eu for further information on this project.

1. Please supply us with the following contact information:

Name:

Institution:

Job title:

Country:

Email address:

2. Are any of the following declining or not in use in your institution?

	Declining	Not in use
Guided tours	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lectures/talks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Audio guides/handsets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Exhibitions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Workshops	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hands-on exhibits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Digital interactives or displays	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Evening events/ late openings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Outreach/access activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Please rate the following reasons for the decline.

	Main reason	Important reason	Not so important	N/A
Funding/budget cuts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reduction in staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Out-dated activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reduced visitor numbers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

4. Do any of the following activities show a growth in popularity?

Guided tours

Lectures/talks

Audio guides/handsets

Exhibitions

Workshops

Hands-on exhibits

Digital interactives or displays

Social media

Evening events/late openings

Outreach/access activities

Other (please specify)

5. What continues to be essential in engaging the public?

Guided tours

Lectures/talks

Audio guides/handsets

Exhibitions

Workshops

Hands-on exhibits

Digital interactives or displays

Social media

Evening events/late openings

Outreach/access activities

Other (please specify)

6. Indicate your organisation's current sources of funding?

- Government funding
- Corporate sponsorship
- Donations
- Entry charges
- Fundraising
- Private events/space hire
- Philanthropy
- Other (please specify)

7. Please rank from 1 to 5 what proportion of volunteer activities is devoted to the following:

<input type="text"/>	Public programmes
<input type="text"/>	Visitor services
<input type="text"/>	Behind-the-scenes activities
<input type="text"/>	Fundraising and special events
<input type="text"/>	Community relations

8. Please indicate the current barriers to collecting in your museum.

- Core funding
- Lack of space
- Shortage of curatorial expertise
- Spiralling art market prices
- Over dependency on gifts
- Other (please specify)

9. Has demand for use of/access to the collections changed?

- Increased
- Decreased
- No change

If it has changed, please explain.

10. What 'new' museum ideas/activities/practices are developing?

11. Is there anything you wish to add on the subject of declining trends, ongoing trends, or key 'new' trends in museums?



List of Museums Surveyed Includes: 2011 Pilot Survey & 2012 Main Survey – many museums took part in both	
DW international Branch office in Armenia, Yerevan	Armenia
National Gallery of Armenia, Yerevan	Armenia
South Australian Museum, Adelaide	Australia
Heide Museum of Modern Art, Bulleen	Australia
Historic Houses Trust of NSW, Sydney	Australia
Royal Art Academy, Antwerp	Austria
Museum of Natural Sciences, Brussels	Belgium
Université de Liège, Liège	Belgium
Oberösterreichische Landesmuseen, Linz	Belgium
Memorial de Sergipe, Aracaju	Brazil
Associação Brasileira de Odontologia, Porto Alegre	Brazil
Montreal Science Centre, Montreal	Canada
Musée du ski des Laurentides, Montreal	Canada
New Westminster Museum and Archives, New Westminster	Canada
Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto	Canada
Centre d'exposition de Val-David, Val-David	Canada
Shaanxi History Museum, Xi'an	China
Croatian History Museum, Zagreb	Croatia
Croatian Museum of Naïve Art, Zagreb	Croatia
Croatian Natural History Museum, Zagreb	Croatia
Ethnographic museum, Zagreb	Croatia
Zagreb City Museum, Zagreb	Croatia
Department of Antiquities, Nicosia	Cyprus
The Leventis Municipal Museum of Nicosia, Nicosia	Cyprus
Technical Museum, Brno	Czech Republic
Historiens Hus - Ringsted Museum, Ringsted	Denmark
Randers Kunstmuseum, Randers	Denmark
Museum Salling, Skive	Denmark
Museo Interactivo de Ciencia, Quito Canton	Ecuador
Tallinna Linnamuuseum, Tallinn	Estonia
Bristol Museums, Galleries and Archives, Bristol	England
Weald and Downland Open Air Museum, Chichester	England

Royal Armouries, Fareham	England
Guildford Heritage, Guilford	England
Horniman Museum & Gardens, London	England
London Transport Museum, London	England
National Trust, London	England
Royal Academy of Arts, London	England
Manchester City Galleries, Manchester	England
The Manchester Museum, Manchester	England
Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester	England
Penlee House Gallery & Museum, Penzance	England
Museum of East Anglian Life, Stowmarket	England
Trowbridge Museum, Trowbridge	England
The Gallen-Kallela Museum, Espoo	Finland
Sinebrychoff Art Museum- The Finnish National Gallery, Helsinki	Finland
University of Helsinki, Helsinki	Finland
Satakunta Museum, Pori	Finland
Cap Sciences, Bordeaux	France
ICOM Georgia, Tbilisi	Georgia
DASA Working World Exhibition, Dortmund	Germany
ZKM Centre for Art and Media, Karlsruhe	Germany
Kunsthalle Mannheim, Mannheim	Germany
Westphalian State Museum, Münster	Germany
Schillerhaus, Rudolstadt	Germany
Archaeological Museum of Aiani, Aiani	Greece
7th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities, Hellenic Ministry of Culture, Ancient Olympia	Greece
Acropolis Museum, Athens	Greece
Byzantine and Christian Museum, Athens	Greece
Heritage & Museums, Athens	Greece
Museum of the City of Athens – Vouros-Eutaxias Foundation, Athens	Greece
Museum of Greek Folk Art, Athens	Greece
National Archaeological Museum of Athens, Athens	Greece
National Museum of Contemporary Art, Athens (EMST)	Greece
Numismatic Museum, Athens	Greece
Archaeological Museum of Heraklion, Heraklion	Greece

Historical Museum of Crete, Heraklion	Greece
Centre for Technical Culture- Industrial Museum of Hermoupolis, Hermoupolis	Greece
Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 32nd Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities, Archaeological Museum of Igoumenitsa, Igoumenitsa	Greece
8 th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities (Byzantine Museum of Ioannina), Ioannina	Greece
Archaeological Museum of Nicopolis, Nicopolis	Greece
Natural History museum of the Levros Petrified Forest, Sigri	Greece
6 th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities, Archaeological Museum of Patras, Patra	Greece
7 th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities, Hellenic Ministry of Culture, Pargos	Greece
Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 5th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities, Sparta	Greece
IX Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities, Theba.	Greece
Includes the following museums: Museum of Thebes,	Greece
Museum of Schimatari, Museum of Chaeroneia.	Greece
Museum of Byzantine Culture, Thessaloniki	Greece
State Museum of Contemporary Art, Thessaloniki	Greece
Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest	Hungary
Pet fi Literary Museum, Budapest	Hungary
National Gallery of Iceland, Reykjavik	Iceland
Mermaid Arts Centre, Bray	Ireland
Carlow County Museum, Carlow	Ireland
Wexford County Council, Carricklawn	Ireland
South Tipperary County Museum, Clonmel	Ireland
Cobh Museum, Cobh	Ireland
Lewis Glucksman Gallery, Cork	Ireland
Donaghmore Museum, Donaghmore	Ireland
Dublinia, Dublin	Ireland
GAA Museum, Dublin	Ireland
Graphic Studio & Gallery, Dublin	Ireland
Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin	Ireland
Irish Universities Association, Dublin	Ireland
James Joyce Museum, Dublin	Ireland
National Print Museum, Dublin	Ireland

The Little Museum of Dublin, Dublin	Ireland
National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin	Ireland
National Museum of Ireland, Dublin	Ireland
National Transport Museum, Dublin	Ireland
Notre Dame Keough-Naughton Centre, Dublin	Ireland
Project Arts Centre, Dublin	Ireland
Temple Bar Gallery + Studios, Dublin	Ireland
Trinity College Dublin Library, Dublin	Ireland
Trinity College Geological Museum, Dublin	Ireland
Musaem Chorca Dhuibhne, Kerry	Ireland
Butler Gallery, Kilkenny	Ireland
Kilkenny Castle, Kilkenny	Ireland
Rothe House & Garden, Kilkenny	Ireland
History Links Project, Lifford	Ireland
Limerick City Gallery of Art, Limerick	Ireland
Limerick Museum, Limerick	Ireland
Monaghan County Museum, Monaghan	Ireland
The Alfred Beit Foundation, Russborough	Ireland
The Steam Museum, Straffan	Ireland
Kerry County Museum, Tralee	Ireland
Museum of the History of Bologna, Bologna	Italy
Ministry of Culture of Latvia, Rīga	Latvia
Alytaus Kraštotyros Muziejus, Alytus	Lithuania
Alytus Regional Museum, Alytus	Lithuania
Birštonas Museum, Birštonas	Lithuania
Kaunas City Museum, Kaunas	Lithuania
Kaunas Ninth Fort Museum, Kaunas	Lithuania
M. and K. Petrausku Museum, Kaunas	Lithuania
Maironis Lithuanian Literature Museum, Kaunas	Lithuania
Museum Lithuania, Kaunas	Lithuania
The History Museum of Lithuania Minor, Klaipėda	Lithuania
Lithuanian Sea Museum, Klaipėda	Lithuania
Lithuanian Museum of Ethno-Cosmology, Kulionių kaimas	Lithuania
Marijampolė Local Lore museum, Marijampolė	Lithuania
Antanas Moncys House, Palanga	Lithuania

Siauliai Ausros Museum, Siauliai	Lithuania
Vaclovas Intas Republican Museum of Stones, Skuodo rajonas	Lithuania
Ukmergė Regional Museum, Ukmergė	Lithuania
Lithuanian Theatre, Music and Cinema Museum, Vilnius	Lithuania
The Museum of Energy and Technology, Vilnius	Lithuania
Museum of Genocide Victims, Vilnius	Lithuania
The Vilna Gaon State Jewish Museum, Vilnius	Lithuania
Museum of Lithuanian Education History, Vytauto	Lithuania
Bank Negara Malaysia Museum and Art Gallery, Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia
Central Bank of Malaysia Museum, Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia
Romanian Literature Museum, Chişinău	Moldova
Museum Flehite, Amersfoort	The Netherlands
Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam	The Netherlands
Teylers Museum, Haarlem	The Netherlands
European Museum Academy, The Hague	The Netherlands
Hortus Botanicus, Leiden	The Netherlands
Museum Slot, Loevestein	The Netherlands
Central Bank of Nigeria, Abeokuta	Nigeria
Northern Ireland Museums Council, Belfast	Northern Ireland
National Museums Northern Ireland, Hollywood	Northern Ireland
Norsk Luftfartsmuseum, Bodø	Norway
Valdresmusea, Fagernes	Norway
Helgeland Museum, Mosjøen	Norway
Jaermuseet, Nærbø	Norway
Akershusmuseet avdeling Fetsund Lenser, Oslo	Norway
Munch Museum, Oslo	Norway
Musea i Sogn og Fjordane, Sogn og Fjordane	Norway
Varanger Museum- Sør Varanger unit, Sør Varanger	Norway
The Norwegian Sawmill Museum, Spillum	Norway
Ryfylkemuseet, Suldalsosen	Norway
Norsk Industrierbeidermuseum, Tinn	Norway
Stiklestad Nasjonale Kultursenter, Verdal	Norway
MIST – Rockheim, Trondheim	Norway
Nordenfjeldske Kunstindustrimuseum, Trondheim	Norway
Ringve Museum, Trondheim	Norway

Ringve - Museene i Sør-Trøndelag, Trondheim	Norway
Næs Jernverksmuseum, Tvedestrand	Norway
Casa das Histórias Paula Rego, Cascais	Portugal
Museu Nacional do Traje, Lisbon	Portugal
Casa Museu Abel Salazar, Porto	Portugal
Qatar Museum of Art, Doha	Qatar
Museumarad, Arad	Romania
Muzeul de Mineralogie, Baia Mare	Romania
Grigore Antipa National Museum, Bucharest	Romania
National Museum of the Romanian Peasant, Bucharest	Romania
Caransebes County Museum, Caransebes	Romania
County Museum of Ethnography and Border Regiment, Caransebes	Romania
Muzeul Municipal Dej, Dej	Romania
Muzeul Civilizatiei Dacice si Romane Deva, Deva	Romania
History Museum of Tecuci, Tecuci	Romania
Museum Collection of the Armenians, Yerevan	Romania
Leo Tolstoy Museum "Yasnaya Polyana," Yasnaya Polyana	Russia
Glasgow Museums, Glasgow	Scotland
Gallery of Matica Srpska, Novi Sad	Serbia
Múzeum vo Svätom Antone, Svätý Anton	Slovenia
Muzej krščanstva na Slovenskem, Ivančna Gorica	Slovenia
Kočevje Regional Museum, Kočevje	Slovenia
Loski Muzej Škofja Loka, Škofja Loka	Slovenia
Pokrajinski muzej Murska Sobota, Murska Sobota	Slovenia
Museu Frederic Marès, Barcelona	Spain
Museo Nacional de Antropología, Madrid	Spain
Museo del Romanticismo, Madrid	Spain
Museo Nacional de Arte Romano, Mérida	Spain
Universitat Politècnica de València, València	Spain
Botkyrka Kommun, Botkyrka	Sweden
Jönköpings läns Museum, Jönköping	Sweden
Jönköpings stadsarkiv, Jönköping	Sweden
Army Museum, Stockholm	Sweden
CeHum Stockholm University, Stockholm	Sweden
Cultural Heritage without Borders, Stockholm	Sweden

Department of Education in Humanities and Social Studies, Stockholm University, Stockholm	Sweden
Stiftelsen Skansen, Stockholm	Sweden
Stockholms stadsmuseum, Stockholm	Sweden
Swedish Museum of Natural History, Stockholm	Sweden
Upplandsmuseet, Uppsala	Sweden
Kunstmuseum, Bern	Switzerland
Historisches Museum, Olten	Switzerland
Grün Stadt Zürich - Sukkulenten-Sammlung, Zürich	Switzerland
Lincoln Park Zoo, Chicago	USA
Denver Art Museum, Denver	USA
Skirball Cultural Center, Los Angeles	USA
Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis	USA
Miami Palmetto Sr, Pinecrest	USA
North Carolina State Parks, Raleigh	USA
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond	USA
Memorial Art Gallery, Rochester	USA



Participation, Museums, and Civic Engagement

Christina Kreps

Introduction

Participation is a key concept and approach in current museological discourse. In both theory and practice, participation can be defined in many ways and take on different forms depending on its users and the context of its usage. But in general, participation is a label for the multiple ways in which museums can engage with communities and communities can engage with museums. In essence, participation connotes particular kinds of *relationships* between museums and communities as well as particular approaches to *practice*. Participation is part of the on-going democratization of museums as social institutions in service to society and active agents in civic engagement.

The development of participatory approaches reflects the shift in museum practice from a focus on objects and collections to a focus on visitors, and making museums more accessible and beneficial to wider publics. Decades ago, museums were content in to serve a small, relatively homogenous constituency with a narrow programmatic focus centered on collections and scholarly and professional activities. Today, museums are accountable to much broader constituencies. Communities are asking more of museums in terms of how they can address their needs and interests. Reciprocally, museums are asking more of community members regarding their participation.

The trend toward greater participation is one example

of how museums are changing their orientations to both meet public demands and become more engaged in civic affairs. As social institutions, museums are constantly undergoing change and transformation brought on by pressures occurring both within the museum field as well as from the larger society. Museum practices and institutional policies are continuously being rethought in light of new issues and challenges of public concern. As Janet Marstine, in the Introduction to the edited volume, *The Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics: Redefining Ethics for the Twenty-first Century Museum* states: “it is well documented that the museum sector has become increasingly more responsive to the shifting needs of society; museums have come to accept and even embrace change as a defining element of policy” (2011, 5).

Although museums are often thought of as inherently conservative institutions, today resistance to change can lead to stagnation in addition to social irrelevancy and obsolescence (Janes 2009). Change is imperative for institutional health and survival. Museums not only mirror the changes going on in their societies, but can also help shape them as active social agents.

The museological literature on participation is growing, providing case studies on both the successes and pitfalls of participatory work. Like so many movements in the museum field, it is one thing to theorize about what we do or should do and quite another to actually

do it. The growing literature on the topic is evidence of how participation is becoming an integral and even expected element of museum practice. What this literature is teaching us is that above all participation is hard work and takes considerable dedication and commitment on the part of institutions, staff, and community members.

This essay examines the participatory turn in museology within the context of ‘the new museum ethics’, and the larger movement to make museums more socially inclusive and responsible as well as civically engaged. I present some underlying principles of participatory practice, and how different approaches to participation have been applied drawing on examples from the literature and my own work. I also discuss some of the challenges and issues faced in doing participatory work, and suggest that participatory/inclusive practice is a form of ethical/reflexive museum practice fundamental to the growing emphasis on civic engagement in museums.

New Ethics for the Twenty-first Century Museum

Marstine contends that the changes occurring in the museum world today signal the need for a ‘new’ museum ethics; an ethics that is not defined merely by professional ‘codes’ aimed at professionalizing individual practitioners and that prioritize institutional responsibility to the care and protection of objects. Ethics codes are still important, but need to be “invigorated by contemporary ethics discourse so that a process of debate takes priority and the result is self-reflexive, acknowledges the complexities and contradictions of the contemporary museum context, and has the ability to change as the needs of society

change” (Marstine 2011,7). For Marstine, substantive change in museum policy and practice requires a “museum ethics of change.”

Progressive institutions embrace rather than ignore or shy away from the key ethical issues of the day, and enter debates as participants in civic discourse. Museums that are driven by a dynamic ethics discourse have a clear sense of their values and how the decisions they make convey these values, which are continually being assessed in alignment with the communities they serve. “Institutions invested in the new museum ethics discourse effectively communicate the public value of museums. The process empowers museums to change because [the museum] builds public trust through democracy, transparency, and relevance” (Marstine 2011, 5).

Pivotal to the new museum ethics is the idea that museums have ‘moral agency’. “The relations between museums and communities rest upon the moral agency of the institution---its participation in creating a more just society” (Marstine 2011, 10)...and its “contributions to social well-being, equity, and fairness as an integral part of museum work” (Sandell 2011, 130). Marstine defines three major strands of museum theory and practice through which museums can assert their moral agency. These are: social inclusion, radical transparency, and shared guardianship.

Since the late 20th century, museums have been increasingly committed to creating the more socially inclusive museum in tandem with efforts to be more socially responsible. While much work has been done on fostering ‘inclusivity’, for example in the form of providing greater access to exhibitions and

educational programs for ‘underserved audiences’. Marstine contends that “patterns of participation still demonstrate inequalities of access” (p. 10). More equitable and diverse approaches to social inclusion require a paradigmatic shift in our thinking about the purpose and role of museums in society, what constitutes the ‘museum public’ as well as democratic participation in the museum. According to Marstine, the creation of the ethically, socially responsible museum of the 21st century requires thinking about the identities of museums, staff, and publics as fluctuating and hybrid rather than stable and essentialized.

Social inclusivity is also dependent on developing new modes of democratic participation in the museum that invite divergent and transgressive voices. While this process is often avoided because it presumes risk, Marstine submits that the “the ethical museum today, consciously chooses to assume risk to foster socially inclusive discourse” (p. 11).

The socially inclusive museum also accepts the concept of shared authority and power. Sharing authority and power in decision making, curatorial work and programming does not mean that staff give up their responsibility to collections, areas of expertise, and administration. Sharing authority and power can be a difficult and complex process that requires creative thinking about relationships. Marstine recommends Bernadette Lynch’s concept of ‘reciprocity’ as an effective mode of nurturing shared authority.

According to Lynch, “reciprocity requires that each party recognizes, respects, and draws from the expertise of the other: museum staff members

acknowledge the social capital of collaborators and partners as no less significant than their own” (Lynch in Marstine, p.12). Moreover, reciprocity can foster dialogue in which power relationships are exposed and deconstructed, allowing ‘creative conflict’ to emerge. Reciprocity may also inspire museum staff to develop a more diverse range of options through which stakeholders can participate. In the words of museum scholar and feminist Hilda Hein:

“

The museum initiates, but should not dominate, conversation. It generates vocabulary to perpetuate communication. No single story is preeminent, but together they constitute reality. Museums and the public combine to articulate that reality, and no one is above it

(Hein quoted in Marstine, p.12)

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The socially responsible, inclusive, and ethical museum is also concerned with forwarding social justice and human rights. As Richard Sandell notes, a “social justice agenda is integral to rethinking the terms of social inclusion” (2003, 45), and museums can contribute to social inclusion on individual, community, and societal levels. On an individual level, museums have the capacity to enhance self-esteem, confidence, and creativity. On the community level they can act

as a catalyst for social regeneration, empowering communities to take control of their lives and the development of their neighborhoods; on the societal level they can promote tolerance, inter-community respect and challenge stereotypes (ibid).

Marstine posits that the 21st century museum ethics is also built upon a new theory and practice of radical transparency in museums, which she describes as “a mode of communication that admits accountability—acknowledgement and assumption of responsibility for actions...Radical transparency is necessary because museums continue to be perceived as a trusted source of knowledge” (p.14). However, radical transparency does not require that museums share all information equally. Some information and concerns need to be held private to protect and honor the wishes of certain stakeholders. What defines radical transparency, according to Marstine, are clear guidelines for what can and cannot be shared developed in partnership with community stakeholders.

The idea of shared guardianship is Marstine’s third strand of museum theory and practice through which museums can assert their moral agency and institute new ethics. Shared guardianship may be the ultimate form of participation because it requires museums to relinquish control over the care and use of collections in their possession. It implies new ways of thinking about rights and responsibilities to collections as well as the special kinds of relationships people can have to objects in collections as expressions of their cultural heritage. Although shared guardianship has been especially important for museums housing collections derived from Indigenous peoples, the approach is relevant

to all museums entrusted with caring for and protecting cultural heritage.

Marstine borrows the term guardianship from the work of Haidy Geismar who adopted the concept from the Maori people of New Zealand as a way to describe the rights and responsibilities of both museums and the Maori in the stewardship of Maori collections. The idea of guardianship not only suggests shared responsibilities and ownership, but also alternative views of what constitutes cultural property. In Geismar’s words,

“

Maori groups are increasingly supportive of using the museum as a storehouse and exhibitionary context for their community treasures (provided there is an ongoing process of consultation). Rather than a condition of ownership, this notion of guardianship develops relationships of consultation and collaboration. The acknowledgement that property is a relationship rather than an object suggests alternative views of cultural property, which acknowledges the political and social relations that objects are enmeshed within as vital to their identities (quoted in Marstine, p.18).

”

Indeed, museum collaborations with indigenous peoples are revealing diverse and alternative ways of perceiving and treating objects that stand in sharp contrast to how they have been viewed and treated in mainstream museums (discussed below). “In contemporary museum ethics discourse the concept of guardianship is a means towards respecting the dynamic, experiential and contingent quality of heritage and towards sharing in new ways the rights and responsibilities to this heritage” (Marstine 2011, p. 17).

Marstine’s proposal for a new museum ethics and her concepts of social inclusion, radical transparency, and shared guardianship provides a lens through which we can look at participation from multiple angles. And while the new museum ethics is contingent in nature, meaning it is adaptive, improvisational and deeply engaged with the world around it, above all, Marstine argues, it is not just an ideal but a social practice (p. 20). So too is museum participation forged in relationship with and in their communities.

Participation in Theory and Practice

Although participation is a ‘buzz word’ in the museum field today, the idea emerged in the 1970s in a number of fields, for example international development, management and business, as a more democratic approach to projects and working relationships. The remarkable success and popularity of Nina Simon’s book *The Participatory Museum* (2010) and her Museum 2.0 blogspot is evidence of both the need and desire to explore new ways of engaging visitors and connecting with multiple, diverse communities. Much of the interest in participatory approaches is driven by the economic realities of the museum and cultural sector today, in which funding for institutional

support and programming continues to be cut and museums must prove their ability to generate their own revenue streams. In this environment, cynics might say that participation is yet another marketing strategy to increase visitor (*cum* customer) numbers and expand markets. Certainly, marketing agendas and corporate mentalities can compromise practice and undermine efforts to apply the ‘new museum ethics’. But this perspective belittles the important work being done by many in the field to develop and promote participatory approaches in their efforts to make museums more socially responsible, vibrant, and engaged in community life. Many see the need to go beyond ‘attracting new audiences’ and making museums more ‘accessible’, questioning the thinking behind this discourse and how it affects practice.

Indeed, much of the contemporary museum studies literature is devoted to critically examining various aspects of actual museum work in order to expose biases and barriers to progressive practice. For instance, a number of authors have deconstructed taken for granted categories of ‘the audience’, ‘the visitor’, ‘the community’, and ‘the public’, pointing out that we should refer to these categories in the plural since they are all diverse in their make-up with different needs, interests, and degrees of ability to take advantage of what museums have to offer (see Karp 1992, Crooke 2006, Graham and Yasin 2007, Mastai 2007).

Recognition of the heterogeneity of visitors, communities, and so on, demands diversification of museum practice. This means there is no such thing as ‘best practices’ or ‘one size fits all’ models for museum work. Instead, we need to modify and tailor practices to make them appropriate to particular constituencies and social and cultural contexts. What may be suitable

in one context may not be in another. Many may see diversification as a challenge since it seems to go against the grain of ‘efficiency’, ‘standardization’, and the furthering of ‘professionalization’. But diversification allows for the creation of innovative and alternative approaches to museum practice. It also opens spaces for diverse forms and degrees of participation.

As noted earlier, participation and participatory approaches are terms that are defined and applied in many ways by both theorists and practitioners, and there are many different kinds and levels of participation. The degree to which participation occurs is contingent upon various factors and conditions. Thus, the participatory process, in museums and elsewhere, can be seen as a continuum from passive

participation to active participation. In the former case, visitors simply come to museums and ‘consume’ as ‘empty vessels to be filled’. In the latter case, visitors are more actively engaged in museum activities and can become (co)creators and producers. And furthermore, while community members can participate in museum activities, museums can also be active participants in community life contributing to civic discourse and social well-being.

Simon’s approach to participation, outlined in her book *The Participatory Museum*, is primarily focused on establishing frameworks in which to create and foster participatory, audience-centered interaction and relationships *within* museums and cultural institutions,



especially through digital media and interactive technology. She defines a participatory cultural institution as

“

a place where visitors can create, share, and connect with each other around content. *Create* means that visitors contribute their own ideas, objects, and creative expression to the institution and to each other. *Share* means that people discuss, take home, remix, and redistribute both what they see and what they make during their visit. *Connect* means that visitors socialize with other people---staff and visitors—who share their particular interests. *Around* content means that visitors’ conversations and creations focus on evidence, objects, and ideas most important to the institution in question (Simon 2010, iii, italics in original).

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For Simon, the goal of participatory approaches is to meet visitors’ expectations for active engagement and to do so in a way that furthers the museum’s mission and core values. She stresses how there is no single model for participatory approaches. Likewise, the

participatory institution does not ‘deliver’ the same ‘content’ to everyone. Instead, it collects and shares diverse, personalized, and changing content that is co-produced with visitors. It invites visitors to respond and add to museum content, and “people use the institution as a meeting grounds for dialogue around the content presented. Instead of being ‘about’ something or ‘for’ someone, participatory institutions are created and managed ‘with’ visitors” (p. iii). Much of her book is a ‘how-to’ guide for institutions to use in developing their own content-rich, mission statement supporting, and audience-centered interactions. Three fundamental theories underpin Simon’s book:

- 1 The idea of the *audience-centered* institution that is as relevant, useful, and accessible as a shopping mall or train station.
- 2 The idea that visitors *construct their own meaning* from cultural experiences.
- 3 The idea that *users’ voices can inform and invigorate* both project design and public-facing programs (p. ii; emphasis in the original).

Simon presents four participatory models borrowed from the Center for Advancement of Informal Science Education’s project, ‘Public Participation in Scientific Research’ (PPSR) (www.caie.insci.org). PPSR defines three broad categories for public participation in scientific research, which Simon contends are also applicable to participation in museums and cultural institutions. These are: contribution, collaboration, and co-creation.

- In contributory projects visitors can provide objects, ideas, and actions to an institutionally controlled process.
- In collaborative projects, visitors are invited to serve

as active partners in the creation of projects that are created by and controlled by the institution

- In co-creative projects, community members work together with institutional staff from the beginning to define the project's goals and to generate the program or exhibit based on community interests. The staff partners with visitors to co-produce exhibits and programs based on community members' interests and the institution's collections (p.187).

Simon adds a fourth model to the PPSR typology: hosted. Hosted projects are ones in which the institution turns over a portion of its facilities and/or resources to present programs developed and implemented by public groups or casual visitors.

As with most models of participation, Simon discusses how visitor participation within museums is a process involving degrees or 'hierarchies of participation' whereby collaboration and hosting appear on the higher end of the continuum. According to Simon collaborative projects fall into two broad categories:

- Consultative projects, in which institutions engage experts or community representatives to provide advice and guidance to staff members as they develop new exhibitions, programs, or publications
- Co-development projects, in which staff members work together with participants to produce new exhibitions and programs

Consultative participants help guide projects' development while co-developers help create them (p. 235). And Simon reminds us that "collaborative processes are highly culturally dependent. What

works for one partnership might not work for another" (p. 238). Although Simon's approach focuses on participation of visitors already in museums, it can be seen as an example of how museums can strive to be more socially inclusive and transparent in their work, in keeping with the new museum ethics.

The Field Museum in Chicago, Illinois, USA, is an example of a museum that is not only concerned with creating participatory and interactive experiences for visitors inside the museum, but is also actively engaged in community life. The Museum's commitment to social responsibility and civic engagement is inscribed in its mission statement which states, in part, "We focus on critical environmental and cultural issues which are engaging and relevant to the public's daily lives and civic responsibilities" (quoted in Janes 2009, 125). To this end, the Museum created two initiatives that emphasize the interrelatedness of environmental and cultural diversity: the Environment and Conservation Program (now part of a new division known as Environment, Culture, and Conservation [ECC]) and the Center for Cultural Understanding and Change (CCUC). Both initiatives are multidisciplinary and explore the ways the Museum can direct its wealth of knowledge, collections, research expertise, exhibitions, education, and communication resources to helping resolve the challenges posed in the conservation of biological and cultural diversity. The Field Museum's ECC and CCUC exemplify how a museum can activate the new ethics of 'shared guardianship', through its community partnerships devoted to environmental and cultural conservation.

The CCUC is committed to public involvement and urban research in its own city and region. According to its website (fieldmuseum.org/ccuc/) the Center

"uses anthropological research to identify and catalyze strengths and assets of communities in Chicago and beyond. In doing so, CCUC helps communities identify new solutions to critical challenges such as education, housing, health care, environmental conservation, and leadership development. Through research, programs, and access to collections, the CCUC reveals the power of cultural difference to transform social life and promote social change" (accessed April 18, 2013).

The CCUC has undertaken a number of programs to foster intercultural dialogue and exchange. 'Cultural Connections', for example, is a partnership between the museum and over 20 Chicago-area ethnic museums and cultural centers that provides opportunities for

participants to explore important questions, such as why there is cultural diversity, what is culture and what makes cultural diversity important. The program "showcases insider views of ethnic and cultural Chicago." 'New Allies for Nature and Culture' is another program grounded in the idea of cooperation and stewardship. Its purpose is to "foster collaborations between organizations working on environmental, social, and cultural issues in the Chicago area." The CCUC held conversations with over one hundred organizations in 2007 to identify five common concerns, including climate change, youth programming, arts/creative practices, health and food, and economic development. "This program builds on these common concerns by recognizing that the well-being of people



and the earth are inter-related. Through collaboration, the CCUC and its partners intend to create a sustainable Chicago region, and together, change the map of the future” (Janes 2009, 126).

Both the work of Simon and the Field Museum’s CCUC demonstrate how museum practice can be enhanced by and benefit from multidisciplinary perspectives and approaches. They also show how participatory models drawn from other fields, such as the natural and social sciences can be applied to museum work. Our views on museums and museological behavior can also be broadened by examining them in other national and cultural contexts. In my research and applied work on museum development in Indonesia, beginning in the early 1990s, I found participatory models taken from the field of international development studies especially helpful.

The idea of participation became important in the 1970s when both practitioners and theorists began to recognize how projects failed when they did not involve local people or stakeholders in all aspects of the development process. Participatory approaches were advocated as a means to improve the ways in which development projects were planned and implemented, and as a means of empowering communities to have greater control over their own course of development. Several decades of development work showed that when people influence and control the decisions that affect them, they have a greater stake in the outcome of a project and will work harder to ensure its success.

The World Bank Learning Group on Participatory Development defines participation as “a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions

and resources that affect them” (The World Bank Participation Sourcebook, 1996). From this perspective, participation is seen largely as a stance which project designers and sponsors take in organizing and carrying out actions in collaboration with stakeholders. Based on democratic principles, participatory approaches aim to bridge the gap between outside professionals and experts and community members, suggesting that the knowledge, skills, and technologies of local people hold as much value as those of ‘experts’. Participation is conceived as both a conceptual framework and body of techniques and methods for facilitating the participatory process as well as making seemingly foreign institutions, ideas, and technologies compatible to local settings.

Participatory approaches to community development acknowledge the importance and value of ‘traditional’, ‘indigenous’, and ‘local’ knowledge. Indigenous knowledge is defined as local knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society. It reflects and constructs people’s ways of ordering and communicating about the world and serves as the information base of a society. Traditional knowledge is acquired through experience and observation and is passed down from one generation to the next through practice and example (Warren *et al.*, 1995). In development work, many see the value of documenting and building on indigenous knowledge, skills, and resources rather than replacing them with foreign technologies, ideas, and institutions. Traditional knowledge and other forms of culture have come to be viewed as assets for the promotion of culturally and environmentally sensitive approaches to development (Kleymeyer 1994, Rao and Wilson 2004). The concept of and principles behind participation and the value of indigenous knowledge became especially

relevant to me in the Indonesian context where museums are still seen as a relatively foreign concept to communities outside large urban areas. On the island of Borneo (Kalimantan), for example, government sponsored museums are not well integrated into society nor hold much value to community members largely because they have been established in a top-down fashion by government officials with little involvement on the part of community members. I have also observed a tendency to reproduce Western, professionally-oriented museum models and practices with little attention given to how this model fits local cultural contexts (Kreps 1997, 2003).

This non-participatory, non-inclusive approach to museum development has made museums generally irrelevant to local communities, but more importantly, is also working to undermine traditional, indigenous approaches to the care and preservation of valued cultural heritage. These approaches are examples of indigenous knowledge, skills, and technologies that comprise part of people’s cultural heritage. As such, they are worthy of preservation in their own right as examples of human cultural diversity. Just as development work has demonstrated the need to incorporate local knowledge into projects and use ‘appropriate technologies’. I discovered how museum practices should also be made to fit specific community needs and circumstances, based on people’s own concepts of cultural heritage preservation and curatorial methods.

As a result of my research and experience in Indonesia and elsewhere, I have become keenly aware of the need to develop and apply what I call ‘appropriate museology’. Appropriate museology is an approach

to museum development and training efforts that adapts museum practices and strategies for cultural heritage preservation to local cultural contexts and socioeconomic conditions. Ideally, it is a bottom-up, participatory approach that combines local knowledge and resources with those of professional museum work to better meet the needs and interests of a particular museum and its community. Appropriate museology also suggests that indigenous museological traditions should be explored and integrated into museum operations where suitable (Kreps 2008).

Awareness of alternative perspectives and the need for appropriate museology is essential when applying the ethics of shared guardianship. Such awareness has been especially important for museums in the United States housing collections originating in Native American communities since the passage of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) in 1990 by US Congress. The Act, in addition to protecting burial sites, provides a process for museums and Federal agencies to repatriate human remains, sacred objects, and other items of cultural patrimony to lineal descendants and culturally affiliated tribes. NAGPRA requires museums to make inventories of Native American human remains and cultural materials in their collections and in consultation with tribal representatives to determine their ‘cultural affiliation’. Under the law, museums are then required to make these inventories and pertinent information available to tribes who, in turn, can make requests for repatriation.

One of the many outcomes of NAGPRA is the growing presence of Native American curators, traditional scholars and advisors in museums as well as the development of collaborative partnerships. As a

result of consultation, collaboration, and co-curation of collections and exhibitions, Native points of view have come to challenge conventional museological paradigms and practices, revealing how Native communities have their own ‘traditional care methods’ in keeping with individual tribal, cultural protocol.

Traditional care methods are intended to protect the spiritual as well as material integrity of objects, reflecting each community’s religious and cultural protocols pertaining to the use, handling, and treatment of certain kinds of objects as well as access to them. The way in which objects are stored in museums can be very important to Native communities. For example, some communities prefer to have certain objects positioned in line with one of the cardinal directions. Some objects can be handled only by men or only by women. Ritual feeding and cleansing is also often requested whereby objects are smudged with smoke from sacred plants like tobacco, sage, and cedar. In many cases, objects are removed from sealed containers or plastics in order to allow them to breathe since they possess spirits and a life force that needs to breathe.

In many museums, including the University of Denver Museum of Anthropology which I direct, culturally sensitive and sacred objects (as well as human remains) are separated from general collections and stored in separate rooms. Access to these restricted areas is limited to museum staff and tribal representatives. Restricting access and use of collections has been one of the most contentious aspects of NAGPRA because some museum professionals and scientists believe restricted access goes against the grain of the idea of the museum as a public and democratic institution where resources should be open to all. But the public nature

of museum collections and information about them is unsettling to many Native communities since open access can be inconsistent with tribal traditions regarding rights and responsibilities to certain kinds of objects.

While some members of the museum and scientific communities have been opposed to NAGPRA on legal and scientific grounds and because of the changes it has required in practice, others have embraced the opportunities the law has opened for creating new partnerships and collaborations with Native communities. Today, repatriation and the respectful treatment of human remains and culturally sensitive materials no longer revolve around questions of ownership of cultural property. Rather, these concerns are now primarily viewed as moral and ethical issues that are increasingly being seen as part of people’s cultural and human rights (Kreps 2011, Peers and Brown 2003).

As this section has shown, participation can be interpreted and applied in multiple ways depending on its context and users. The “new museum ethics” challenges us to continually rethink and adapt our practices to changing social conditions and diverse cultural contexts, and furthermore, helps us better recognize both the possibilities and limitations of participation in and with museums.

Challenges to Participation

As the prevalence of participatory and collaborative approaches to museum practice has grown over the past decade or more, so has the literature on the subject. Thanks to this growth, we now have numerous case studies from which to draw that both celebrate success stories and critically assess the problematic aspects of participation. Participation has become

especially significant for museums attempting to be more socially inclusive, and that are reaching out to new and historically ‘underserved’ audiences such as youth, immigrants, refugees, and ethnic minorities. What this literature teaches us is that the realities and agendas of different participants can contradict, compromise, and even undermine the best intentions motivating participatory work.

Bernadette Lynch, an academic and museum professional, has critically examined and evaluated numerous museum projects devoted to participation, collaboration and community engagement.¹ Her research has revealed how different concepts and relations of power, operating on both institutional and individual levels, as well as other limitations can impede or undo participatory work even for institutions that put public engagement at the heart of what they do.

In her book chapter ‘Collaboration, Contestation, and Creative Conflict’, Lynch also borrows from international development studies and states that there is a “growing discomfort and dissonance about the perceived benefits of ‘participation’ in a number of areas, for example in international development studies when in many cases participation turns out to be manipulation” (2011, 146). She cites development theorist Uma Kothari who points out that participation can reinforce “a ‘normative’ discourse that reflects a group consensus...while the complexities and ‘messiness’ is filtered out” (p.46). What is said about participation in the development sector also applies to participatory work in museums, that is,

¹ See, for example, the special issue of *Museum Management and Curatorship* (Volume 28, issue 1, 2013), “Working through Conflict in Museums: Museums, Objects and Participatory Democracy,” edited by Bernadette Lynch. Also, Lynch’s report *Whose Cake is it Anyway? A Collaborative Investigation into Engagement and Participation in 12 Museums and Galleries in the UK* (2011), commissioned by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation in 2009.

everything depends on who is in control and who holds the most power.

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Participation in museums can be understood as shaped by the individual’s position in relation to other individuals present and, through them, with the museum institution. Associated with this perspective are different concepts of power. In transactions between museums and participants, because of the challenges of different perspectives that such encounters will inevitably generate, issues of power and coercion become central. Yet such processes remain largely invisible to all concerned, frequently due to a lack of awareness about the ethics of these relations within the museum’s public engagement work. There is therefore an imperative to make such processes visible, in order to illuminate the relational complexities within the messy and contradictory work of participation in museums (p. 147).

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In planning and implementing projects in partnership with community members, Lynch asserts that one of the main challenges for museums is to share authority and power, especially in decision making, setting agendas items, and establishing the terms and conditions for levels of inclusion and agency. At issue is how community members can participate and to what degree their contributions are valued and accepted. Museums must do more than simply invite community members to 'rubber stamp' existing plans. They must listen to community members/ partners, and more importantly, respond in ways that create spaces for 'participatory communication" They must also create conditions that do not rob participants of their active agency as citizens, preventing them from realizing their capability, or, 'the power to do something' (2013, 452).

Lynch points out that the ideology and rhetoric of 'service', so often embedded in museum mission and policy statements, places the subject (community member) in the role of 'suppliant' and 'beneficiary' and the 'giver' (the museum and its staff) in the role of 'carer' (2013, 447). This rhetoric has the effect of 'pathologizing' the museums' subjects as being in need of 'improvement'. Lynch asks, "How clear is it to the museum staff, who with the best of intentions support these words or to the community members as 'beneficiaries' on the receiving end, that power is at work within such language and in the roles it gives the institution in relation to its community partners? In order to discover where the power lies, one must ask who has the active agency?" (2013, 447).

Lynch underscores how community engagement

practices involve power because "ideas operate behind all language and action. Ideas or values ground all social and political activity...These become so routine that organizations such as museums do not often consciously think of them, yet political ideologies inform policy-making in terms of engagement and participation all the time" (ibid).

For Lynch, it is fear of change and loss of control that is the "central undermining flaw within well-meaning attempts at democratizing museums" (2011, 149). This fear can shut down or side track open dialogue and discussion that is crucial to the participatory process. In fact, Lynch discovered in her research that despite the emphasis on dialogue in contemporary museum discourse, lack of discussion was perhaps the significant cause for disillusionment surrounding current engagement practices on the part of museum staff as well as community participants.

Open and honest dialogue is crucial for mutually beneficial engagement to take place, even if it is confrontational and creates conflict. Museum/ community partnership negotiations are about respecting and learning from conflict and opposition as much as they are about agreement and harmonious relations. "Conflict must be allowed to be central to democratic participation if museums are to view participants as actors rather than beneficiaries" (Lynch 2011, 160).

According to Lynch, developing more reflexive practice in museums would significantly help clarify the subtle nature of the power relationships embedded, and so often hidden, in participatory practice. Reflexive

practice requires museum staff and administration to continuously critically reflect on what they do, how they do it, and whose interests are being served by their work. This process is also required for continual change and transformation in museum practice.

While reflexive practice can facilitate greater awareness of the hidden ideologies and power relations embedded in participatory work, Lynch also points out that there are real, significant pressures that can inhibit reflection and drive museums away from community engagement. For example, the system of short-term, project funding not only discourages critical reflection, but also perpetuates "an illusion that the work is more effective than it is. It also perpetuates a situation where little or nothing is learned from experience" (2013, 444). Pressure to get things done on schedule and by deadlines can also deter reflection and debate. In sum, Lynch asserts that

A lack of openness is perpetuated within the museum profession, both from the way projects are represented and reported...and, most problematically, in the way museums and galleries are funded for their engagement work. This inhibits change from happening with the museum profession, and any form of learning taking place on an organizational level. Museums are rewarded for 'success', not for their risk-taking or the

challenges and failures they face. Nor are they encouraged (in project funding reports) to honestly and openly reflect on the difficulties in their work (2013, 445).

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For Lynch, the only way engagement can become truly embedded and therefore more effective in museums is through a commitment to ongoing reflective practice, which allows for a deeper understanding of 'how things work' on institutional, individual, and community levels. Such an understanding can, in turn, lead to the empowerment of museums and community members to overcome the many limitations to participation. In this respect, empowerment should be seen as part of the participatory process as well as one of its goals.

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Empowerment is the process which enables individuals/groups to fully access personal/collective power, authority, and influence, and to employ that strength when engaging with other people, institutions or society. Empowerment is not giving people power, it is letting this power out. That power includes the power to disagree (Lynch 2013, 452).

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Lynch's analysis of museum participation/engagement and recommendation for more reflective practice clearly echoes and reinforces Marstine's new museum ethics; an ethics grounded in the ideas of social inclusion, radical transparency, and shared guardianship. Reflexive practice is one way in which we can actualize the new museum ethics as an underlying principle of participation. And just as Marstine visualizes the new ethics as social practice so is participation since it rests on developing and expanding more inclusive, transparent, and mutually beneficial social relationships within and beyond the museum.

Conclusion: Museums and Civic Engagement

Despite the many challenges involved in doing participatory work, participation will undoubtedly continue to gain importance as museums become ever more committed to social responsibility and civic engagement. This commitment requires that museums adopt an 'ethics of change,' whereby museums are able to change as the needs of society change (Marstine 2011), as well as fundamental changes in museum culture. As Lynch suggests, we need to create "new customs around facilitating reflective and therefore effective engagement practice" (2013, 454).

The customs of a changing museum culture need to reflect, among other things, changes in the way museums relate to and conceptualize community members, from seeing them as 'beneficiaries', 'customers', 'audiences', 'visitors', and 'publics', to viewing them as fellow citizens and members of civil society. In addition to Lynch, many authors have noted how museums often see their relationship to community members in oppositional terms or from an

'us and them' perspective (Graham and Yasin 2010). This ;insider/outsider; mentality undermines both museum and community members' capacity to actively participate in and contribute to the workings of civil society and its betterment together.

Over the past decade or more, the museum sector has increasingly been called upon to develop its capacity to empower communities to engage with what Graham Black calls the "great and local issues of the day" (2010, 130). For Black, the ;great issue; is a growing concern among governments about the erosion of community sensibilities and public engagement with the democratic process. As public institutions, museums have been responding to this issue by creating initiatives for community partnering and dialogue, and for reinventing civic roles.

In the USA, for instance, the American Association of Museums (now the American Alliance for Museums) published *Mastering Civic Engagement: A Challenge to Museums* (2002), based on its national 'Museums and Community Initiative'. The publication outlines for museums core principles of civic engagement, democracy, and community building, and challenges museums to build and strengthen their community bonds (Black 2010, 130). Ellen Hirzy, in *Mastering Civic Engagement*, sums up the character and roles of the civically engaged museum.



Civic engagement occurs when museum and community intersect—in subtle and overt ways, over time, and as an

accepted and natural way of doing business. The museum becomes a center where people gather to meet and converse, a place that celebrates the richness of individual and collective experience, and a participant in collaborative problem solving. It is an active, visible player in civic life, a safe haven, and a trusted incubator of change. These are among the possibilities inherent in each museum's own definition and expression of community (2002, 9).²



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² Also see Barbara Schaffer Bacon, Pam Korza, and Patricia Williams' *Giving Voice: A Role for Museums in Civic Dialogue* (2002), prepared for A Museums and Community Toolkit published by American Association of Museums and available on the Animating Democracy website, www.animatingdemocracy.org/publications/papers-essays-articles/museums-and-civic-dialogue



Key Trends in Museums in East Asia in the 21st Century

Eiji Mizushima

Introduction

As we enter the 21st century, the museum world is undergoing a gradual change in East Asia (defined, for our purposes, as Japan, China, South Korea and Taiwan). Of course, any organization, in any era, can be said to be in the process of transformation. Put simply, from the point of view of museum policy, the change is an extreme shift toward internationalization; from the point of view of museography, the change is the conversion of museum collections to digital form. In museum activities, the most notable trends in the museums of East Asia are those in the educational field.

In Japan, a fashion for outside evaluation of museums by citizens has emerged, perhaps in response to the growing trend toward democratization of civil society. As museum organizations move forward with internal reform, the *raison d'être* of many museums is being called into question. Over the past decade or so, accountability and transparency have become watchwords of museum management.

Like a Japanese haiku poem, museum management must contain elements of both immutability and fluidity. The immutable part is the museum's function of conveying cultural and historical knowledge to future generations. In other words, a museum functions as a repository of its society's collective memory; its *raison d'être* is to collect and preserve collections, documents

and specimens that serve that function.

The fluid part of a museum's mission is its educational activities. Many museums in Japan place greater emphasis on their communication functions than on their role as a storehouse, enthusiastically planning and offering exhibitions as a form of educational activity. Hands-on exhibits at science museums and science centers, art workshops at art museums, and programs such as environmental education and interactive nature workshops at natural history museums are offered in abundance. These programs offer educational activities that public schools could not hope to provide through their own resources. In today's museums, such educational services have emerged as the most important issue for these institutions, which are increasingly transforming their museum functions to focus strongly on educational programs.

In consideration of this trend, this paper explores the following six topics:

1. An overview of the development of museums in each country in East Asia
2. Museum organizations in each country and the formation of international networks
3. The current status of museum educational activities and related issues
4. Personnel training and museological education
5. Issues in Museology research in an era of globalization, with discussion of conditions in Japan, China, South Korea and Taiwan

6. From the point of view of future directions on the international level, the formation of the networks necessary to establish personnel training systems in Asia is emerging as a key trend

Development of Museums in East Asia

Development of museums in Japan

Japan reformed its educational system immediately after the end of the Second World War. The Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties was enacted in 1950, followed in 1951 by the Museum Law. These laws established a registration system, provided government subsidies for public museums and tax concessions for private museums, and established a national qualification system for curators. The aim of this legislation was to increase both the quality and number of museums in Japan.

The numbers are certainly impressive. Today Japan is second only to the United States, with its 18,000 museums nationwide, as a 'museum superpower'¹. According to a survey by Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), whereas only 239 museums were scattered across Japan in 1955, by 2005 this figure had climbed to 4,418, reaching 4,527 in 2008. The latest figures, dating from November 2011, count some 5,775 museums in Japan nationwide. Of these, a majority are museums of a historical, archaeological or ethnological nature (3,327). A further 1,101 are art museums, while another 485 consist of natural science museums and museums of science, technology and industry. The

numbers differ in the classification system used by the Museum Law. According to this law, the figure of 5,775 museums includes not only officially 'registered museums' but also 'museum-equivalent facilities' and 'museum-like facilities'.

According to a 2007 study by Japanese Association of Museums (JAM), the number of visitors to all museums in Japan is roughly double the nation's population: 280 million museum visitors in a country of 150 million people. Statistically, this means that each person in Japan visits a museum an average of 1.8 times per year. If we divide the population by the number of museums, Japan has one museum for every 26,000 people.

The modern era of museums in Japan began with the National Museum of Nature and Science. Its predecessor, the Museum of Education, was founded in 1877, modeled on the Museum of Education in Toronto. Around 1967, during the era of high economic growth, (a notable year as the 100th anniversary of the Meiji Restoration and of the organization of Tokyo into a metropolitan city), a rush of museum-building occurred in Japan. In response to this rapid proliferation of museums, MEXT established "standards for the establishment and management of public museums" in 1973. These standards succeeded in guaranteeing a certain level of quality in the nation's museums.

The asset-inflation bubble that began in 1986 saw a second boom in museum construction. This boom prompted dramatic progress in exhibition and presentation technologies. When the bubble burst,

however, one museum after another closed its doors, as residents turned away from mere passive exhibits in favor of activities rooted in communities and educational activities came into sharper focus. Today Japan's museum community, which boasts 130 years of history dating from the founding of the Museum of Education, confronts financial difficulties, and stands at a crossroads in terms of both operation and management.

The operators of museums, along with the community residents who are their users, are taking a dispassionate view to ask some hard questions: Have Japan's museums achieved a level of quality on a par with world standards? Is there room for improvement in the management of Japan's museums from the perspective of global standards?

Development of museums in South Korea

The use of the term 'museum' in South Korea dates to September 1908, when the Riwangga Museum was established within the grounds of the Changgyeonggung Palace². This means that the history of museums in South Korea dates back to more than 100 years ago. As in Japan, a registration system is used; a remarkable 840 'registered museums' exist throughout South Korea, and the number is forecast to explode over the coming years. If we count the nation's 107 private and university museums, which are treated separately under South Korean law, a total of 947 museums are in operation in South Korea.

Today South Korea is blessed with a richly diverse mix of museums, ranging from traditional archaeological museums to botanical gardens and zoos. Recently a number of museums created exclusively using 'cyber-technology' have arrived on the scene.

Before South Korea won independence from Japan, the activities of its museums were centered around the national museums. Of the university museums, Keijo Imperial University (a predecessor of Seoul National University) maintained a museum housing archaeological and ethnological specimens from throughout Korea, gathered by the university's faculty. A number of private universities also held their own academic collections.

Modern South Korea's remarkable complement of university museums is distinguished by one remarkable characteristic. In 1967 the Ministry of Education issued an order for the establishment of university standards, one of whose provisions was that "each comprehensive university is required to establish a university museum." This fact marks a major difference with Japan's museum community.

It was in the 1980s that South Korea's museum community entered a period of radical change. With the enactment of the Social Education Law in 1983, a foundational law was established, however indirectly, for the educational activities of museums. During this period a growing number of museums became larger and

¹ The total number of museums in Japan depends on the statistical method used. According to the Japanese Association of Museums (JAM)'s *Museum White Paper* and MEXT's *Social Education Survey* (both in Japanese; the *Social Education Survey* is published at the national level once every three years), the number of museums nationwide in 2005 was 4,418. The figure of 5,770 museums includes facilities such as university collections and museum-like facilities.

² The museums of Japan and South Korea share a close relationship. The Imperial Jesil Museum (November 1, 1909 to 1910) was established within the grounds of Changgyeonggung, but only the Emperor Sunjong and the royal family were permitted to view it. In 1909 the museum was opened to the public. To provide enjoyment as well as intellectual development for the Korean people, a zoo and botanical garden were opened in the same year, and together were categorized as a museum. After Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910, the Imperial Museum was renamed the Riwangga Museum.

more specialized. In 1988 a new ministry, the Ministry of Culture, was established, and promptly set a target of 'building 1,000 museums' by 2000. Of particular note in the 1980s is the enactment of the Museum Law, which set explicit regulations governing all aspects of museums. This law had been submitted in 1979, but when it was enacted and proclaimed in 1984 it contained no clauses pertaining to university museums. However, in 1991 the Museum and Art Gallery Promotion Law was enacted, and the old Museum Law was scrapped. Following this series of events, in the early 1990s clauses governing 'the overall regulation of museums' and 'curators' were inserted, and the scope of museum operations was defined, creating the foundations of today's museum policies.

Today the South Korean museum world is in headlong expansion. The number of museums nationwide doubled in a six-year period, from 336 in 2002 to 707 in 2008; by 2011 that figure had ballooned to 840. In recent years the national government has become generous in its financial support for museum operation, and the support is increasing. Even small, privately

owned museums are hubs of activity. With a population of 50.22 million people (in 2013), South Korea boasts one museum for every 60,000 people.

In terms of founding organizations, South Korea's museums are divided into national, public, private and university museums. 'National museums' can be broadly divided into those attached to the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MCST) (National Museum of Korea, 11 regional national museums and the National Folk Museum of Korea) and those under the umbrella of other ministries or agencies, such as the Cultural Heritage Administration (National Palace Museum, National Maritime Museum (now the National Research Institute of Maritime Cultural Heritage)). 'Public museums', a term we will use to refer to museums founded by local and regional governments, account for 40% of the total. Since the establishment of the regional-government system, the number of these museums has been on the rise, as part of an effort to promote balanced growth in the regional culture. A further 44% of museums are private museums, operated by individuals, businesses or foundations.

Table 1. Rising trend in number of museums in South Korea (2002–2011)³

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Museum	276	289	306	358	399	511	579	630	655	694
Art Museum	60	65	74	80	92	115	128	131	141	146
Total Number	336	354	380	438	491	626	707	761	796	840

³ Data resource : <http://www.index.go.kr/egams/index.jsp> (accessed 2013/05/30)



Development of museums in China and Taiwan

In the early days of the reform and liberalization⁴ that began in 1978, there were about 300 museums in all of China. Today, though figures are incomplete, over 2,300 museums are known to exist throughout the country. This number is growing at a breakneck pace, with the result that a shortage of museum operation and management personnel has been noted. In 1991, the Shaanxi Historical Museum was built and opened its doors as China's first major, modernized museum. Other museum projects, such as the Shanghai Museum and the annex to the Henan Museum were completed in succession. At the provincial level, museums are being built, extended, or planned.

A Western museum specialist has famously derided Chinese museums as "first class in resources, second class in exhibits, third class in service". Yet since the International Council of Museums (ICOM) held its 2010 General Conference in Shanghai, the improvement in the

quality of China's museums was startling.

The primary focus of the Chinese government is providing direct motivation for the Chinese people. The policy of free admission to museums was implemented at the behest of the national government. As a result of this policy, the Chinese people have come to demand a high level of cultural activity and are avidly pursuing spiritual culture. In this way museums have acquired a high profile in Chinese society, improving their function as museums, developing their exhibition techniques and bolstering services to visitors.

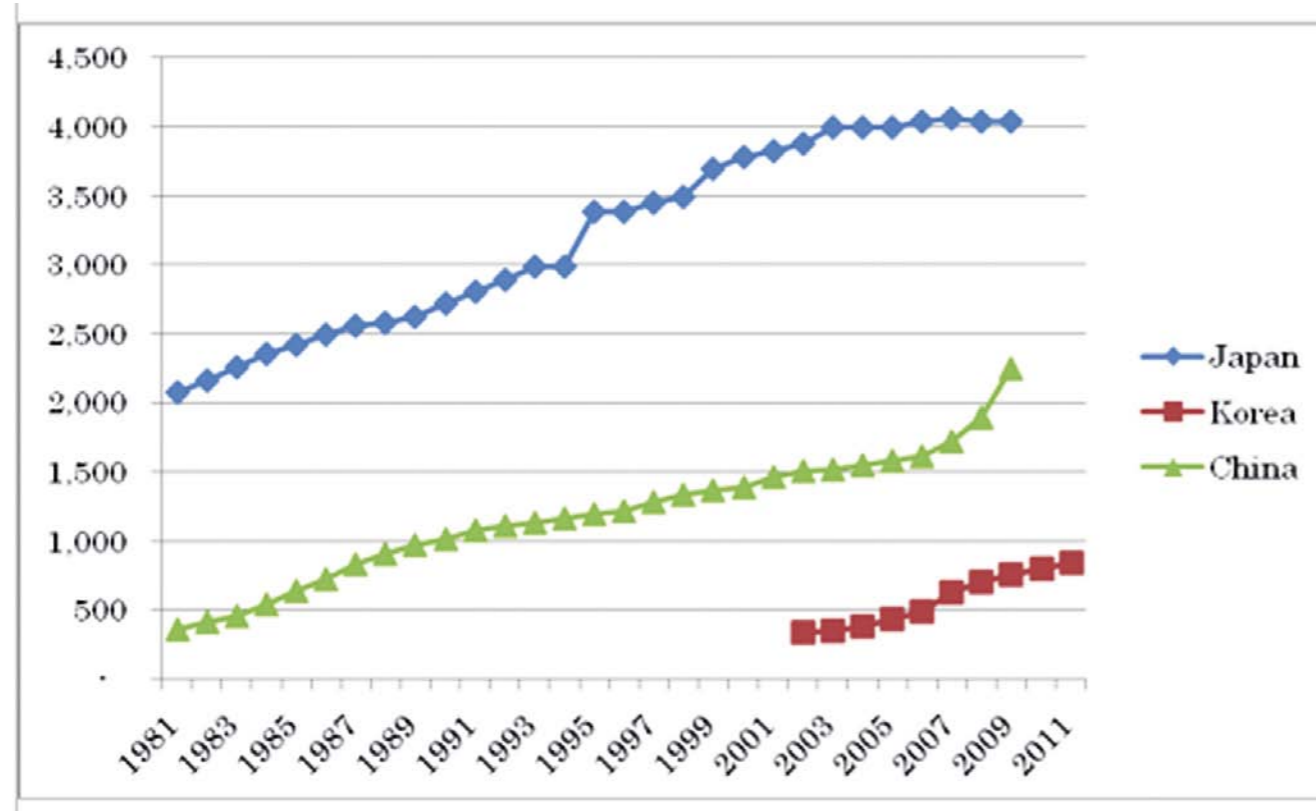
While the free-admission policy has placed museums in the spotlight, however, sources related to China's museums indicate that visitor numbers have failed to climb appreciably over the past few years. This could easily be due to the methods used to gather statistics and other problems with the data⁵.



⁴ A policy in the People's Republic of China of internal reform and opening up to the outside world. Under the leadership of chairman Deng Xiaoping, this policy shift began after a plan was presented at the 3rd Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee Meeting of the Communist Party of China in December 1978.

⁵ These statistical materials are extremely important from an international-comparison point of view, yet neither ICOM nor ICOM-ASPAC collects, organizes or analyzes statistical data. In an increasingly international society, some research body will need to gather and analyze this data, to enable measurement of the cultural development of each country.

Figure 1. Increase in number of museums in Japan, China and South Korea⁶



China's central government has a policy target of raising the number of museums throughout China to 3,500 within a few years. With 3,500 museums serving a population of 1.34 billion people, this means that China will have one museum for every 380,000 people. Given that the equivalent figure in Japan is one museum for every 26,000 people, the appropriateness of this target surely bears examination from the perspectives of museum, cultural and educational policy.

Taiwan, meanwhile, has been developing museums at a blistering pace in recent years. A population of 23 million people (as of April 2011) is served by 228 museums or more; if other cultural facilities are included, the number rises to 750 (as of May 2013), or one museum for every 30,000 Taiwanese.

Assuming the leading role in Taiwan's museum world is the National Palace Museum. The museum's collection, which astounds foreign tourists every year, has been

⁶ Data source: Museums in Japan (JAM,2010)

completely digitalized as part of a national digitalization plan. These digital archives are easily accessible anywhere in the world. This high rate of digitalization places the National Palace Museum among the most advanced museums in the world.

Table 2. Comparison of number of residents per museum

Country or region	Population comparison
Japan	26,000
Korea	59,000
China	380,000
Taiwan	30,000

Museum Systems in East Asia and Formation of International Networks

The museum system in Japan

Japan's modern educational system got its start with the Basic Law on Education (enacted 1947, overhauled 2006). The role of museums and libraries as lifelong learning institutions was spelled out in the Law on Social Education (1949), a law subordinate to the Basic Law on Education. Of course, the legal basis for museum management is contained in the Museum Law (enacted 1951, revised 2008). Both public and private museums can become 'museums under the Museum Law' by obtaining registration by the educational committee in their regions. Such museums are known as 'registered museums'. Similarly, facilities that are not registered museums but are specified by their local educational committees as facilities

equivalent to museums are known as 'museum-equivalent facilities'. Both registered museums and museum-equivalent facilities are regulated under the Museum Law.

Museums other than registered museums and museum-equivalent facilities are known as 'museum-like facilities'. Though these are not governed by the Museum Law, they are included in MEXT's museum statistics. Generally the term 'museums' embraces registered museums, museum-equivalent facilities and museum-like facilities.

While MEXT has jurisdiction over the National Museum of Nature and Science, the Agency for Cultural Affairs, a body subordinate to MEXT, has jurisdiction over national historical museums and art museums. Most public museums are attached to their educational committees, though in recent years the number of public museums attached to bodies other than an educational committee has been increasing.

Until now public museums at the prefectural and municipal levels have customarily been managed by public-sector institutions (*kōsetsu-kōei*: public management of public institutions). However, following a 2003 revision of the Local Government Law, the management of a public museum (museum or art museum) can be contracted to a private-sector operator, such as a joint-stock company or NPO (this arrangement is known as *kōsetsu-min'ei*: private management of public institutions). In addition, new museums can be built using approaches such as public-private partnerships (PPPs) and private finance initiatives (PFIs).

Other than the national government, one organization that has come to play a significant role in the advancement of museums is JAM. Established in 1931, 20 years before the enactment of the Museum Law, JAM is one of the oldest museum associations in the world, with a history that spans over 80 years⁷. *Museum Studies*, the journal of JAM, has been in continuous publication since JAM's inception, except for a hiatus during World War II; its history and tradition are among the most venerable among all academic journals in Japan. In addition, once every five years JAM publishes *The Museum White Paper*, a survey of the current status of museums across Japan, providing comprehensive statistics on the nation's museums (however, because this publication is not available in English, information on Japan's museums is not widely disseminated internationally). Many other museum-related associations are also active in Japan⁸.

The museum system in South Korea

Today some 840 museums are registered with South Korea's MCST. The registration system was created by the national government and stipulates a few basic requirements: a minimum collection size (at least 100 items), a certain amount of floor space and a minimum number of days of operation. Many unregistered museums are also in operation. Of these, some 300 are private museums and about 100 are university museums, with the rest consisting of national and public museums. Following the launch of a government support policy,

the number of museums has surged. Many of these are private museums, which have initiated a wide range of programs and activities nationwide.

One source of financial support for museum programs is the national lottery fund, which has prompted the registration of a large number of museum-collection items. These funds contribute greatly to the active inclusion of culturally underprivileged classes (social inclusion), broadening of museums' visitor base and extension of support for the right of public access to culture.

When private museums hire curators, the South Korean government provides assistance in the form of the personnel expenses for one person. This aid breathes fresh vigor into private museums, with positive effects in terms of more effective use of exhibits and collections.

The South Korean government also provides support for interpreters and docents (museum guides and educators), which are essential for museum education and hugely beneficial to visitors. This policy contributes greatly to the country's museums, improving overall quality and enhancing the educational impact of their exhibitions.

Like Japan, South Korea has a museum association. The Korean Museum Association (KMA) was founded in 1976 and incorporated as a foundation in 1991. This association contributes to the advancement of museums through the efforts of six permanent committees: the

Academic Committee; the International Committee; the Policy Committee; the Science and Technology Committee; the Public Relations Committee; and the Ethics Committee.

Since 2005 the KMA has offered overseas training programs for museum-related people in South Korea. These programs have been held in Beijing (2005), Kyushu (2006), Vienna (2007), Taiwan (2008), Singapore (2009), Tokyo (2010), Malaysia (2011) and in the Japanese city of Kanazawa (2012), among others. For museum-related personnel, these overseas training programs are vital for the cultivation of personal connections. When conducting international exhibitions, trust is vital, and the trust built through these personal connections plays a valuable role in the success of such events.

In fact, in addition to the KMA, South Korea boasts a large number of museum-related associations. Examples include the Korea Private Museums Association, the Korea Private Art Museum Association, the Korean Art Museum Curators Association and the Korea Culture&Tourism Welfare Association. Gyeonggi Province, on the outskirts of the capital Seoul, is blessed with a particularly rich cluster of museums; here the Gyeonggi Museum Association is established, conducting liaison and joint projects among museums. Gyeonggi is a pioneer in the museum field, as it is the first province in South Korea to enact an "ordinance to promote museums and art museums."

This tripartite organization, in which the national and regional governments work with private organizations (the museum associations) to operate museums, is a unique feature of the museum community of South Korea.

The museum systems in China and Taiwan

In China and Taiwan, though moves are afoot to enact museum laws, no such laws are yet on the books. In 2012 Taiwan raised its Council for Cultural Affairs to the status of Ministry of Culture; currently a new museum law is being drafted.

Turning to trends in China, in 1979 the State Administration of Cultural Heritage Management Bureau promulgated the Ordinance on Creation of Provincial, Municipal and Autonomous-region Museums. An overview of subsequent actions in China follows below.

- 1979 Province, Municipality and Autonomous Region Museum Regulation by State Administration of Culture and Heritage
- 1982 Relics Protection Law
- 1986 Ministry of Culture, Museum Collection Management Regulation by Ministry of Culture
- 2001 Ministry of Culture, Relics Collection Rating Standards by Ministry of Culture, start and implementation
- 2008 and 2012 Draft of Museum Regulation by State Council Legal Office

As mentioned at the beginning of this report, China's museum sector is booming, in tandem with the country's economic growth. With China's long history, traditional culture and wealth of cultural properties, the international community is watching with interest to see how the country will put these cultural resources to use. International leadership in Asia can help to achieve more robust preservation and disclosure of cultural properties and disclosure of intellectual resources. The formation of personal networks by trusted museum

⁷ The Museums Association in the United Kingdom was founded in 1889.

⁸ For example: Japan Association of Zoos and Aquariums (JAZA), Japan Association of Botanical Gardens (JABG), Japanese Council of Science Museums, Japan Science Museum Association (JASMA), The Japanese Council of Art Museums, The Japan Association of Art Museums (JAAM), Japan Planetarium Association (JPA).

professionals, transcending boundaries of language and political systems, will clearly prove to be a vital issue going forward.

Formation of international networks: efforts in Japan

We have already seen that each country in our survey has implemented policies for the promotion of museums. However, in the 21st century we need to change our way of thinking about this issue, as the pace and extent of globalization far exceeds that of the previous century. Japan's efforts in the international community can be summarized as follows.

In 1957 *Museum*, the journal of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), carried a special edition on the museums of Japan. This spread marked UNESCO's first article introducing Japan's museums to the world. In September 1960, UNESCO and Japan's Ministry of Science, Education and Culture (now MEXT) jointly hosted a 'Seminar on Museums in the Asia-Pacific Region', in Tokyo, Kyoto and Nara.

The 'Recommendation Concerning the Most Effective Means of Rendering Museums Accessible to Everyone', agreed at these seminars, was officially adopted at the 11th General Conference of UNESCO in 1960.

- In 1973 UNESCO and the Asia-Pacific Cultural Center (APCC) jointly sponsored the Roundtable Conference on Modernization of Museum Activities in Asia.
- In 1976 the Regional Seminar on the Adaptation of Museum in Asia to the needs of the Modern

World convened in Japan, sponsored by UNESCO. These two conferences declared that the training of middle-level managers was an urgent priority for the modernization of Asia's museums.

- In 1976 the 1st ICOM Asian Regional Assembly convened in the Iranian capital of Tehran.
- In 1979 the 2nd ICOM Asian Regional Assembly convened in Bangkok.

Drawing on the above recommendations, in May 1980 UNESCO and the APCC jointly sponsored the Planning Meeting on Personnel Training for Museums in Asia, which convened in Tokyo. At this meeting, Japan tabled the 'Basic Requirements for Personnel Training for Museums in the Asia-Pacific Region'.

- In October 1983, UNESCO and the APCC sponsored the 'Training Seminar for Mid-level Managers for Museums in the Asia-Pacific Region'. The seminar took place over the course of a month, at museums in Metropolitan Tokyo and the Osaka region.

ICOM includes domestic committees for each country as well as five regional alliances (the Arab world, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America/Caribbean, and Southeast Europe). Japan belongs to the International Council of Museums, Asia-Pacific Alliance (ICOM-ASPAC). From 1987 to 1990, the ICOM Japan Committee served as the representative body for ICOM-ASPAC's predecessor, the ICOM Regional Agency in Asia and the Pacific. In 1987, a conference of representatives convened in Japan.

In December 2009, the ICOM Japan Committee convened the ICOM-ASPAC Tokyo Conference at the National Museum of Nature and Science. At

this conference, 25 young (35 and under) museum personnel were invited from countries across Asia, and 200 persons related to museums in the Asia-Pacific region attended. Of particular note regarding this conference was the first Workshop of 'ICOM Code of Ethics' Guidelines.

In the early part of the 21st century, globalization is proceeding apace, not only in the economic sphere but also in politics, civil administration, science and scholarship, culture and many other fields. Under this environment, relationships of interdependence and mutual coordination among countries are deepening. The need for international exchange is on the rise worldwide, as countries seek to share values and actively exchange opinions and information in a wide

range of fields, encompassing industry, academia and public service. The museums of East Asia need to make a positive effort to learn together, gradually forming networks to maintain standards of museum management, establish international ethical guidelines for museums, and understand and maintain appropriate scope of activity, among other imperatives.

The 'soft power' of a museum is its ability to attract people with compelling content and make an impact on society. This soft power forms part of the foundation for sustainable economic development and smooth international cooperation. As internationalization advances, it is important to recognize anew that museums will come into increasing focus in East Asia as a force for advancing national power.



A new kind of PEST control for a new age

Museums today must look squarely at the environment around them and the roles expected of them. In today's age of globalization, museum activities are subject to impact from 1) politics, 2) economics, 3) society and 4) technology ('PEST'). As museums become increasingly specialized, the environment they require for successful operation is framed by 1) competence, 2) professional ethics, 3) standards and standardization, and 4) approaches and orientation. The functions expected of museums are, broadly, 1) practical experience, 2) education, 3) skill and technique, and 4) education and training (see Table 3). In other words, a new age requires a new kind of 'PEST control'.

The first step in such PEST control is evaluation; the Japanese experience offers a case in which a system for evaluating museums has been established. Museum personnel who visit the JAM website can enter basic information for each volume and appraise their own museum's capabilities in the country's current museum environment, using a self-evaluation system developed and published on the website⁹. A

standardized version of this self-evaluation system for East Asia could easily be applied in the Asia-Pacific region, enabling comparative research for the evaluation of each museum.

The museums of the Asia-Pacific region need to shed their current practice of operating on a stand-alone basis, trying to do everything themselves. To accomplish this transition, we have entered an era when museums must work with surrounding regions and pursue common policies to promote museum operations. A re-launch is needed, in which museums engage in dialogue beyond national and museum-system frameworks, touching on museum, educational and cultural-promotion policy.

One plan that Asia's museums can easily implement is an 'Asian Museum Award' or 'Asian Award for Museum Management Quality'. Such an award could be modeled after the European Museum of the Year Award. What is clearly needed is a series of training programs to contribute to the improvement of museum quality.

Table 3. New approaches to PEST control (prepared by the author)

Change in museum operating environment	Museum environments in which the trend toward specialization is strong	Areas in which museum specialists are needed immediately
Policy	Performance and evaluation	Practice
Economy	Ethics and conduct of behavior	Education
Society	Standards for management	Skills improvement
Technology	Renewed focus on professionalism	Training

⁹ This website 'Museum evaluation system' can be tried only in Japanese. <http://www.j-muse.or.jp/04links/jikotenken.php>.

Current Status of Museum Education and Related Issues

Museum education and museum pedagogy

We now shift our focus to the issue of museum education. Japan's museum world was profoundly influenced by a book by American academic and anthropologist Carl E. Guthe entitled 'So You want a Good Museum: A Guide to the Management of Small Museums' (1957, AAM). In this book, Guthe repeatedly points out that museums require organization and systematization. He emphasizes that a museum's educational programs need to be organized and systematized, whether for application in exhibition methods or in educational activities for children and students. Through countless examples, Guthe demonstrates how various museums and art museums have improved their educational techniques.

So how should Japan's museums organize their educational activities and programs as Guthe advocates? How should systems for educational operations be erected? Certainly some art museums organize their activities to host workshops but on closer inspection we find that visitors typically attend these workshops as one-off events, rather than on a continuing basis.

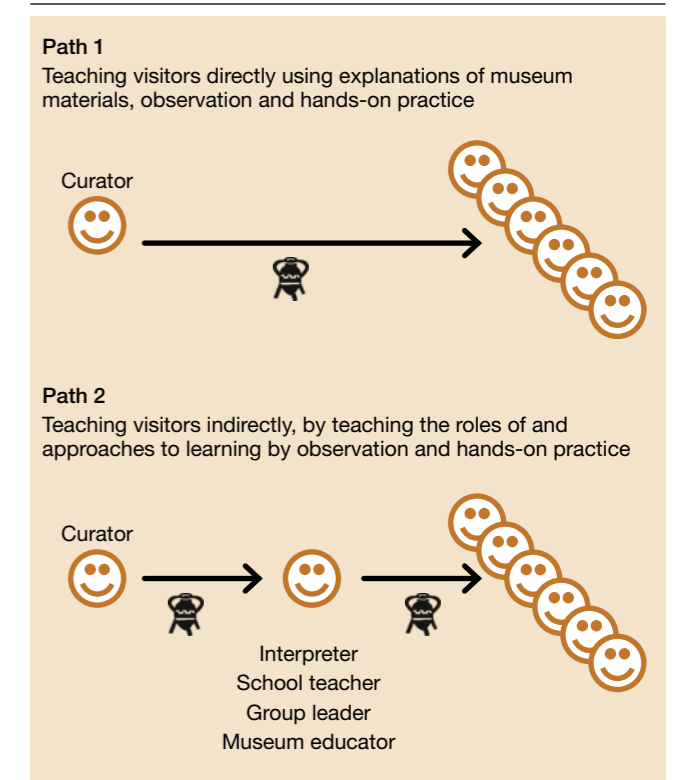
Let us consider a hypothetical example in which a museum operates its educational activities through two paths, as illustrated in this page¹⁰. These are educational activities offered by the curators

¹⁰ A number of definitions for 'museum education' exist. For our purposes, museum education is defined as in *The Museum Education Handbook* (Schwann, 1992): 'Education for museums, in museums, through museums and from museums'.

¹¹ Resource: E.MIZUSHIMA(2012), *Museology* vol.III, Gakubunsha, p261.

themselves and educational activities offered by curators through others, such as instructors and volunteers. Even if both types of educational activities use materials and collections, the methodology for each is different.

Figure 2. Two paths for museum education¹¹



This difference is not, however, widely recognized in museum-education activities in Japan. Ideally,

museums should adopt a combination of these two approaches. Under the conditions prevalent in Japanese museums today, museum education and museum pedagogy need to be clearly distinguished¹². The reason is that, if a single curator assumes all museum educational activities offered in the museum for visitors (gallery talks, etc.), the frequency of such activities is necessarily limited.

Providing education to people related to school education and to the volunteers who support the museum leads is effective in cultivating museum culture and broadening the visitor base. The results differ depending on which of the two paths the museum chooses.

One of the roles of a museum is to serve as a beacon for lifelong learning. Traditionally this concept has been thought to consist of preserving, collecting, exhibiting, conducting surveys and research, and conveying traditional culture to future generations. In the civil society of modern Japan, however, the primary function demanded of museums is education, and museums that serve as institutions of lifelong learning play a vital role in that society. Increasingly museums will be judged not on the quantity but on the quality of their educational programs and other activities. Museums are a part of the nation's infrastructure for cultural development, and once the number of museums has reached a certain critical mass, it is naturally expected to shift the emphasis to improving quality.

If we accept for the moment the definition that 'education is the power to influence others', then the 'educational power of a museum' must lie in serving as a stimulus that energizes the lives of a people. The comprehensive educational power of museums, 'museum power' as it were, has never been in greater demand than today.

That being the case, museums must revise their activities focused on museum education. They must be aware of the management strategy they will need as their function changes and know who their target segment is (schoolchildren, the general public, the elderly, specialists, foreign tourists, etc.). Managing this process wisely is the key to museums' growth and progress.

Issues in museum education: Improving 'museum literacy'

The phrase 'museum education' has two possible meanings. It can mean the educational activities offered to visitors within the museum, or it can mean improving people's understanding of how to use museums—their 'museum literacy'.

Japan's National Museum of Nature and Science has committed efforts to two operations in recent years. The first of these is the development of courses for 'science communicators' who can link the museum with visitors. The second is the deployment of

'museum-university partnerships'. In the former operation, the science communicators play the role of improving visitors' museum literacy, helping them to understand how to use the museum to greatest effect. In the latter, the museum partners with 58 universities across Japan; the universities pay the National Museum of Nature and Science an annual fee, in return for which they can receive a range of services from the museum. For example, any student of a partner university is entitled to free admission to the museum. Such students can also take part in practical museum training at the museum.

Personnel Training and Museology Education *Curator training systems in Japan*

Curators work in the background to maintain the quality of Japan's museums. In Japan, curators obtain their qualifications at the national level, usually through a university. While some 300 Japanese universities offer courses in museum science, specialized departments and major subjects at graduate schools are few. In fact, most currently serving curators teach part-time. Since 2012, in tandem with a revision of the Museum Law, the national government has introduced a new curriculum for museum-curation courses, and students are required to pass certain 'subjects involving museums' to receive national qualification. These subjects are: introduction to lifelong learning, introduction to museums, theory of museum management, theory of museum collections, theory of museum collection conservation, theory of museum exhibition, theory of museum information and media, theory of museum education and museum practicums.

Heretofore the research activities of curators have tended to be cloistered. Today's curators must shift

their mindset toward activities in the service of citizens, seeing their duties from museum users' point of view. At the same time, museums must join hands with partners, such as universities or their regional communities, to serve a diverse range of scholarly needs. It is time for a fundamental rethink of what a museum is.

Recent years have seen an increasing availability of curator training programs and textbooks for use in university Museology programs. By the same token, currently serving curators are finding that they are expected to possess strong professional skills not only in collection study and research, exhibitions and education, but also in the operation and management of museum activities. Recurrent education for curators may be another emerging issue.

These modern demands cannot be satisfied at the undergraduate level. Japan's museum community must take a serious look at graduate studies to prepare a more advanced grade of professional education. In some cases, with an eye on internationalization, museums may need to study the state of Museology and museum education at museums in neighboring countries. ICOM's International Committee on the Training of Personnel (ICTOP) has published a document entitled *The ICOM Curricula Guidelines for Museum Professional Development*. Recalling the 'subjects involving museums' at Japanese universities, these subjects consist of only a small part of the ICOM-recommended curriculum.

As museum activities grow ever more international in character, Japan's curators must become able to compete on an equal basis with their counterparts

¹² Whereas training provided in school settings is usually assumed to be compulsory or mandatory, in the museum context this training is presumed to be undertaken of the participant's free will (Schouten 1987, 'L'Education dans les musées: un défi permanent', *Museum* no.156, p. 241). In Germany, the term *Pädagogik*, 'educational science', is frequently used; the 'science of museum education' is thus *museumspädagogik*. This term refers to the entire range of activities provided at museums, regardless of visitors' age, educational level or social background.

overseas. ICOM is expected to release a booklet entitled *International Standards for Improving the Quality of Professional Curators*. Japan's museum community will need to be aware of these standards, applying them where appropriate, and once more review the Japanese system for curator development.

Curator training systems in South Korea

Like Japan, South Korea has a national qualification system for curators. Unlike Japan, however, curators in South Korea are divided into levels 1, 2, 3 and 3-plus, in ascending order of accomplishment. Curators are ranked in terms of number of years of experience and academic degree, demonstrating a clearly defined system of professional organization. During the deliberations leading to the revision of the Museum Law (2008), Japan's lawmakers considered adopting a similar system of levels, but dropped the idea.

The training of curators is flourishing in South Korea's universities. Not only is the number of museums on the rise, but the number of major subjects in Museology offered at universities is mounting as well. The skills of South Korean curators have reached an impressive level. Though exact figures are hard to come by, as many universities do not name their Museology departments and major subjects directly¹³, some 10 to 20 schools are thought to be in operation nationwide. Famous examples include the Department of Cultural Properties Management at the Korean National University of Cultural Heritage, the museum-education studies program at Hanyang University, the major in museum and art-museum studies at the Graduate

School of Education of Kyunghee University, and the major in art-museum and museum studies at the Graduate School of Public Administration, Kookmin University, among others.

Of particular note is that South Korea is remarkably replete with academic and professional associations related to museums. The list of academic associations includes the following:

- The Korean Museum Association
- The Korean Museum Educational Association
- The Korean Cultural Education Association
- The Korean Association of Culture and Art Management
- The Korean Association of Cultural Space Construction
- The Korean Exhibition Design Association
- The Korean Museum Marketing Association
- The Forum on the Future of Korean Museums
- The Korean Research Center for Management of Museum Cultural Resources and Technology etc.

These academic and professional associations promote the professionalism of Museology and related fields in South Korea, and their effect is to elevate the general level of the profession. However, these associations have been criticized for being too specialized, making it difficult to gain an overall picture of Museology in the country. To bring the field closer together, almost all of the museum-related academic and professional associations in South Korea united in 2007 to hold an 'International Academic Conference

on Korean Museums'. This conference convenes every year on International Museum Day, around May 18. Japanese researchers take part in this event every year, deepening ties of professional exchange.

Museology education in China

According to China's Ministry of Education, the number of universities teaching Museology in China is 20¹⁴. Around 2000, only five such universities existed nationwide, but from 2010 to 2012, the number shot up from five to 20 just in the span of two years. This sudden and startling increase has prompted a shortage of Museology instructors; as a result, most of the instructors tasked with teaching Museology are not specialists in Museology but hail from fields such as history, archeology, anthropology and art history. Some universities conclude agreements with Museology instructors from Europe and with universities in North America. For example, Beijing Normal University partners with the University of British Columbia in Canada to offer a graduate course in museum education.

Museology education in Taiwan

In Taiwan, courses in Museology are offered at four universities that receive financial support for the purpose from the Taiwanese government¹⁵. Of these, the Graduate Institute of Museum Studies at Taipei

National University of the Arts (TNUA) and the Graduate Institute of Conservation of Cultural Relics and Museology at Tainan National University place particular emphasis on Museology education.

One example of international partnership in Taiwan is an academic-exchange agreement concluded in May 2009 between TNUA and Japan's National Museum of Ethnology (located in Osaka). Established in 1982 as the National Institute of the Arts, TNUA adopted its current name only in 2001. Though a relatively new university, TNUA stands as Taiwan's highest institute of education for learning and research in the arts. In 2001 TNUA established the College of Cultural Resources (at the department level), which became the basis for the establishment of the Graduate School of Museum Studies. Since that time TNUA has taken its place as the nerve center for Museology research in Taiwan. Like other countries in the region, Taiwan is in the midst of a boom in museum construction, with one museum after another being newly established or expanded. Even so, TNUA's importance as a center of research and education in the arts and in Museology is expected to continue to grow from strength to strength in the years to come.

Taiwan translates research papers on Museology from countries around the world, and a large volume of academic works by her researchers are published.

¹³ For example, museum science is offered at Daejeon Health Sciences College through its Cultural Properties Department, Faculty of Social Practice.

¹⁴ Peking University, China Social Science Academy (graduate school only), Minzu University of China, Beijing Normal University, Renmin University of China, Jilin University, Sichuan University, Sun Yat-Sen University, Zhejiang University, Shandong University, Fudan University, Nankai University, Wuhan University, Zhengzhou University, Northwest University, Xiamen University, Jinan University, Anhui University, Shanxi University, Liaoning University

¹⁵ Taipei National University of the Arts, Graduate Institute of Museum Studies, National Taiwan University of the Arts, Graduate School of the Art Management & Culture Policy, Tainan National University, Graduate Institute of Conservation of Cultural Relics and Museology, Fu-Jen Catholic university(private school), Graduate Institute of Museum Studies. In addition, some universities offer classes in museum science as research subjects within major subjects in tourism, management, cultural industries and the like. Examples include National Taipei University of Education and the Department of Cultural and Creative Industries Management at the College of Humanities and Arts.

The island nation also plays host to an impressive list of international conferences on Museology. Since 2010 alone, National Taipei University of Education has hosted Museum 2010, 2011 and 2012 in partnership with The University of Leicester of the United Kingdom, and has sponsored international symposiums on the subject.

In summary, China, South Korea and Taiwan are highly educated societies. The excellent manager class currently active in these countries' museums and art museums include many who have studied Museology as exchange students at universities in Europe and North America. Museology education continues to flourish in Taiwan, and every year Taiwanese university students arrive at The University of Leicester's School of Museum Studies in groups of 10¹⁶.

It is natural to expect that, perhaps in reaction to the above trends, voices will inevitably be raised in the countries of East Asia advocating the creation of an Asian Museology, tailored to the history, values and traditional culture of Asia.

Issues in Museology Research in an Era of Globalization

Museological research in Japan

This paper turns next to museum research conducted in Japan (leaving aside personal research projects by individual museum researchers). In Japan, a number of academic societies related to museums are active, in addition to JAM.

The revision of the Museum Law in 2008 was preceded by wide-ranging research activities on the part of JAM. The organization tabled a series of reports, which may properly be considered preparation for the above-mentioned revision. These included *Museums in Dialogue and Partnership: Dialogue for Understanding and Partnership for Action: Creating a New Age of the Museum with Citizens* (2001) and *The Desired State of Museums* (2003), as well as *Mission Planning Handbook* and *Handbook of Collection Handling* (2004). More recent initiatives by JAM have been notable for their reflection of themes suited to the times, acting on advice from MEXT. Examples of survey and research reports and manuals published by JAM in recent years include *International Comparison Survey of Educational Support for Museums (UK, France, Germany, US, Canada, Japan)*¹⁷ (2001–2003); *Development of Educational Support Programs by Curators*, *Development of Educational Programs for Elderly Visitors to Museums*, and *Development of Programs for Effective Use of Museums by Junior-high-school and High-school Students* (both 2001–2004); *Foreign Visitors, Barrier-free Design, Elderly Visitors*, part of the *Making Museums Friendly to Everyone series* (2005–2007), and *Museum Management and Management Indices: Developing Systems for Evaluation* (2006–2008).

JAM has had virtually of the major recommendations and academic papers presented at ICOM conferences and the like translated into Japanese and distributed.

Examples include *Museum Registration Methods* (AAM, 1957), translated in 1967, *Museums Today and Tomorrow*, translated in 1972, *The organization of museums: practical advice* (UNESCO, 1960), translated in 1973, and *Museum Basics*, translated in 1995. JAM translated and published these works in its capacity as the ICOM Japan Committee. Needless to say, ICOM Code of Ethics and Key Concept of Museology (2010, ICOM/ICOFOM) are also translated into Japanese.

Academic associations related to museums in Japan include the Museological Society of Japan, the Japan Society of Exhibitions Studies, the Japan Museum Management Academy (JMMA) and the Japan Art Documentation Society.

In museum research it is imperative to understand international trends and conduct research from an international perspective. The activities of JMMA in particular are international in scope. For example, every year since 1998, JMMA has invited one or two museum researchers to Japan for research and debate; to date over 25 researchers have participated. JMMA actively researches and gathers information on trends and conditions overseas, seeking out new trends in the world of museums, approaches not yet seen in Japan, changes in policies and systems, and emerging directions in all of the above. While the number of people invited is small, JMMA is extensively engaged in debate and dialogue with researchers from overseas. A special project to invite overseas instructors to Japan not only helps the association to build personal contacts but also plays a role, however modest, in joining the Japanese museum community to a larger international network. From the first invitation in 1998 to the 10th in 2008, researchers were invited from

Western countries (the UK, France, the Netherlands, the US and Canada); from the 11th occasion onward, however, JMMA dedicated itself to exchange with researchers from South Korea, Taiwan and China. Its reason was that it had adopted a 'thesis' (basis for activities) of 'building Museology for Asia'. The shift can also be viewed as a clear expression of a desire to learn from neighboring countries and pursue joint research.

In 2015 JMMA will celebrate its 20th year of operation. In preparation for this auspicious anniversary, Japan's researchers are focusing their efforts on creating an 'encyclopedia of museum management'. This project, which will make the fruits of Japan's Museology research visible to all, should seek international evaluation.



¹⁶ From the Western universities' point of view, the countries of East Asia represent an untapped educational market. As relative laggards in museum-studies research, these countries provide universities in Europe and North America with a fresh source of students.

¹⁷ The English-language version of this international comparison report was distributed at the 2001 ICOM conference in Barcelona.

Precisely because of the rapidly changing times, the methodology of museum management is undergoing a rapid transformation. Today's museums must respond to the needs of the times. If research results in Japan are to serve the needs of society in a meaningful way, Japan's museum community must make clear efforts to enunciate models and theories geared toward returning benefits to society.

Museological research in China

Over the past few years, a number of interesting trends have been emerging in the field of museum research in China. The first is a focus on organization of and investigation into historical archives. A considerable amount of work in this area, which is fundamental to historical research, was carried out in the early 1980s, with some valuable results. Later, however, these efforts declined. In recent years, researchers have renewed their attention to this basic research, and some noteworthy results have emerged, such as Cheng Jun's 'Appendix to Historical Archives of Early Modern Museums in Shanghai' (*Museum Research*, 2005).

The second trend is a move to delve deeper into specific themes. Research is increasingly shifting from museum history at the 'macro', national level to the 'micro', regional level, and from sweeping historical overviews to research on specific themes. On the former point, recent years have seen a steady succession of announcements of research results in regional museum history and the history of specific museums. While many of these results are descriptive in nature, they are significant for the

historical materials they uncover and their expansion of the field. The steady flow of results on specific themes is a marked departure from previous research¹⁸.

A third trend is attention to fields other than history, leading to a shift from description to interpretation¹⁹. Finally, the fourth trend, from the perspective of research methodology, is the beginnings of an attempt to deal with and interpret the history of museums in China from an international perspective. One representative result is *Museums in the 20th Century: Recollections and Outlook* by An Laishun. Though the results reflecting these new trends are few, they will undoubtedly play a valuable role in solving past research problems, and should improve the level of museum research in China.

Museological research in Taiwan

Any discussion of the past century of museum activities in Taiwan must inevitably hark back to China before 1949. In fact, until 1980, awareness of museums was shallow, and Museology research was little more than an extension of museography (the description of a museum's collections). The objective of this museography was no more than a one-sided introduction of methodologies and concepts from other countries. Museum theory was not widely recognized as scholarship, and indeed most of its proponents were people working at museums. Museum research consisted of discoveries regarding work experience and history, as well as points based on archaeology, folklore, cultural anthropology and art history, and their limitations. These characteristics continue to the present day. As in



South Korea, Taiwan stood at a vital turning point in the 1980s: it was in this era that Taiwan began the subjective construction of a culture. This was the period in which the National Museum of Natural Science, the pioneer of the museum movement in Taiwan, established its preparation room. In provinces and cities across Taiwan, the 'hardware' of cultural centers was completed and began operations, launching a distinctive process of development. It was also at this time that dissertations on Museology began to be presented in Taiwan. Publications such as *Museology Quarterly*, published by the National Museum of Natural Science; *Taiwan Museum* and *Taiwan Art*, both published by the National Taiwan Museum; *National Museum of History Quarterly*, from the National Museum of History; the National Palace Museum's *Palace Monthly*; *Modern Art*, published by the Taipei Fine Arts Museum; and *Art Education* from the

National Taiwan Arts Education Institute provided a forum for framing an overview of the concepts and academic theory of Museology debated elsewhere outside specialized books. The demand for related symposiums and workshops intensified as well.

As Museology gained recognition in Taiwan, chronological histories and descriptions and the introduction of techniques and functions gave way to interpretation and understanding, and to consideration and examination of theory. Next, these dissertations came to be embodied in a rich harvest of regional experiences in Museology, as experimental study assumed an increasing share of research. The accumulation of expertise on certain specific topics had begun.

Examples of topics that began to receive attention during

¹⁸ For example, *Construction of Museums in China Before 1949* by Li Guoao.

¹⁹ For example, *Investigation into Awareness of Museums Since the Beginning of Modern China* by Yang Zhigang.

this time are the status of actual museum operations within various cultural systems, historical investigations of the internal functions of museums, the nature of the socio-cultural roles of museums and their change over time, and the character of museums in a wide range of categories. Museology researchers also began to participate with background knowledge in other specialized fields, including anthropology, architecture, history, biology and public administration. The results of these inquiries formed the foundations of modern Museology in Taiwan. Also, some curators who were previously focused on museums in Taiwan and their academic development discovered a new pragmatism in museum operations. These curators began to ground themselves deeply in practical techniques and concepts, embracing a passion for linking knowledge to everyday life.

During the same period, however, the limitations of Taiwan's nascent museum movement became clear. When the minority of curators described above looked at the museum movement emerging in Taiwan, they



found that many of the new demands were excessive, as they lacked the technology, experience and concepts to acquire meaningful expertise. Moreover, because Taiwan's museums lacked the foundations necessary for academic research, their theoretical development and personnel education and training were extremely limited.

Today Taiwan's museums are making headway on these issues. As described earlier, international conferences related to museums are held in Taiwan every year, and steady if sluggish progress is being made. One issue that may pose a challenge is the way in which neighboring countries come to grips with these results.

Formation of an Asian Network to Establish Personnel Training Systems

How should a country make use of its cultural heritages?

It is fair to say that the pace of development of Asia's museums is slower than that of their counterparts in Europe and North America. While Japan, South Korea, China and Taiwan are advanced in comparison with other Asian countries, overall their societies' awareness of museums has shown little improvement. Fortunately, though much remains to be desired in the development of museums, traditional cultures and ways of life are still preserved in many regions of Asia and are regarded as cultural heritages.

Given the rapid advance of globalization today, museums must step up their efforts to preserve traditional cultures. When considering this state of affairs, the most effective way to accelerate the development of museum activities in Asia is to cultivate sufficient human resources. Museums must raise the quality of their specialist personnel.

One reason this effort is vital is financial. Museums require financial support to expand their operations, so they need personnel who can attract that financial support and see that financial resources are used efficiently. Securing such capable personnel is the fastest route to the invigoration of museum activities.

The cultivation of such personnel is fraught with challenges. Social conditions in each country and region must be taken into account, and may even make such personnel development impossible. In the latter case, museums may consider whether they need to resort to international cooperation or aid.

Museums must therefore adopt a multidimensional strategy in training specialist personnel. International exchange, conducted with due consideration of the social conditions in each region, will likely form the basis for expansion of museum activities generally in Asia.

While the training of specialists among the museums of Japan, South Korea, China and Taiwan is extremely desirable in itself, it can also serve as a springboard for exchange with other regions. Such exchange can generate some wonderful synergies. This is because, while East Asia lags behind Europe and North America, the region is relatively gifted in terms of museum specialists, who are highly active. The results of exchange among the museums of East Asia would spread immediately to other regions; in the long term, the museums of East Asia that play a leading role in this process can be expected to evolve into major centers of museum-specialist development.

Orientation of museum networks in Asia

A number of major museum networks are active in Asia

today. The most important of these is ICOM-ASPAC, which acts as a regional mechanism for international museum conferences. Its current roster of over 30 member countries convenes conferences once every three years, each time focusing on a theme of high topical interest. Among the themes taken up at recent ICOM-ASPAC conferences are regional museums and the preservation or exploitation of cultural heritage issues.

The Asia-Europe Museum Network (ASEMUS), as the name suggests, includes museums in both Asia and Europe, and exchange between these two regions is the network's forte. Among its best-known projects is the Virtual Collection of Masterpieces (VCM), which introduces Asian culture through various museums. Unfortunately, ASEMUS lacks strong foundations as a forum for international exchange among the museums in each country. This organization is poorly suited to the tasks of reflecting the unique characteristics of cultural preservation in Asia and of consistently handling some specific problems as key issues confronting general museum activities.

Museum activities must reflect a variety of social and cultural characteristics of their regions. It must not be overlooked that a great many of Asia's regions continue to value, protect and pass on their traditional cultures. Many traditional societies remain relatively closed to outside influences and have not yet opened to the wider world. Moreover, many regions take an active part in preserving the forms of traditional societies, mindful of their status as developing regions.

Nonetheless, many of these cultures are under threat and may disappear entirely under the onslaught of rapid development born of economic liberalization.

The protection of traditional cultures is the core duty of museum activities. Given the economic disparities among the countries in Asia, new approaches must be devised to overcome these disparities through the domain of museum activities. A great diversity of cultures is dispersed throughout the vast region of Asia, and this cultural diversity must be upheld through the activities of the region's museums.

The universal imperative in the role of museums in the societies of Asia is twofold: to support regional identities through the preservation of the traditional cultures of each region; and to provide the foundations for cultural industries that will benefit regional economies over the long term, by supporting cultural diversity. Of course, these are stated aims of museums in other regions as well. In point of fact, however, it is by supporting these objectives through the preservation of traditional cultures as their most important mission that the museums of Asia draw a sharp distinction between themselves and the museums of other regions.

For Asia's museum networks, a close look at the orientation described above indicates that these associations must draft suitable plans explaining how the development of the region's museums is to be achieved. For Asia's museum professionals, pending questions include the creation of an Asian museum culture and the achievement of a radical shift in each regional society's awareness of the social functions of museums. Success in these endeavors will provide the most unshakeable foundation for the development of the region's museums.

The reason why this is so is that these missions are key concerns of both the governments of each Asian country and of the region's museum specialists. Through detailed

analyses of current social and cultural conditions in each region, models must be developed for drafting museum development strategies suited to the conditions of each region and resolutely applying them in each location. This work will form one of the key trends of the 21st century.

Specialist museum personnel as the nucleus of museum networks

The success or failure of museum networks is determined by three factors. The first of these is common objectives. The second is the specialized personnel, who understand these objectives fully and can strive resolutely toward their fulfillment. The third factor is a system of exchange that facilitates the smooth formation of mutual understanding. Currently the museum specialists of Japan, China, South Korea and Taiwan are broadly similar in orientation. They are roughly equal in their preparation of measures to develop their museums and in the diligent execution of those measures.



Even so, solutions are urgently needed for the problem of securing sufficient numbers of specialized personnel of sufficient caliber in each region. If specialized personnel who are passionate about their work are in place, creating the means for exchange and mutual understanding is not particularly difficult. Regardless of the practical social circumstances, securing specialist personnel with excellent training and a strong sense of cultural mission is an urgent priority. This is the most vital task for the stimulation of museum activities in Asia and a basic stage in the process.

Unfortunately, the necessary educational institutions remain a bottleneck. Perhaps more than in any other discipline, specialist museum personnel must acquire a diverse corpus of cultural knowledge. They must possess a solid understanding of and, most importantly, passion for cultural heritage. Sadly, while many universities and other institutions play the role of providing museum-related education and retraining, few universities and research institutions possess the coordinated framework necessary in fields such as Museology and are able to teach the requisite knowledge in a comprehensive fashion.

Ideally these problems should be solved on an international level. A wide range of systematic proposals must be prepared if we are to train wise museum professionals who understand the value of museums in Asia; the most advisable approach is to handle these efforts through international networking. The educational system of one region (or country) cannot create a museum culture and support cultural diversity on its own. Personnel development through international networking is a necessary approach in sharing the pending problems that Asian museums face in common.

East Asian museum networks as a model for international cooperation

The societies of China, South Korea, Taiwan and Japan are exceptionally closely related both geographically and culturally. They hold more in common with each other than do the societies of virtually any other region. The modern museum cultures of these countries bear a great many similarities, in aspects such as museum exhibitions and the large number of private museums in operation, among others. Compared with other regions, the countries of East Asia are strikingly similar in socioeconomic terms as well. For these reasons, East Asian museum networks hold an extremely important position as a pioneering phase for a network embracing all of Asia's regions. These networks can be expected to enable the development of models for the creation of an Asian museum culture.

As stated above, the most important objective of this museum network is the training of the next generation of museum specialists. Obviously the opportunities to create the Asian museum culture alluded to earlier are sharply restricted if the cultivation of capable specialists is not achieved. The key to creating this cohort of highly professional museum specialists lies in the development of programs to forge links among the various museum-related fields. Similarly, the key to development of an Asian Museology is to focus on the question: Which fields need to be newly organized?

The development of joint programs for the training of specialized personnel needs to be considered from a wide range of perspectives. Starting from a base of continuing exchange among existing fields of specialization (specialized academic associations), we must proceed to build out a framework for smooth and fruitful exchange in new directions.

One such direction is the joint development of general education in Museology. It should be possible to achieve this goal through approaches such as exchange of credits among universities and joint administration of graduate study programs. This in turn can be achieved through the joint development of teaching materials through joint forums of the specialists who teach Museology in East Asia. To foster educational and research exchange among specialized fields, each country could be assigned a domain of responsibility. This approach is doubly desirable, as it would enable the development of specialized teaching materials and would offer a permanent and economically effective mechanism of exchange.

Conclusion

Museum culture has entered a new phase globally. At the same time as museums embrace the international nature of modern society, their role as a core supporter of regional cultural identities, whether society is aware of that role or not, is growing in importance as never before.

In another seeming contradiction, museums are among the most conservative institutions in our modern world, yet at the same time they must apply the most state-of-the-art techniques and approaches in their work. Just as the barriers separating societies are falling all around us, our museum cultures are transcending national boundaries to become global in character, even as museums fulfill their missions as institutions of unshakeable support for regional cultural identities.

When we consider the key trends in East Asia, it is clear that museums must achieve their missions by dramatically bolstering the skills of their specialist personnel, so they can respond dynamically to the



rapid changes unfolding in international society. For this reason, international cooperation is earnestly to be desired as a means for the cultivation of specialist personnel who combine high ideals with expert knowledge.

These issues are of present and immediate importance. The formation of networks for the cultivation of and exchange among museum specialists is the starting point for a new age in museum development throughout Asia. These networks will surely serve as a resolute foundation for the achievement of an Asian museum culture.

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Concluding Remarks

Marie Bourke

The outcomes of *New Trends in Museums of the 21st Century* are documented in the symposium and roundtable proceedings, Survey 2012, and essays in this Report. Was it a useful exercise to try to explore such a vast terrain? Dr. Christina Kreps, “As a non-EU member, participating in the LEM Project has been especially rewarding because it has given me the opportunity to see and experience, first hand, a wide range of museum types and practices throughout Europe. The experience has allowed me to make comparisons and gain insight into the many social forces behind current museological trends, not only within the EU but also in the US. I have been inspired by how much the project has achieved given the diversity of participants’ national, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. This diversity, rather than creating barriers and limitations, has opened doors and possibilities. The LEM Project network is an exemplary model of international exchange and collaboration.” This perspective explains the importance of placing this work within a wider framework, particularly as there is no one answer to all of these questions but a series of outcomes, and no single solution but a range of options, each one with different repercussions.

The options open to museum practitioners were articulated at the events associated with this project and in the online discussions. Professor Declan McGonagle, Director of the National College of Art

and Design in Dublin, gave a timely reflection on the circumstances: “What we are working through is not actually a recession – a period of negative economic activity – which will come to an end, resulting in a fundamental resetting of the key assumptions around which much of our social, economic and cultural development and provisions have been shaped across Europe, since World War II”. David Anderson, Director General of Amagueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales, observed the concerns over the social economic impact, “Across much of the world, but certainly in the United Kingdom – and perhaps in Ireland? – we see a growing gap between rich and poor, with the obscene wealth of a few contrasting with the obscene poverty and insecurity of a growing portion of the wider working population. We see a relative concentration of power and resource in capitals, and the abandonment of peripheries. We see a loss of faith in the democratic process.” Sara Selwood, Professor of Cultural Policy and Management at London City University, who has spent a good portion of her career analysing trends, commented on the value of culture and key cultural trends, “In a future in which museums will have fewer resources, will need to focus more on their collections and will have a narrower, if not more dedicated group of visitors, they may have no option but to be more single-minded; one might hope that they will be doing what several of them already do best – capturing audiences’ imaginations and humanitarian

content”.¹ These views are a reminder of how major changes in society have a profound effect on people. If museums and cultural institutions are firmly rooted in the community, paying attention to the changing circumstances of that community, then they should have already taken steps to change their operation in order to serve the needs of that community.

Many of the processes of change have been documented in a range of excellent reports, including those produced by the Centre of the Future of Museums (US); the Network of European Museums Organizations; the Museums Association (UK); the American Alliance of Museums; and the Netherlands Museums Association.² Most of these address immediate concerns and use them as a guide to chart ideas for the future. They share a common thread with the observations of Working Group 1 *New Trends in Museums of the 21st century* and that is their unity over the severity of the economic downturn, the length of time that it is taking (with few signs of improvement) and the reality of the impact being just as serious overseas as it is in Europe. Budgetary cuts of varying degrees are so severe that some museums

have closed. Museums have reduced their opening hours, there are room closures, a number have cut out evening openings, while other museums have closed an extra day a week. The next casualty of cuts is staff, with reductions in the number of people working in museums, full-time, part-time, temporary and seasonal. In effect, staff numbers have been reduced through cuts or a jobs embargo. Fewer people are doing more jobs and increasing amounts of work. Retail outlets, an important source of revenue, are losing income through a lack of visitors. Some museums have reported a sharp decline in visitor numbers while others note an increase due to free admission, due to parents seeking free activities for their children and from people who have taken early retirement. The result is an inability to maintain the quality service that museums have worked so hard to build.

The case studies outlined in this Report offer a wider view of how museums can assess their situation, review what has to be done, and make changes. The case histories represent a practical attempt to show how different museums - traditional, early 20th century and brand new – have sought to update, refurbish,

modernise and implement as many new services and facilities as possible. In the words of Sofia Tsilidou of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture & Tourism – Directorate of Museums in Greece, who felt that “The case studies proved a useful way of charting change. It is hard to modernise older museums, in this instance a state museum, which is not necessarily a pioneer at European level but is consciously adopting and implementing fresh new agendas in adult learning and is, therefore, setting the tone for changes and developments at state museum level.” The range of museums listed serves to illustrate what a number of museums have done to progress and improve.

It's important to understand that every improvement to a museum assists in engaging new audiences. This background to the need for change is explored by Siebe Weide in the article, ‘On the future of museums’.³ These changing patterns include the rapidly ageing population of Europe and North America; the baby boomer generation now on pensions; the increase in people with free time; the potential of volunteers to assist museums; the fact of Europe losing its historical advantage as an economic power as it is in the process of transition and seeking new sources of wealth. There is a generation issue - new generations of young people are accustomed to the digital world from inception and experience the world in a different way. They question the authority of museums, they like to make their own decisions about what they consider art and antiquity and are just as happy to ignore museums if they do not attract them through social networking and provide the lifestyle services

that they want. There are other concerns about sustainability regarding the management and storage of collections and the issue of climate control and energy efficient museums. Massimo Negri also makes reference to many of these issues, together with a subsequent series of case histories. Most of the responses to the Survey 2012 and participants at the symposium and roundtable reflected these concerns. Gita Šapranaukaitė, Director of the Estate Academy of Museum Rumšiškės in Lithuania, found the Survey 2012 and its outcomes a particularly useful way of charting trends, “A great job was done by the Working Group in providing full details about all the Survey questions and results. Our country lacks this type of analysis and could benefit from adopting this method in the future.” The question is, are these concerns being addressed and fast enough?

Some of the longer-term reports point towards the potential of technologically based museums, such as, ‘Returns to the Future with TrendsWatch 2013’, in which they highlight what a museum visit of the future might be like. The visitor might arrive at the museum and borrowing a ‘digital disconnect’ pouch to go offline for a stress-free visit. It might include the whole digital experience by using mobile devices to track what exhibits they wish to view and log in the objects or artworks they enjoyed. A trip to the museum’s lounge-café might be to use a tablet to complete an essay to earn a credit towards a digital badge on the college art history course. They might spend time in the café with other residents of micro-developments in the local neighborhood who like to meet in the museum.

¹ M Bourke (editor). *Future Forecasting: the Challenges facing Museums and Cultural Institutions in the 21st Century*. Proceedings of the Roundtable and Symposium. (National Gallery of Ireland, 2012).

² *Agenda 2026 A Study on the Dutch Museum Sector*, Netherlands Museums Association. www.museumvereniging.nl.
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Trendswatch 2013: Back to the Future. (American Alliance of Museums, 2013). www.aam-us.org.

³ S. Wiede. On the Future of Museums. *NEMO News*, Newsletter of the Network of European Museum Organisations, German Museums Association, 2, 2012. www.ne-mo.org.

While drinking a herb tea or latte, they might bring up the museum's website to check a teen art lab project and see how their school's participants are doing. On leaving they might visit the museum shop to collect a print-on-demand reproduction of their favourite Greek urn, ceramic or sculpture (having texted an order in advance to the shop's 3-D printing centre). It is an interesting scenario but it is not the main purpose of museums and there are reservations, as in the case of Dr. Henrik Zipsane, Director of Jamtli Foundation and Professor at Linköping University, "Participating in the LEM working group on Trends in Museums of the 21st century has been an exciting experience. The broad mapping of trends and the discussions of these are important and must continue to be an open ended process. Museums must continuously ask themselves what their mission is here and now and find answers. The LEM Working Group on trends is a good way to follow and participate in the discussions for professionals. I have been surprised to find that a lot of museums see the potential of ITC as an answer to many of the challenges of today and tomorrow." This is a good cautionary comment, however it is still important to be aware of just how fast technology is developing, how slow museums are to embrace these developments (they are heavily resource dependant), and the implications for museums in losing younger generations if they do not find a way to implement them.

Dr. Kreps' essay, which focuses on the multiple ways in which museums can engage with communities and

communities can engage with museums, links in with many themes relating to *New Trends in Museums of the 21st century*. She makes the point about moving away from describing audiences as 'visitors and 'publics' to 'fellow citizens and members of civil society'. The author quotes Bernadette Lynch in noting that museums frequently view their relationship with the community as from an 'us and them' perspective which develops an insider/outsider mentality, or the concept of 'others', as has come up elsewhere in this Report. She refers to what Graham Black describes as the 'great and local issues of the day' that is about seeing museums create initiatives for community partnerships and for reinventing civic roles. In summing up she refers to Ellen Hirzy's aspiration that the character of a civically engaged museum might have some of the key elements of a place of civic engagement, that is when 'museum and community intersect', where the 'museum becomes a centre where people gather to meet and converse', a place that 'celebrates the richness of individual and collective experience', a museum that is a participant in 'problem solving', an 'active, visible player in civic life, a safe haven, a trusted incubator of change'.⁴

Perhaps for a European audience, Dr. Eiji Mizushima's article is the most fascinating due to the fact that, as it is based on the East Asian museum world, this enables developments in Europe to be understood in wider framework. In his opening remarks he quickly points out the main points in the transformation of East Asian museums: 'growing internationalization',

the 'digitization of the collections' and the 'increase in educational activities'. From here he sets out to present a systematic overview of the 'Key Trends in Museums in East Asia' under six different headings (1) Development of museums in East Asia (Japan, China, South Korea and Taiwan); (2) Museum systems in East Asia and formation of International networks; (3) Current status of museum education and related issues; (4) Personnel training and museological education; (5) Issues in museology research in an era of globalization; (6) Formation of an Asian network to establish personnel training systems. He uses a Japanese *Haiku* poem to illustrate the two facets of museum management: 'immutability' – that of the museum as a repository of its society's collective memory e.g. its *raison d'être*; and 'fluidity' – educational activities and services that are emerging as one of the most important issues for Japanese museums. He thereby begins the process of charting the pace of development in East Asia in this remarkable essay, and no summary does it justice as it encapsulates so much new material that comes across as both revealing and startling to a European audience. For instance, Japan is only second to the United States as a 'museum superpower' with 18,000 museums nationwide, where 280 million people visit museums in a country of 150 million. In the case of modern South Korea, where 840 'registered museums' serve a population of 50.22 million, the museum world is in a state of 'headlong expansion'. The rapid rate of development continues in China where the museum sector is 'booming' and museums are growing at a 'breakneck pace' and where the increase in museums is planned to grow to 3,500 in a few years to serve a population of 1.34 billion. In the meantime, Taiwan is developing museums at a 'blistering pace' and now

750 museums/cultural institutions serve a population of 23 million. These are staggering figures and statistics. One of the points that Dr. Mizushima focuses on is the need to develop educational services and facilities so that museums can enhance their ability to provide lifelong learning. As is the case in Ireland, museums will increasingly be judged not on quantity but on the quality of their educational services through a shift to improve quality. In that context, the critical role of training the next generation of museum staff and specialists is all important. He makes a plea for the creation of networks to cultivate and exchange thoughts and ideas among international museum specialists – that this would enhance a new age of museum development and assist in improving the foundations of an Asian museum culture.

The essence of the challenge represented by this Report is that museums must engage with a wider more culturally diverse public in more effective ways. They need to encourage online and on-site visitors to participate in the museum and create a welcoming friendly experience that engages the visitor during more flexible opening hours that fit in with a person's lifestyle. The nature of the engagement needs to involve far more short-term temporary exhibitions/ displays and rotation of the permanent collections; an increase in learning and entertaining cultural events and activities; and a digital-virtual presence throughout the institution including an emphasis on social networking. The fact that minority experiences are largely absent from national and major museums is something that was listed in the Survey results. National galleries and museums have to be more conscious of the views and experiences of 'other' members of society because European identity is continually evolving into

⁴ B. Lynch in J. Marstine. *The Contingent Nature of new Museum Ethics. Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics*. 2013. G. Black. *Embedding Civil Engagement in Museums. Museum Management and Curatorship*. 2010. E. Herzy in *Mastering Civic Engagement. A Report from the American Association of Museums*. 2002.

a series of new dynamic identities, and so museums have to become places of exploration, dialogue and of inclusion to enhance national and European understanding.

Working Group 1 is aware that the next generation of museum practitioners will have to think through the challenges outlined in this Report carefully. There is no single solution but a range of different options. It is hoped that they will draw the links more closely between the physical and the virtual museum so that our museums reach more people in ever more meaningful ways. That they will help the museum to move beyond its physical walls - within which are the

original works – and make them accessible online - to attract and engage our audiences and show them how the collections have a real link with people as well as being works of art. This new generation of museum practitioners will learn how to bring these works to life, virtually and physically, and help museums to develop into dynamic centres of learning, creativity, innovation and enjoyment to strengthen communities and enrich people's lives. Watch this space...

My thanks to all the participants in *New Trends in Museums of the 21st century*, the contributors to this Report, and to the members of Working Group 1.



Authors' biographical details

Marie Bourke is Keeper and Head of Education at the National Gallery of Ireland. A researcher, lecturer and writer on Irish art, museum & cultural studies, she has edited ten issues of NGI Museum Proceedings. Her publications include: *The Story of Irish Museums 1790-2000, culture, identity and education* (Cork University Press, 2011, reprinted 2013); *Discover Irish Art*, co-author, Dr. S. Bhreathnach-Lynch (NGI, 1999); *Art in Transition* (NGI, 1998); *Exploring Art* (NGI, 1997); Exhibition Catalogues: *Museums Matter*, co-author, Dr. Bell (Irish Museums Association, 2008); *Drawing Studies: A Celebration* (NGI, 2007); *Learning from Art* (NGI, 2004). Co-ordinator of the LEM Working Group 'Key Trends in Museums of the 21st Century', she is Adjunct Professor in the School of Cultural Policy & Art History, University College Dublin.

Christina Kreps, Ph.D. is Associate Professor of Anthropology, Director of Museum and Heritage Studies and the Museum of Anthropology at the University of Denver, Colorado, USA. She has conducted research on museums and been involved in several museum and heritage protection training programs in Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, the Netherlands, and Italy in addition to her teaching and work in the US. Christina has published widely on cross-cultural and international approaches to museums and museological practice; critical museology, and intangible cultural heritage. She is currently co-editor, with Dr. Richard Sandell (Museum Studies, Leicester University) of the Routledge

series, *Museum Meanings*, and former editor of the journal *Museum Anthropology*.

Eiji MIZUSHIMA is a professor of museology, School of Informatics, University of Tsukuba. He is a founder of Museum and Culture Advanced Research Center in Asia Pacific (MARC-ASPAC). Vice chair of ICOM Japan, Vice president of Japan Museum Management Academy(JMMA), member of Standing Committee of Japanese Association of Museums(2006-2010), Editorial Board member of International Journal of Intangible Heritage (ICOM / National Folk Museum of Korea, 2008-), Advisor for Counsellors' Office of the State Council (China, 2010-).

Majored in Conservation Science at Tokyo University of Science, joined Science Museum/Japan Science Foundation as a curator (1981-2003). Studied "Museologie Scientifique" at Université de Paris VII and CNRS(1987-1988), took an International Summer School of Museology in Bruno, Czeckslovakia (1989), worked for La Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie (CSI, Paris, 1993-1997). During his services in CSI, he majored Muséologie at Ecole National du Patrimoine(1996).

His publication include: *Museology* vol.I – vol.IV (2012-2013), *Museum Studies: Self Study Guide* (in Japanese 1999, 2004, and in Chinese 2010), *Introduction to Cultural Heritage Education* (2006), translation work: *Managing New Museums, A guide to Good Practice* by Timothy Ambrose(1997), *The Care of Historic Musical Instruments* (ICOM/CIMCIM, 2002),

Information Management in Museums by E. ORNA & Ch. Pettitt (2003), *Musées et Muséologie* by Luc Benoist (2003), *Le Patrimoine mondial* By Dominique Audrerie et al (2005).

His research field is world-wide: Turkey, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, France, Spain, Hungary, Romania, etc. He has lectured widely on museology and cultural heritage management in China, Korea and Taiwan.

Massimo Negri is the European Museum Academy Director. Formerly European Museum Forum Director from 2000 to 2009 and member of the Jury of the European Museum of the Year Award from 1983 to 2009. Twice Fulbrighter at the Pennsylvania State University and at the Smithsonian Institution. Independent temporary exhibition specialist and an active lecturer on industrial archaeology, he has also written several publications in this field as well as on museological matters in general. Teaches museology at the State University of Padua. He has recently directed the museological programme of the new Museum of the History of Bologna, and now is member of the Scientific Committee of the renovated Museum of the Duomo Cathedral of Milan.

Caoilte O Mahony graduated with a degree in History of Art and Spanish from University College Cork in 2006. Following the completion of a twelve-month Irish government exchange scholarship in Spain, he returned to Ireland where he was awarded a Master in Arts degree in Cultural Policy & Arts Management from

University College Dublin in 2008. Caoilte then went on to take part in several visual arts-based internships before undertaking a Master of Philosophy in Irish Art History at Trinity College Dublin in 2011. He is currently Tours Organiser at the National Gallery of Ireland.

Margherita Sani works at the Istituto Beni Culturali of the Region Emilia-Romagna, where she is in charge of European museum projects, in particular on museum education, lifelong learning and intercultural dialogue. She is on the NEMO (Network of European Museum Organisations) executive board and a member of ICTOP (ICOM Committee Training Personnel).

Sofia Tsilidou is an archaeologist - museologist working at the Directorate of Museums, Exhibitions and Educational Programmes of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports since 1998. She has been involved in work on the promotion and awareness raising of cultural heritage at national level, the administration of loans from/to the State Archaeological Museums and the coordination of EU-funded museum-related projects of transnational cooperation. She is a Board member of NEMO (Network of European Museum Organisations).

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Modern wing for multimedia (2002) at the Teylers Museum.
© Teylers Museum.

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A small girl pointing at Desden from the Right Bank of the Elbe by Bernardo Bellotto.
© National Gallery of Ireland.

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Bachhaus Eisenach: full immersion in Bach's musical world.
© Massimo Negri.

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The Tower of Time in the courtyard in the Museum of the History of Bologna. A shocking contrast between contemporary and ancient architecture.
© Paolo Righi.

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In big black cloth, several boys are looking at the science phenomenon. Festival by mobile museum in North Japan.
© Óyagi Tsuyoshi.

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Haus der Geschichte Bonn. Contemporary history at hand.
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Educational programme for students at a temporary exhibition.
© Byzantine & Christian Museum, Athens. Photo by Veronique Magnes.

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The Wimbledon Tennis Museum: theatrical reconstruction of the gentlemen's changing room.
© Wimbledon Tennis Museum.

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Detail of the Second Fossil Room (1885) at the Teylers Museum.
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Educational activity for visitors with movement disabilities.
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Educational programme at the temporary exhibition "Salvador Dali. The Myth of Surrealism".
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The Oval Room, the heart of the Teylers Museum (1784).
© Teylers Museum.

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Modern wing for temporary exhibitions in the museum garden (1996) at the Teylers Museum.
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Educational activity for a third age group.
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Bird's eye view of the Bishop's Palace Museum with the Medieval.
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Top floor gallery deals with the history of Waterford port, city and its trade.
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Evocative use of multimedia at the Museum of Prints and Peddlers, Pieve Tesino, North of Italy.
© Massimo Negri.

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Exhibition project "Connecting the Pieces: Dialogues on the Amache Archaeology Collection." A collaborative exhibition about Colorado's Japanese American Internment Camp at the University of Denver Museum of Anthropology, May–July 2012.
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Making Home workshop at the Denver Museum of Anthropology.
© Denver Museum of Anthropology.

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Ningbo Museum, opened December 2008, is the symbol of Ningbo culture and Chinese one. It is a comprehensive museum with geographical features, showing the history of humanities and arts.
© Eiji Mizushima.

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'YUMEHAKU (Dream Museum)' mobile museum goes to the stricken area by the Great East Japan Earthquake to show some specimen for children's educational support, as well as within the Hyogo Prefecture.
© Haruko Yamashita.

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Nagasaki Museum of History and Culture, opened in November 2005, is one of the few museums in Japan with the theme of "Overseas Exchange". Museum holds approx. 48,000 precious collections including historical documents and arts & crafts that tell the story of Nagasaki developed as the sole window opened to foreign countries during the period of national isolation.
© Eiji Mizushima.

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Iron Museum, opened in July 2000, is a private industrial archaeology museum in Korea. The monument of Blast Furnace (left hand), made in Japan, was displayed as an open air museum exhibition.
© Eiji Mizushima.

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Interpreter in yellow costume, Protection Hall of Burial Pit and Museum, Xianshi province.
© Eiji Mizushima.

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Festival by mobile museum in North Japan.
© Óyagi Tsuyoshi.

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The sunspot is observed. The child who is learning from how to use a telescope. Festival by mobile museum in North Japan.
© Óyagi Tsuyoshi.

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The museum on wheels in Hyogo Prefecture visited to the 800-km-away stricken area, North Japan. Festival by mobile museum in North Japan.
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The Capital Museum, located in the Confucius Temple, was prepared in 1953 and formally opened in 1981. The new Capital Museum was officially opened on May 2006.
© Eiji Mizushima.

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Family Packs: Children's and Family Activities at the National Gallery of Ireland.
© National Gallery of Ireland.

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