

CAMOC MUSEUMS OF CITIES REVIEW

CAMOC ONLINE
ASSEMBLY 2020

Webinar: Museums
of Cities in the Time
of Pandemic

The Future of the
Endangered Museum
Rotterdam

camoc.mini.icom.museum

SOME REFLECTIONS ON INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AND CITY MUSEUMS
• THE SMITHSONIAN ANACOSTIA COMMUNITY MUSEUM • REFUGE CANADA

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From the Chair

Dear CAMOC members,

Covid-19 is an unprecedented challenge for our museums, whether it's running our daily programmes, carrying out our research or engaging with our public. Beyond that, of course, it impacts on our professional and public lives.

There are so many consequences, not least a highly uncertain future, shifting demographics and long-term sustainability. Museums may have to find new management models and methods of operation, but for some, such as small private or civic museums, the impact of the pandemic may force dramatic and lasting change.

Other than the constraints caused by the outbreak, many of our understandable frustrations are connected to ongoing systemic inequalities, which the pandemic crisis has laid bare. That is precisely why museums, our heritage and our culture in cities and countries across the world should now be regarded as even more vital for our well-being.

City museums world-wide have met the challenge by creating new and relevant digital content and reaching out to audiences in new and effective ways. In so many cases, however, the substantial growth in the digital audience has to be set against a dramatic decrease in physical attendance.

Nevertheless, many of our city museums were able to reopen and deliver regular on-site programmes like exhibitions and events to engage the public. Some are being responsive to the outbreak by collecting items, documenting and exhibiting the effect of the pandemic on the city and its people. There are so many examples: the Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum, with its "Moments of Resilience" programme; the museums of the City of New York, Krakow, London, Lisbon... and that's just a few. There are so many others.

We need to know more about what's going on, so we invite you to respond to the latest ICOM Survey related to Covid-19 and its impact to the museum sector. It's open until October 18.

The Museum Rotterdam

We have to draw your attention to a very serious matter. As you can read in Paul Van de Laar's article, the future of the Museum Rotterdam is under threat.

Last June, the Rotterdam Arts Council delivered a devastating blow to Museum Rotterdam. If the city council decides to follow their recommendations, the public city museum of Rotterdam will be downgraded to a collection store and may eventually have to close its doors.

Museum Rotterdam presents city history, displaying its most relevant features and values. It provides a long-term state-of-the-art programme of collecting and displaying the remarkable diversity of the Rotterdam of today. Being the second city of the Netherlands and a city with a very high migrant population, Rotterdam counts on its city museum as the key institution to interpret and represent the past and the present of the city. Museum Rotterdam



is usually quoted as one of the world's best examples of urban community engagement. We can only hope that the Museum will be allowed to carry on with its good work in fostering mutual understanding and empathy for the city, and the wider world, in its own unique way.

Our conference in Krakow, our Webinar and Online Assembly

What about CAMOC's plans? We are doing our best to go ahead and keep up with the main goals, although adapting to constraints imposed on us by the virus.

This is what is important for you all to know:

Inevitably, the CAMOC Annual Conference 2020, to be held in Krakow, Poland, had to be postponed to the beginning of 2021. CAMOC is pondering the most feasible options to ensure an on-site conference, at least for a reasonable number of delegates. We will keep you posted on the new proposed dates.

In the meantime, CAMOC will organise a webinar on city museums in the time of the pandemic. It will be held on Tuesday, October 27, from 14h Central European Time (CET). Our panelists will share experiences and state-of-the-art approaches which enable their institutions to cope with this extraordinary situation and the new challenges presented to cities, their people and their museums. The Webinar will be followed by the 2020 CAMOC Assembly, starting at 15h30 CET, which usually is a part of our annual conferences, but this time will be held on-line.

You can register here:

<https://forms.gle/QizdvUgKeKdCMDel7>

As ever, all current and future CAMOC members are welcome!

Book of Proceedings from the Kyoto Conference in 2019

We have just published the E-book of Proceedings from our conference in Kyoto, Japan, held in September 2019. It's now on our website and is free of charge. You will find plenty of exciting food for thought and a lot of relevant information on city museums across Asia and other parts of the world.

As always, remember that your feedback and participation are really important to us, so stay tuned.

Stay safe and well!

Joana Sousa Monteiro

Invite you to join us on

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2020

MUSEUMS OF CITIES IN THE TIME OF PANDEMIC

webinar
14h – 15h30 CET



MICHAŁ NIEZABITOWSKI
MUSEUM OF KRAKOW



SARAH HENRY
MUSEUM OF THE
CITY OF NEW YORK



JAN GERCHOW
HISTORICAL MUSEUM
FRANKFURT



JOAN ROCA
MUHBA – BARCELONA
HISTORY MUSEUM



CRISTINA MIEDICO
FONDAZIONE SCUOLA
DEI BENI E DELLE ATTIVITÀ
CULTURALI, ROME



JOANA SOUSA MONTEIRO
MUSEUM OF LISBON

15h30 – 17h CET

CAMOC Online Assembly 2020

A report on CAMOC's activities since ICOM/CAMOC Kyoto 2019
and presentation of future plans

Open to all present and future CAMOC members



REGISTRATION LINK: <https://forms.gle/QizdvUgKeKdCMDeL7>



The Future of the Endangered Museum Rotterdam

PAUL VAN DE LAAR*



***Girlpower**, an exhibition about Rotterdam women in sport (7 September 2019 – 8 March 2020). Girlpower paid tribute to the sporting triumphs of Rotterdam's legendary female athletes. Opening of exhibition with Rotterdam's top girls. © Jesje Veling*

Last June, the Rotterdam Arts Council delivered a devastating advice for Museum Rotterdam. If the city government decides to follow the recommendations, the city museum of Rotterdam will be degraded to a collection store house without exhibition space, and will be forced to close its two locations. This advice fits in a cascade of decisions that started in 2012; during this period, the (Historical) Museum Rotterdam – originally from 1905 – has been slowly choked to death. The consequences are that Rotterdam – the second city of the Netherlands – will not have a place where the city history and the collections can be on display.

What went wrong in this port city?

Until 2013, the (Historical) Museum Rotterdam had access to two museum premises: our main location, the restored 17th-century palace Schielandshuis, and our branch in Delfshaven, the former port city of

Delft which Rotterdam annexed in 1886. Whereas the Schielandshuis showed, in particular, a patrician kind of the city's history, the primary function of the Delfshaven Museum was educational. There, children were introduced to the social-cultural history of Rotterdam, with much attention to daily lives and storytelling activities. The two buildings were not optimal museum locations, and, from 2000 onwards, my predecessor had been working on a new museum project. At that time, I joined the staff as head of collections and research. We all hoped that we could move to a new location, where all new ideas on the role of the city museum could be explored and shown. In 2008, the Dutch design firm Kossmann and De Jong presented a plan for a new museum in the city centre, but, unfortunately, the banking crisis put an end to our ambitions. The plan was put in the drawer and we had to start from scratch, waiting for the end of the depression.

While we were waiting for better times, we used the intermezzo to re-profile our mission with new heritage

* Paul van de Laar, Director, Museum Rotterdam



Party People (12 January – 28 July 2019). In the '80s, creative Rotterdammers embrace the raw image of the port city. Cultural entrepreneurs transformed abandoned port buildings, cinemas and factories into dance halls. This exhibition linked their parties, clubs and music to the decade when it all began: the 1990s. © Naomi van Heck

and participation projects. We started to reformulate our collecting strategy with a focus on contemporary issues. In 2011, the museum dropped the “Historical” in its title and changed the name into Museum Rotterdam. This decision fitted in our new ideas on the role of city museums. The name was changed in hope to communicate that Museum Rotterdam is not just about the past, but rather a gateway between the present-day city and its past, through a dialogue with urban heritage communities that shape the future city. But, we realised that, in order to make it happen, we still needed a new home, representative of our new missions.

However, the city government, still under pressure of the banking crisis and financial destabilisation, was no longer willing to invest in a new city museum. While other cities in Europe captured new opportunities, recognising the importance of city museum to engage and connect with citizens, Rotterdam did the opposite. In 2013, our budget was reduced by almost 40 percent. When I became director, in 2013, I was forced to close our two locations. From that period onwards, we turned into a “travelling museum” that circulated around the city and was branded as “Museum Rotterdam-on-location”. This community museum network combined heritage and participation programmes, resulting in accessible, public-profiled exhibitions on location. The pop-up museum without a home profiled a strategy whereby museum professionals integrate with urban communities and base their research agenda on active participation: collecting not as a passive undertaking, but based on cooperation of communities, to be conveyed in a Museum Rotterdam-on-location exhibition.

While the museum staff was experimenting on outreach programmes, I approached Ralph Appelbaum Associates. I contracted this well-known design firm, specialised in new museums, exhibits, educational environments and visitor attraction, to help develop a new vision and masterplan for the future. We realised that, in order to stay in business, we had to move to a new location. The focus of the master plan, which was delivered in 2014, was *collect to connect*. The new home for the museum would provide ample space for its large collection, signature exhibitions and ambitious civic programs: “The new Museum will serve Rotterdammers, acting as destination hub for visitors and providing a platform for hosting international dialogues about the contemporary global city”. In order to create a platform, we decided that our new museum should be based on the cooperation of the diverse urban neighbourhoods of the 15 boroughs, districts with some administrative autonomy. We promoted our masterplan as “15 stepping stones for the next generation”.

Paul Spies, good friend of the museum and, at that time, director of the Amsterdam Museum, was asked to review our masterplan in October 2014. His positive evaluation was a great support for us and we hoped the city government would be triggered to invest in a new city museum and implement the masterplan together with us. The city decided not to invest in our plan. Instead, the city officials pushed us to move to the Timmerhuis, a new building designed by the star architect Rem Koolhaas in 2016. From the start, we made it abundantly clear that this location did not meet our ambitions. It was not designed as a museum building, lacked adequate climate conditions and was unfit for presenting our collections and the grand narrative of Rotterdam. Notwithstanding the limitations, we hoped to use the building as a cultural and social space and an exhibition space for our heritage and participation projects, which we had been developing as pop-up museum. A dynamic urban heritage strategy was the basis of this approach and a new, innovative programme was developed. The new programme, *Authentic Rotterdam Heritage*, curated and directed by the CAMOC Board member Nicole van Dijk, became the pillar of the new heritage approach, a dynamic way of connecting the museum with urban communities and contemporary material and immaterial heritage. Gradually, the programme developed into a new socially embedded heritage profile, based on active participation of the network. Nationally and internationally, the programme gained a lot of attention and stimulated discussions on the meaning and significance of the role of city museums. In particular, it contributed to the discourse on the right to the city, but was also profiled as best practice

by CAMOC in developing a more inclusive museum definition.

In 2020, we delivered a new plan for the coming years. This has to be done every four years and is subject to review by a committee of the Rotterdam Arts Council. We opened the plan with a strong statement: Rotterdam should invest in a new city museum. If we want to move forwards and take our mission seriously, we have to implement our masterplan. Our 4-year plan promotes Museum Rotterdam as an important knowledge centre, a civic laboratory, community connector and an innovative partner to the city. We still envision a new city museum that will be an active player in the creation of a better city, making connections between the past, present, and future of Rotterdam(mers). Just as it was current back in 2014, this vision still applies in 2020 and beyond.

Instead of embracing our ideas, the Arts Council advised to essentially defund Museum Rotterdam out of existence. The arguments are wrong and the advice was really shocking, not just for us, but also for so many museum professionals in the Netherlands and abroad, who know what we have been doing over the past years. The Council totally ignored our long-term vision and neglected our active participation and innovative contribution to the city. In fact, the judgment was not based on facts but on false truths

and misinterpretations. The Arts Council closed ranks and does not want to discuss the short-sighted opinion with us. For us, the big question is: why didn't they throw their full support behind the development of a robust City Museum? Many of our friends and colleagues, at national and international level alike, responded in anger and wrote letters to mayor and aldermen. We received much support, for which we are deeply grateful.

On September 22, the Municipal Executive announced that the museum will receive only half of the current subsidy. That budget will only provide for the preservation and management of the municipal collection and our branch museum, the Education Centre on the Second World War, Museum Rotterdam '40 - '45 NU. In the upcoming period, the management, together with the Supervisory Board and various stakeholders, will try to convince the City Council of the fact that this decision is not in the interest of the city. However, if the Council finally adopts the allocation proposal, the museum will be forced to close the doors of the Timmerhuis as the main museum premises on December 1. We are concerned, not only of what will become of our ambitions, but also how to make sure that our much appreciated community programmes will survive and be safeguarded for the future. A city government that accepts such a destructive decision has lost its way.

Join CAMOC

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of museums of cities

**OVER FIFTEEN YEARS DEDICATED TO CITY MUSEUMS,
URBAN LIFE AND OUR COMMON FUTURE!**

Your contribution is invaluable for our network!

Please stay connected with us, inform your friends and colleagues about what we are doing and invite more people to be a part of our community.

To become a member of ICOM and CAMOC please visit our web page.

It will have a bridge/link that will direct people to our membership page:

<http://camoc.mini.icom.museum/get-involved/become-a-member/>



BECOME A MEMBER.

The Repositioning of Museums for Society and their Role in the Regeneration of Cities

ERROL VAN DE WERDT*

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a complex set of challenges for every industry sector in the country, including ours. Museums have seen their incomes plummet and face an uphill battle to recover their losses even as they admit fewer visitors and devise new routes through their exhibitions in observance of the prescribed safety precautions. And as if that weren't enough, many of us suddenly found ourselves having to

operations required our physical presence and which could be handled virtually. We also began asking ourselves if it was time to rethink our position on the outsourcing of core activities, and on using feedback and learnings from community outreach efforts, which we have typically neglected to do, to inform our programme of activities, particularly with respect to non-traditional museum-goers.



The TextielLab, the beating heart of the Museum. © Josefina Eikenaar. The collection as a source of knowledge and expertise: Collection compositions, various objects, collection TextielMuseum. Styling and photo: Floor Knaapen

work remotely, which exposed the inadequacies of our ICT facilities as well as our complacency regarding the way we've always operated. We could, of course, treat all of this as a temporary inconvenience, implement the safety measures and wait for the pandemic to blow over so we can return to business and start recouping our losses. However, we could also treat this as an opportunity to rethink not only how we have traditionally operated but also how we define ourselves as museums and what role we could play within our communities and society as a whole.

Our immediate response to the pandemic was practical: expand our online offering with things like DIY workshops at home, online tours, webinars and consultation hours with textile specialists, bring forward our investment in virtual and augmented reality applications and review which aspects of our

But then we began asking questions such as: how much support do we command within our local communities? How well are we actually meeting the needs of our audiences? How inclusive have we been and are we doing enough to be more inclusive? In truth, we'd been posing these questions even before the lockdown. The twin phenomena of globalisation and digitalisation had already ushered in a world of rapid change, whose warnings that we rethink our operations and reason for being were getting harder to ignore. And some of us were already embarking on developments to secure our future in this new world. The pandemic merely prompted us to accelerate these developments.

It has been clear for a while that our reliance on traditional museum-goers would not suffice for much longer. That we were going to have to change our business model if we wished to survive in this rapidly changing world. That this survival demanded we

* Errol van de Werdt, Director, TextielMuseum Tilburg, the Netherlands



TextielMuseum: combination of historical and modern architecture reflecting the creation of a dialogue about the past present and future of the textile industry. © Josefine Eikenaar

broaden the scope of our core business and provide experiences and services that ventured beyond the boundaries of culture. That this broadening of scope would require opening ourselves to cross-sector collaborations within new networks, rooted in the sharing of knowledge and expertise. Such collaborations would allow us to develop more diverse and more democratically conceived programmes of activity, which would enable us to tell stories and provide experiences that better reflect more people's realities and needs, which would in turn enable us to attract a more diverse audience and mean more to this audience. The new generation of current and potential museum-goers is already demanding this. Young people not only expect us to be more socially and politically aware, but also to be more vocal on the issues that need to be addressed *en route* to a fairer, more inclusive and more environmentally responsible society. These are defining elements of the zeitgeist — not for nothing is ICOM updating its definition of museum.

So, what have we, at the TextileMuseum, been doing in response to the changing times?

First, an account of how we came to be in the first place.

Tilburg has long been known as the wool capital of the Netherlands. The city's economy boomed during the industrial revolution on the back of its wool industry, but crashed following the industry's collapse in the 1960s. Scores lost their livelihoods and many of the old industrial buildings fell vacant. Fortunately, the government stepped in to establish a place of memory in recognition of the city's century-long heritage of textile artisanship and industry.

The TextileMuseum began as that place of memory, and even our premises are pregnant with historical

significance: our home was once one of the most important textile factories in Tilburg. The building, as well as our priceless collection, had provided the basis for the classical manifestation of the museum since its inception. But to solely remain a place of memory, however, is to risk becoming a prisoner to history, so when the building underwent refurbishment in 2008, the new combination of historical and modern architecture that characterised the refurbishment became the first visible manifestation and reminder of what we exist to do: create dialogue

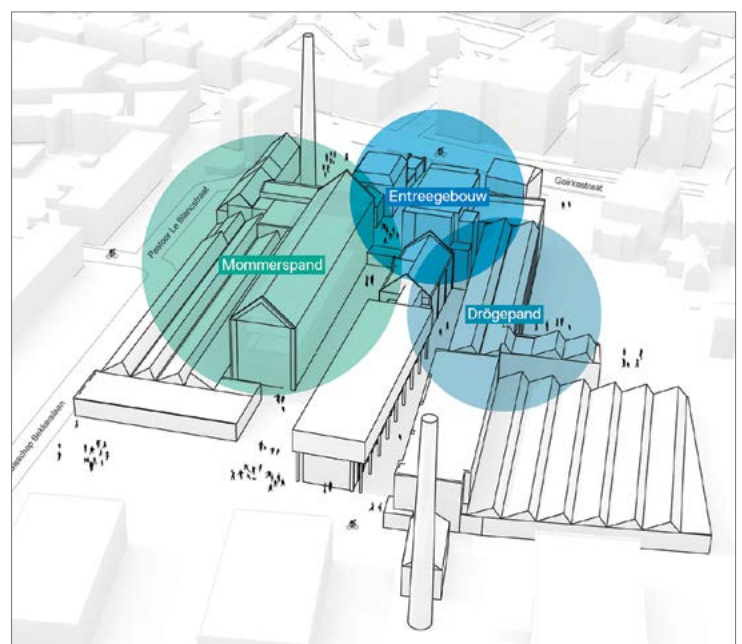
about the past, present and future of the local and European textile industry. The next step was to establish the museum as a place of innovation as well as presentation and preservation.¹

The transition to working museum

We began by building a small lab to create high-end textiles and cater to a niche at the top end of the creative industry.

We employed former textile workers as weavers, knitters and museum guides. That lab grew into

¹ More details about the museum building and its history are available at: <https://www.textielmuseum.nl/en/history-and-building/>



Revitalisation plans for TextielMuseum of the future as a meaningful place in the city (UN studio, Amsterdam). © UNStudio

the TextielLab, and is now the beating heart of the museum, with knowledgeable technical staff and product developers and an array of high-tech and traditional machinery capable of handling all manner of textile manufacturing techniques. We have built the TextielLab into the ideal workspace for artists and designers from all over the world, who can use our collection as a source of inspiration and research, with our curators acting as guides. The lab and collection allow artists and designers to experiment with traditional techniques by means of new technology, modern yarns and new ideas. Today's designs are tomorrow's heritage, after all, and it is through reinterpreting the work of our predecessors that our shared culture and heritage lives on. It also allows us to both preserve traditional techniques and pass on the knowledge to future generations.

The TextielLab has hosted people experimenting and innovating on behalf of globally renowned figures and brands such as Rem Koolhaas, Hermes, Nike and Renault. More than 250 projects a year are executed here, everything from reinterpretations of artefacts and the creation of autonomous art works to textile research and prototype development. Fabrics developed here have appeared in high-profile projects all the way from the Persian Gulf to the catwalks of Paris.

The lab is also open to students, and gives them a place to acquire hands-on experience in textile craftsmanship, observe professionals at work and receive instruction from textile specialists.

The world is changing

The tectonic shifts brought about by digitalisation, globalisation and rising social and political awareness will continue to ripple through society economically, socially and culturally. Museums must reflect on our role with respect to these shifts and amend our mission, vision and offerings accordingly. Economists, philosophers and other intellectuals have identified three domains of change that hold particular relevance for the future of museums.

The first has been labelled the new industrial revolution. It encompasses new methods of production, environmental sustainability and a desire for personalised products and experiences. It also points to a growing necessity for new skills from people entering the job market, such as those that underpin creative thinking, problem-solving, social interaction and interpersonal communication.

The second has to do with the growing realisation that the diversity that characterises society has not been reflected in the operation and output of most institutions, and that there is a growing demand for the democratisation of museum programming, as well as greater public participation in these institutions from a wider cross-section of society. Institutions that remain inward-looking and exclusive to traditional museum-goers will inevitably lose their relevance. Thus, museums must become places of self-discovery and lifelong education for all.



The third has to do with the changing needs of the new generation of museum-goers. This new audience has a different set of expectations regarding museums, and will increasingly demand our active participation in addressing social issues, as well as that we provide experiences and tell stories that facilitate reflection on said issues.

Repositioning the museum as a museum for all

Until recently, our primary focus has been on artists, designers of all sorts, architects and talented youngsters. But the shifts described above provided the catalyst to introduce changes that would not only make us more inclusive and our activities more participatory, but would also give *everyone* the opportunity to create. So, we are working towards becoming a hands-on museum for all: you enter as a visitor and leave as a creator. This turns museum-goers from spectators into participants and allows them to experience the process of creation. Visitors will be able to create their own designs, choosing from a selection of organic yarn and using professional machines, skilled assistance and software, and leave at the end of their visit with a scarf or pair of socks or some other item they made themselves. First-hand experience of this nature immerses visitors in the production process of sustainable design and manufacture, and provides more immediate access to the corresponding challenges and solutions. This is a completely unique way to experience a museum, not just in the Netherlands but anywhere in the world. We've also set up a junior lab for kids to become acquainted with sustainable production and the

endless possibilities offered by textiles and practice creative thinking in an environment built specifically for this purpose.

To ensure greater community involvement and more inclusive participation, we are democratising our programme of activities in consultation with representatives from a cross-section of society. These activities will be developed on the foundation of our moral duty towards the realisation of a cleaner, fairer world for all. In fact, sustainability is to be included in our positioning as a museum, and we have already partnered with an external party to set up an in-house recycling and upcycling unit.

We are also addressing the exclusion of particular backgrounds from the labour market by pairing disadvantaged youngsters with established designers, with a brief to create exclusive high-end items for a new socially conscious brand to be sold in the museum shop. We will also be working more actively with design collectives as part of our effort to encourage traditional industries to rethink their production methods.

Last but not the least, we intend to be more active in the regeneration and revitalisation of our city, the final pillar in our commitment to the museum's renewed role in society.²

² Our ambition document gives a full description of the activities mentioned in the article and about the creation of the Museum as a meaningful place in the city. This plan is already being developed in cooperation with the city council and partners outside the cultural domain. <https://www.textielmuseum.nl/en/vision-for-the-future-2020-2024/>

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Send us news about your museums, new exhibitions and projects!

CAMOC Museums of Cities Review looks forward to receiving news about your city museums, new exhibitions, projects and initiatives! Selected texts will be published and also shared on our website, thus reaching the entire international network of city museums, our individual members and friends around the world.

CAMOC Museums of Cities Review has four issues per year, and proposals for the following ones can be submitted by:

- November 30th, 2020
- February 28th, 2021
- May 15th, 2021
- August 15th, 2021

The texts should be concise (up to 1000-1500 words), having not only informative but also an analytical component, and be accompanied with complementing images or other visual materials of your choice. For technical reasons, horizontal layout is preferred for images.

For text proposals and submission, for questions or clarifications you might need, please write to the editor, **Jelena Savić** at:
jsavic.bl@gmail.com or secretary.camoc.icom@gmail.com

The Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum: Working to Create a More Equitable Future

MELANIE ADAMS*

Our Mission: Together with communities, the Anacostia Community Museum illustrates and amplifies our collective power.

Given the many global political, economic, and social changes that society faces, museums across the world are examining their role in helping to create a peaceful and sustainable future. The Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum is positioned as a model for museums as a force for positive change. With a bold vision for the future—one in which urban communities activate their collective power for a more equitable future—ACM is committed to convening important conversations and connecting members of diverse communities toward common goals and a more equitable future.

A pioneering idea

The Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum was founded in 1967. What began as “an experimental storefront museum” envisioned as an outpost of Smithsonian museums on the national mall quickly became a model for profound community engagement and partnership. Under the leadership of its first director John Kinard—a local minister and activist—the museum became a means for people in an underserved Washington, DC neighborhood to voice their concerns about city life, encourage local cultural expression, and examine their role in the greater community.

Local involvement has shaped the museum’s pioneering, community-based planning model. An early example of this partnership between the museum and its neighbors was the groundbreaking exhibition *The Rat: Man’s Invited Affliction*.¹ ACM took on the subject matter based on visitors’ experience with rodent



Anacostia History Society Members in Front of Original Museum Location 1967. Source: Smithsonian Institution Archives. Image # 92-1705.

infestation in their neighborhoods to help visitors better understand causation, challenges, and solutions to the rodent issue. Through a hyper-local lens, the museum explores civic engagement, community activism and everyday life.

ACM today

ACM research and collections speak to historic and contemporary community life in Washington, DC. Exhibitions and programs directly engage the local community as visitors, collection donors, program participants and content creators.

Food for the People, Food Culture, Food Justice (opening summer 2021) explores the deep food history of Washington, DC, while also uncovering how issues of equity and justice inform DC’s food landscape today. As a part of its exhibition development process, the museum is conducting oral histories and convening individuals and organizations working on food justice issues in order to strengthen local networks and bolster information sharing among stakeholders. *DC Eats* and related programs will engage diverse audiences in celebrating DC’s unique food landscape while understanding the complex issues of access and equity that underlay the simple act of having a meal.

* Melanie Adams is the director of the Smithsonian’s Anacostia Museum. She has twenty years of experience in the field working at museums in Missouri and Minnesota. She is the past president of the Association of Midwest Museums, graduate level instructor, and author of numerous articles on community engagement in museums. She received her PhD in Educational Leadership and Policy studies with an emphasis in critical race theory from the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

¹ <https://anacostia.si.edu/Exhibitions/Details/The-Rat-Man’s-Invited-Affliction-6388>



ACM Staff and Volunteers at annual MLK Day parade 2020. © Dee Dwyer

Museum exhibitions provide a large, public-facing effort to highlight community culture and history. The current exhibition, *A Right to the City*², examines neighborhood change and civic engagement from the perspective of DC residents, community groups, and local organizations. *A Right to the City* has uncovered timely, fascinating histories of Southeast Washington's Barry Farm community. With only two remaining structures from the 19th century and facing the demolition and redevelopment of its namesake public housing complex that was built in 1943 as segregated war housing, the museum's work preserves the heritage of this hugely significant and understudied DC neighborhood. The exhibition also invites visitors to record and share their personal stories and experiences with neighborhood change.

In the last several years, ACM exhibitions have revealed stories of the nation's capital from various, untold perspectives. *Gateways* (2016 to 2018)³ explored the Latino migrant and immigrant experience in Washington, DC—as well as Charlotte, NC; Raleigh, NC; and Baltimore, MD. The bilingual exhibition invited Washington's vibrant and diverse Latino populations to see themselves represented by the Smithsonian, in their own voices. Likewise, *Twelve Years that Shook and Shaped Washington: 1963-1975* (2016)⁴ and *How the Civil War Changed Washington*⁵ (2015) have presented DC history from unique perspectives, through original research.

Urban Waterways is the Museum's documentary and educational initiative which explores the continuous relationships between urban communities and

their waterways, inspired by life along Washington's Anacostia River. ACM has examined waterways through various lenses: science, history, faith, art, race, class, equitable development, and activism. The project creates cross-disciplinary dialogue among diverse stakeholders, documents and collects oral histories from residents, community leaders, and activists, and engages interested parties with ongoing activities to reclaim, restore, and advocate for equitable development of local waterways and surrounding communities.

As ACM joins museums around the country in responding to the Covid-19 situation, we continue to be committed to serving our community. We are looking at our upcoming programs to see if they still make sense in our new environment and if not, what can be done to make them more relevant. We are working with our community to collect their stories of resilience through a campaign entitled *Moments of Resilience*, created to collect stories of people coming together to help each other through this difficult time. And finally, once we are back open, we plan to use our newly created outdoor space to bring people together to create moments of joy and unity that remind us of the community's collective power.

The future of ACM continues to shine bright as we develop new ways to live our mission and vision. ACM programs and initiatives speak to issues that impact the daily lives of Washingtonians—issues shared with urban communities across the globe. Stories of contemporary and historic significance—related to identity, artistic and cultural expression, urban development, environmental justice, public policy and more—are central to the museum's work. We are proud of our history of sharing the voice of the community and look forward to the next fifty years of amplifying voices and creating a more equitable world where everyone has the chance to thrive.

Urban Garden Celebration 2020. © ACM staff photographer



² <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/34d99cccb2c5454da7b4f08e482c1987?item=1>

³ <https://anacostia.si.edu/Exhibitions/Details/GatewaysPortales-6081>

⁴ <https://anacostia.si.edu/Exhibitions/Details/Twelve-Years-that-Shook-and-Shaped-Washington-1963-1975-5986>

⁵ <https://anacostia.si.edu/Exhibitions/Details/How-the-Civil-War-Changed-Washington-5114>

Some Reflections on Intangible Cultural Heritage and City Museums

EVDOKIA TSAKIRIDIS*

In this contribution I will present some reflections, practical examples and tools that can serve as inspiration for museums, and more specifically city museums, who (endeavor to) engage with practitioners of *intangible cultural heritage* (ICH),

who are willing to safeguard their practices, representations, knowledge and skills by transmitting them to the future. My experiences stem from my role as coordinator of the *Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project*.

The Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project (IMP)



The *Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project* was a wide networked initiative being set up between 2017 and 2020 and funded – among others – by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union. The IMP network realized several international conferences and expert meetings revolving around topics such as (super)diversity, participation, urban societies, innovation and cultural policies, and their relation to museums and the safeguarding of intangible heritage.

On the website www.ICHandmuseums.eu, all of the outcomes are available: an extensive **toolkit** providing a wide range of hands-on tools ready for use, the **book** publication *Museums and Intangible Cultural Heritage: Towards a Third Space in the Heritage Sector. A Companion to Discover Transformative Heritage Practices for the 21st Century* (in English) and its **executive summary** in English, Dutch, French, German and Italian, an overview

of the **literature** on the topic, **reports and recordings** of the different events, the results of five **co-creations** that were initiated as part of IMP, etc.

Together with partner organizations from the Netherlands, Italy, Switzerland and France¹, and backed by the support from ICOM, NEMO – Network of European Museum Organisations, the ICH NGO Forum and UNESCO, we at Workshop intangible heritage (BE)

initiated this international initiative towards exchanging and generating experience and expertise, as well as conceiving (practical) new ways needed in order to take the next step in heritage work revolving around museums and safeguarding intangible heritage.

* Evdokia Tsakiridis, Project coordinator of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project

¹ **Organisation:** Workshop intangible heritage (BE)

² The partners were: The Dutch Centre for Intangible Heritage, SIMBDEA - Società italiana per la museografia e i beni demoetnoantropologici (IT), the Swiss Museum Association and Maison des Cultures du Monde - Centre français du patrimoine culturel immatériel (FR).



Intangible Cultural Heritage? A visual realized by the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project as part of the IMP toolkit

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE?

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IS A LIVING AND DYNAMIC PRACTICE

- 'practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills'
- 'instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated' with ICH, are part of its definition.

'The "intangible cultural heritage" means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. [...]'

Intangible cultural heritage, as described in the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage



Oral storytelling (NL) – © Nederlands Openluchtmuseum

ICH-DOMAIN

Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe



Gathering of wild herbs, fruits and mushrooms in the Massif des Bouges – © Flore Gloud

ICH-DOMAIN

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IS TRANSMITTED

- 'from generation to generation'
- 'identity and continuity'

Traditional craftsmanship



Weaving in Aubusson (FR) – © RE, Service communication ICH-domain Creuse Grand Sud

ICH-DOMAIN

PEOPLE ARE CENTRAL TO INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

- 'communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals'

Performing arts



Tea Time Company (Czechia) (CZ) – © Fotokafkar

ICH-DOMAIN

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IS ALWAYS CHANGING

- 'constantly recreated'
- 'in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history'

Social practices, rituals and festive events



Winegrowers' Festival in Vevey (CH) – © Confrérie des Vignerons

ICH-DOMAIN

The project had the intent to explore all possible interactions, approaches and practices on safeguarding ICH with its practitioners or bearers, in/together with museums and museums-based specialists, that have, in recent years, been taking place in the five countries. The range of varying museums, the different practices and policies related to ICH and the rich variety of museum 'types' that exist in these countries were particularly inspiring from a comparative point of view, including: centralized or decentralized museum policies; public or private initiatives; and museum profiles ranging from eco-museums, to ethnographical museums, art museums, open air museums, museums focusing on a specific craft or type of performance to city museums ... all of them were involved. Taking along their different backgrounds, participants had both similar and diverging links and experiences with ICH, from one-off projects to intense collaborations that changed the mindset of all parties involved.

Why safeguard intangible heritage?

For some museums, safeguarding ICH with the active participation of its bearers and with a focus on future viability for this living heritage – which are two main criteria for **safeguarding** – has been a daily practice for years, or even decades. For others, many questions as to how to go about with ICH, have only just come about. In yet other museums, it has been an ongoing topic of discussion or hesitation to cross thresholds of uncertainty as to *why* ICH could be relevant for the museum, and they haven't felt comfortable in addressing the world of ICH in their work thus far. For any of these contexts, the years of IMP trajectory uncovered a set of opportunities that may arise from engaging with (practitioners of) intangible heritage in museums, and in which the museum's activity around ICH proves to become a powerful leverage for social relevance, sustainable development, participation and sustainable cultural entrepreneurship.³

³ To find out more, please see this overview of key opportunities for museums that engage in safeguarding intangible heritage, and vice versa: <https://www.ichandmuseums.eu/en/toolbox/ich-museums-opportunities>.

Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in museums?

Safeguarding, in the context of the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, means “[...] measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage.” It’s about enabling communities, groups and individuals in practicing their living heritage in the way that is meaningful to them.

IMP elaborated a so-called ‘intersection methodology’, that helps understand and offers a systematic overview of how ‘safeguarding measures (of ICH)’ correspond to, and enrich the ‘museum functions’ (cfr. the ICOM museum definition) in the process of safeguarding heritage, and vice versa. At the very intersection of all these different approaches to heritage care, new practices are born, for example related to documentation, acquisition, education... All involved have differing but equal and complementary (levels of) capacity in relation to the care for heritage. It is therefore all the more worthwhile to pool these existing skillsets and know-how, for the common purpose of safeguarding heritage.

(Read more on p. 72 and further, in the book *Museums and Intangible Cultural Heritage: Towards a Third Space in the Heritage Sector. A Companion to Discover Transformative Heritage Practices for the 21st Century*.)

Common questions

What makes city museums stand out is that they usually cover or touch upon a whole range of different practices of ICH (unlike, for example, thematically oriented museums that revolve around one specific craft or performance type), and that diversity – in its various dimensions – is often highly relevant to the city museums’ work. The city museums’ collections are diverse: not only with regards to materials and type of objects/items, but also regarding their provenance, and the fact that they have historical as well as quite contemporary objects – among other “things” – in their care, some of them having direct links to living heritage that is experienced or practiced today by the communities, groups and individuals that surround the museum. Also, the city fabric – their “radius of action” – is composed of citizens with complex and multilayered identities and backgrounds, bringing different needs and expectations in relation to the museum.

Bearing this in mind, it’s not surprising that city museums (but also, museums in general) are often confronted with the same questions:

- In this abundance of objects and other items that are part of the museum’s collection and that are related to ICH, and with a diversified population that is practicing and passing on traditions, skills and knowledge on a daily basis, how to decide what ICH is relevant to the museum?

and

- Once one is able to “select” specific practices of ICH that are of relevance, how to decide who to

involve, and how extensive should the intensity of the collaboration be?

Drawing on the cumulative experience and expertise of the participants to IMP, two brainstorm exercises were developed with a view to support museums in making these complex decisions, based on one’s proper mission and vision, collections, networks, ...⁴ Their main objective is to help devise criteria and focus on the living heritage that is dear to the inhabitants of the city.

Different visions for ICH in the museum

Museums are among the privileged spaces for contributing to safeguarding ICH. However, as many museums and practices of intangible heritage there are, as many interesting and valuable approaches exist with regard to how the relevant communities, groups and individuals that cherish ICH can find support in museums. Here I highlight two cases of city museums that represent different points of view and approaches. Many more inspiring cases wait for you to be discovered on the IMP website.

The **city museum of Lier (Belgium)** for example, decided to prioritize their work related to ICH on the basis of “gaps” in their collection. What traditions, skills and practices – shared

⁴ They are freely available from: <https://www.ichandmuseums.eu/en/toolbox/brainstorm-decide-who-to-involve-when-working-on-ich-and-on-the-intensity-of-the-collaboration> and from: <https://www.ichandmuseums.eu/en/toolbox/brainstorm-what-ich-is-relevant-to-your-museum>.



Felix Van Loock working with a “Cornely machine”. The machine allows to mechanically stitch a stitch, ascribed to a specific lace technique originating from the city of Lier. During the 2019 Heritage Day, visitors could take place behind the machine, and/or let Felix stitch an initial on a handkerchief. Felix was the last director from a lace atelier in Lier, and is actively engaged in transmitted lace techniques. © Stadsmuseum Lier

by many or practiced by few – are present in the city landscape, but are not represented (or are poorly represented) in the museum? A lack of knowledge, objects or descriptions is a fundamental condition for deciding what ICH gets a focus in the museum’s action plan. In the Lier museum’s vision, collaboration with ICH practitioners should always result in more “collection”, not necessarily in the possessive way, but possibly also by mapping, managing and documenting general information. During the course of the work the museum undertakes together with the communities, groups and individuals concerned, they also see it as their task to support them in their needs, by optimally assigning its available (human) resources.⁵

Museum Rotterdam (The Netherlands) takes on a different approach. With the “Active Collection Centre”, they invite inhabitants of the city to label inhabitants, traditions and cultural

activities as (intangible) heritage. Criteria are that the heritage is from Rotterdam, that it is topical, it is actively working for others and/or the city, that it is open to connection and that it adds something to the city. The Rotterdam Museum’s approach consists in bringing the contemporary heritage practitioners and their activities into contact with each other and to stimulate future collaboration in order to shape the city in an inclusive way.⁶

These and many more experiences show us that there are a multitude of ways for city – and other – museums to engage with practitioners of ICH. It requires a spirit of mutual respect and reciprocity. It will most probably enrich, improve, mutate, or adapt that which is long seen as a given for everyone involved, and it will surely be worthwhile. Museums contributing to highlighting the values and relevance of intangible heritage are one step ahead in supporting the dynamics of city life.

⁵ More information about the museum’s approach, and about the work that was undertaken by the museum, lacemakers and other related specialists, and the museum audience in the city of Lier can be found at: <https://www.ichandmuseums.eu/en/inspiration-2/detail-2/lierse-kant>.

⁶ Elpers, S. (2020) Past and Future Presenting in Museums. Four cases of engaging with intangible heritage from the Netherlands. In: *Volkskunde. Tijdschrift over de cultuur van het dagelijks leven* 121:3 (in print).

Refuge Canada

Refuge Canada is a travelling exhibition created by the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 and is supported by TD Bank Group.

The text was produced by the [Museum of Vancouver](#) (MOV)¹ in collaboration with the team at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21. MOV will be hosting *Refuge Canada* in 2023.

Refugees face fear, shattered lives and often dangerous voyages in search of refuge. Canada has provided that refuge for many. However, over the course of the twentieth century, Canada has had a mixed record in welcoming refugees, reacting generously to some while overlooking others.



Visitor activity “Who is a refugee?”, *Refuge Canada*.
© Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21

Refuge Canada is a traveling exhibition developed by the [Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21](#) in Halifax, Nova Scotia, that provides context for Canada’s place in the global refugee crisis and brings to light the challenges faced by refugees in Canada. The exhibition also shares stories of success and contributions made by people who came to Canada as refugees. The exhibition opened at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 in March 2018 as a 370 sq. m. temporary exhibition. It was converted into a 140 sq. m. travelling exhibition which began its tour of Canadian museums in June 2019. It is scheduled to travel across the country for the next five years, until 2024. A pop-up exhibit (30 sq. m.), *Refuge Canada Tent*,

is currently under production for display in libraries and community centres starting summer 2020.

Drawing upon oral histories, archival images, artifacts and interactives, *Refuge Canada* shares the stories of refugees in an evocative and engaging way. For the planning and development process of the exhibition, the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 invited a group of people who came to Canada as refugees, as well as individuals from organizations who work with refugee groups and scholars in immigration research and refugee studies from across Canada to a day-long facilitated workshop to explore and identify themes for the exhibition. A report from this workshop was created and museum staff followed up with participants while content was developed.

This consultation was critical in establishing several important themes in the exhibition such as the role of fear, loss and displacement experienced by refugees and the presentation of diverse points of view around identity felt by refugees in Canada. The Museum also developed a specific partnership with *Page Rwanda*, an association of family and friends of victims of the Genocide against the Tutsis in Rwanda, to explore loss through a case study of Rwandan Genocide refugees. This partnership, which stretched through the production of the exhibition, was key to developing text and gathering images and oral histories to address this sensitive topic and included the loan of some powerful personal artefacts. Finally, the Museum’s research unit of five provided the content foundation and co-developed all aspects of the project. The exhibition aims to create a setting for visitors to make a personal connection to the feelings of pain, danger and hope experienced by refugees, and to be inspired and informed on refugee issues in Canada today.

The exhibition is organized into five themes:

1. **Life Before:** No one chooses to be a refugee. Anyone can become one. Refugees leave their homes, families and jobs behind when they are forced to flee. A dramatic depiction of the ruins of a past life introduces visitors to this experience.
2. **Fear:** Fear, one of the most primal of human emotions, is central to the experience of refugees. It is also a key part of the United Nations definition of a refugee: “A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution...”

¹ Adapted for the CAMOC Review by Viviane Gosselin.
<https://museumofvancouver.ca/>



Moynerghona refugee camp, Bangladesh, December 15, 2017.
© UNHCR/Andrew McConnell

Compelling stories, evocative objects and challenging interactives introduce visitors to the type of fears faced by refugees as they undertake their journey to safety.

3. **Displacement:** Refugees who flee their homes and life as they knew it must make uncertain and often dangerous journeys. They need to make hard decisions about survival, returning home, or fleeing precarious temporary shelter to yet another country, often as unwelcome, stateless residents. Stories that bring out the best and worst in people are explored, including an immersive look at life in the tents of a refugee camp.
4. **Refuge:** Today, over 70 million people have been forcibly displaced from their homes. International organizations and individual nations grapple with the global challenge of offering refuge. How has Canada responded over the course of the 20th century? Canadians pride themselves in welcoming refugees, but there are dark chapters in Canada's response to various refugee crises. Visitors will see the different processes Canada has put in place in the 20th century to respond to refugees.



An immersive look at life in refugee camps, *Refuge Canada*.
© Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21.

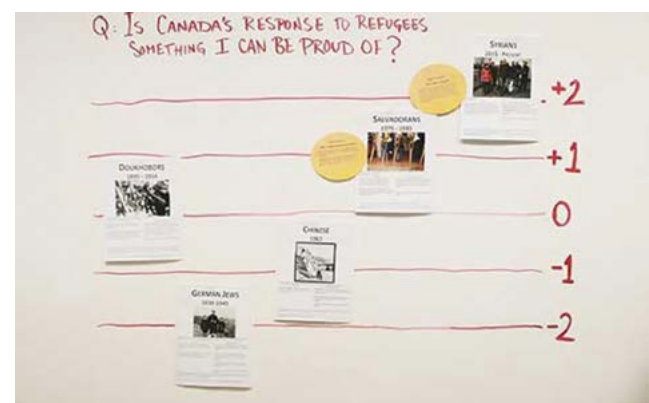
Life in Canada: Refugees who make it to Canada face a range of perceptions by Canadians. Visitors will encounter a challenging range of views, labels, myths and stereotypes about refugees. Adapting to Canada is a daunting task as refugees must cope with both everyday challenges and identity conflicts. Canada has enjoyed success with settling past waves of refugees, sometimes with innovative sponsorship programs.

Refugee stories of achievements and contribution to Canada will leave visitors informed, as well as inspired by the people who have found refuge in Canada.

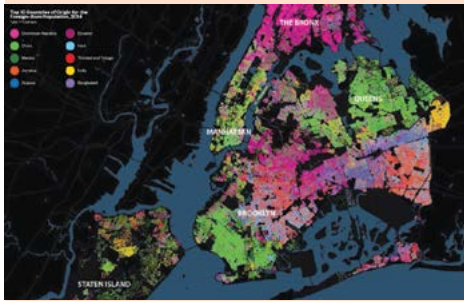
In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, when countries are temporarily closing their borders, *Refuge Canada* offers visitors an empathetic lens through which to consider the additional challenges and fears of being a refugee during a pandemic and what countries like Canada can do to help.

Refuge Canada's traveling schedule has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The public will be notified as soon as the exhibition resumes its tour. The official tour schedule can be found on the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21's *website*.²

School program activity, Refuge Canada. © Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21. A Syrian boy plays with a Canadian boy during an outing to a park, Kelowna, British Columbia, March 24, 2016. The Syrian family came to Canada through private sponsorship. © UNHCR/Jimmy Jeong



² <https://pier21.ca/host-refuge-canada-our-newest-travelling-exhibit>



The Museum of the City of New York begins its new lecture series with "Who Are the People in Your Neighborhood". © mcny.org

EXHIBITION THEME

Who We Are: Visualizing NYC by the Numbers

Dates & Place

Until 18 October 2020

Museum of the City of New York

Information online at

<https://www.mcny.org/exhibition/who-we-are>

Description

New York City is a dense, chaotic mosaic of some eight and a half million people, each with their own individual stories. How can we possibly understand and describe this endlessly complex collectivity – what we share and what distinguishes us? Census data has long been a resource used to draw out unexpected and provocative patterns, connections, and insights about who New Yorkers are since our nation's first count in 1790. In anticipation of the 2020 census, *Who We Are: Visualizing NYC by the Numbers* showcases work not just by data analysts and demographers, but also by cutting-edge contemporary artists and designers who use these tools to enliven and humanize statistics and to shed new light on how we understand our urban environment and ourselves. Together, these intriguing and varied works demonstrate the power and importance of numbers in helping us understand who we are.

Many of the works aim to uncover unusual or unexpected insights and to do so with explicitly political or activist intent. Some of the contributors focus on how race is defined and inscribed in the economic and political landscape, or the degree to which immigration has shaped the city, two issues that reflect the political discourse of our time. Others draw attention to the extremes of income inequality in New York, one of the wealthiest cities on earth. Many of the pieces interrogate the very process of collecting demographic information. Together, they encourage us to consider the questions we ask of ourselves, how we represent ourselves to the world, the ways in which we are categorized, and what goes missing or unstated in the process.

Exhibition Alert

EXHIBITION THEME

Seoul as the Main Character of Novels

Dates & Place

6 May – 1 November 2020

Seoul Museum of History, South Korea

Information online at

https://museum.seoul.go.kr/eng/board/NR_boardList.do?bbsCd=1042&q_exhCd=all

Description

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Korean War and the 60th anniversary of the April Revolution. To commemorate these two historic milestones, the Seoul Museum of History is presenting a special exhibition to highlight, through novels and poems, the city of Seoul and the lives of its people between 1945, when Korea gained independence from Japanese colonial rule, and 1960, when the April Revolution took place.

The city of Seoul played a prominent role at points during the Korean War (1950-1953) and the April Revolution (1960). This exhibition presents literary works by authors who captured those moments, revealing the stories of Seoul and the lives of its people from those times.

The main sections of the exhibition are: *Seoul After Independence (1945-1949): A Chaotic City with Joy of Independence and Pain of Division*; *Seoul During the Korean War (1950-1953): A City Repeatedly Lost and Retaken*; *Reconstruction and Restoration of Seoul and the People's Lives and Seoul, Filled with Calls for Revolution*.

As many as 500 works have been on display, including Park Wan-seo's *The Thirsty Season* and *The Naked Tree*, Cho Ji-hun's *Stand Before History* and Park Tae-sun's *The Collapsed Theater*. The exhibition provides the priceless opportunity to peak inside the pages of history to better understand the lives at the time of independence and the Korean War, as well as the very real anecdotes of those struggling to survive.



Exhibition poster. © museum.seoul.go.kr

EXHIBITION THEME

A Procissão de Santo António em Lisboa / The Procession of Saint Anthony in Lisbon

Dates & Place

22 May – 30 November 2020

Museum of Lisbon – Saint Anthony site, Portugal

Information online at

<http://www.museudelisboa.pt/exposicoes.html>

<http://www.baraca-artesanato.pt/>



The Procession of Saint Anthony. © museudelisboa.pt

Description

Every June 13, since the 18th century, a procession dedicated to Saint Anthony takes place in Lisbon, being a highlight in the calendar of city festivities. The event is a genuine demonstration of faith and devotion that the inhabitants of Lisbon cherish for their saint. Nowadays, the procession leads through the historical neighbourhood of Alfama, gathering also the saints of the churches on its way.

To represent the today's procession, this exhibition at the Museum of Lisbon

– Saint Anthony site features over 300 pieces created by the brothers Baraça, a part of a well-known artisan family from Barcelos. This way, a form and shape are given to the authentic neighbourhood spirit that makes Lisbon so unique and special.

EXHIBITION THEME***Lions on the Coolsingel***
Incredible wartime stories**Dates & Place**

1 June 2020 – 16 May 2021

Rotterdam Museum – Location Timmerhuis, the Netherlands

Information online at<https://museumrotterdam.nl/en/exhibitions/leeuwen-op-de-coolsingel>**Description**

A heroic but unequal battle. Wild beasts roaming the ruined city. Urban planners who stop at nothing to create a new city. Shortages of food and commodities, injustice and violence. Starving Rotterdammers who see food fall from the sky. Seventy-five years after the liberation, and stories about the war in Rotterdam are still very much alive. No wonder, because the traumatic war years are a harrowing and defining chapter in the city's history.

This exhibition tells and reimagines incredible stories about the war. Like a modern mythology, they help us understand the unimaginable, and revitalise Rotterdam, then and now. Historical photos, films and artefacts reveal the origin of these stories, sometimes very surprising.



*Puinruimerskeet nabij de Coolsingel, mei juni 1940; collectie Stadsarchief Rotterdam.
© J.A. Kok / Rotterdam Museum*

EXHIBITION THEME***Christo and Jeanne-Claude: Paris!*****Dates & Place**

1 July - 19 October 2020

Centre Pompidou, Paris

Information online at<https://www.centrepompidou.fr/en/lib/Exhibitions>**Description**

As of 1975, Christo and Jeanne-Claude developed the idea of wrapping the Pont-Neuf in Paris in a golden sandstone-coloured polyamide canvas, which would cover the sides and the vaults of the bridge's twelve arches, the parapets, the edges and the footpaths (the public could walk on the canvas), its 44 lamps and the vertical walls of the central island of the western end of Île de la Cité and the Esplanade du Vert-Galant.

The major exhibition devoted to Christo and Jeanne Claude retraces the story of this project, from 1975 to 1985, and looks back at their Parisian period, between 1958 and 1964, before the wrapping of the Arc de Triomphe in 2021.

EXHIBITION THEME***The Art of Metropolitan Trails*****Dates & Place**

11 July - 11 October 2020

Pavillon de l'Arsenal, Paris, France

**Information online at**<https://www.pavillon-arsenal.com/en/expositions/11755-the-art-of-metropolitan-trails.html>**Description**

From Bordeaux to Boston, Istanbul, Milan, Marseille, and beyond, metropolitan trails have generated a new creative space that lies at the crossroads of urban planning, art, tourism, and environmentalism. Mixing the urban with the cultural, these projects involve many aspects, ranging from the initial, collective attempts to develop them (scouting, city walks, and metropolitan hiking) to documenting them (through art projects, books, articles, travel journals, audiobooks, documentary films, and exhibitions), ultimately resulting in a collective itinerary created in conjunction with local authorities. The exhibition *The art of Metropolitan Trails* describes this emerging practice, renders homage to its pioneers, explains how a metropolitan trail is created, and also, for the first time ever, unveils the outline of the Grand Paris Trail. ►

From the exhibition: The Art of Metropolitan Trails. © Pavillon de l'Arsenal

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

EXHIBITION THEME

For Game: The collection of antique toys of the Capitoline Superintendence

Dates & Place

25 July 2020 – 10 January 2021

Museum of Rome, Italy

Information online at

<http://www.museodiroma.it/en/node/1007608>

Description

The exhibition focuses on the valuable collection of antique toys recently acquired by the Capitoline Superintendence and its exhibition itinerary aims to promote an exhibition that emphasizes the relationship between toys and everyday objects, between play and real life. Over 700 specimens of antique toys belonging to the Capitoline Collection animate 22 rooms on the first floor of the museum, accompanying visitors through an exhibition itinerary divided into thematic areas. The exhibits are mainly related to the years between 1860 and 1930, the so-called “golden age” of the toy. Added to these are the doll house of the Queen of Sweden, from the late 1600s, and the oldest toys in the collection: two pre-Inca dolls from the 14th-15th century, one of which depicts a mother with her child in her arms. The six thematic nuclei in which the exhibition itinerary is divided - the city and the countryside, street and sky games, the child on the move, the family, work, travel - include different types of playful objects: planes and ships, castles, rural buildings, cars, trains, dollhouses, dolls, magic lanterns, circus and amusement park objects, paintings, books, street games, children's transport objects and movement games (sleds, scooters, bikes, prams, rocking horses), didactic games on handicraft work (spinning mills, cast iron cookers, boilers and steamers).

Along the 22 exhibition rooms on the first floor of the museum, the joyful machines - a sort of «Wunderkammer» for children and adults who welcome real but also virtual toys - alternate with labyrinthine paths that allow a «close» and dynamic view of the toys on display.

The first section is dedicated to the theme of the family, which includes 79 dolls arranged in an ideal garden and 15 doll houses, with a site-specific installation for “the royal doll house” that belonged to the Queen of Sweden. One of the houses on display, four stories high - built by hand in 1914 by John Carlsen, brother of the small owner - still has a functioning elevator made from parts of clock mechanisms. Proceeding, one can admire urban and rural games, with about 70 buildings, castles and bridges, shops, a lighthouse, houses and then stables, farms and animals; then airplanes and ships, with a glider and a big kite, and street games, with spinning tops, ropes, slingshots, balls, target shooting, roller skates. This is followed by about 60 pieces linked to the theme of work, with games inspired by the various economic activities of the pre-industrial era or the dawn of industrial civilization. There are spinning mills, looms, electric motors, kitchens, construction games and mechanics, which in the past had the function of developing artisanal, artistic and domestic skills in children. The tour continues with a selection of 60 toy cars, including miniature German cars from the 1930s, and an installation with small automata, street games and miniature horse-drawn carriages. There is no shortage of steam engines, small boilers and trains, some magic lanterns, vision games, with about forty objects related to fun, including elements of the circus - juggling clowns, traveling circus with automata - and the funfair (game football, gallop, mutoscopes or games related to the vision of the pre-cinema) and three carillons.

The children's library is also fascinating with 84 books from the collection selected from pop-up books, “talking” books and fairy tales. In the last room, an animation video presents a story inspired by the objects in the collection: in a miniature world, toys captured in even the smallest details come to life, against the backdrop of the city immersed in its daily activities. The video was made by the artist Francesco Arcuri - video maker curator of all the visual paths of the exhibition - with two animation techniques: stop motion and 2D digital animation.

The entire exhibition is accompanied by explanatory panels on the meaning of the game, on the history of the collection, with more detailed information on the most valuable pieces. On the occasion of the exhibition, all the toys were subjected to careful maintenance and restoration interventions.



Poster of the exhibition. © museodiroma

EXHIBITION THEME

Blitzed: Liverpool lives

Dates & Place

Until Summer 2021

Museum of Liverpool, UK

Information online at

<https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/whatson/museum-of-liverpool/exhibition/blitzed-liverpool-lives>

Description

This exhibition reveals the devastation the Blitz brought to the lives and city of Liverpool in photographs taken by Liverpool City Police between 1940 and 1941. The photographs are accompanied by personal accounts, which bring to life the impact of the war through the eyes of those directly affected by the bombings.

The port city of Liverpool and surrounding areas were key targets for German bombers during the Second World War (1939-45). In Merseyside more than 4,000 civilians were killed, 10,000 homes were destroyed and 70,000 people made homeless during air raids, which peaked in the Blitz of May 1941.



Poster of the exhibition. © liverpoolmuseums.org

Liverpool itself suffered the second highest number of civilian deaths in air raids in the country and, due to censorship, press reports often didn't tell the whole story. At the heart of this exhibition is the people of Liverpool; those affected by the Blitz – their memories, struggles with the aftermath and how they rebuilt their lives in the face of a terrible onslaught. Sensory elements enable visitors to experience wartime aromas and hands-on tactile images.

EXHIBITION THEME

Bauhaus Now: art+design+architecture
A legacy of migration and modernism in Brisbane.

Dates & Place

Opening on 18 September 2020
 Museum of Brisbane, Australia

Information online at

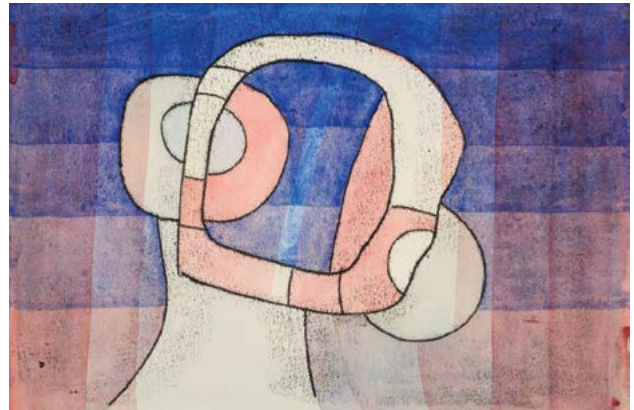
<https://www.museumofbrisbane.com.au/whats-on/bauhaus-now/>

Description

Bauhaus Now brings to life the little-known story of how revolutionary ideas of the Weimar Republic in Germany influenced modernist art, design and architecture in Brisbane and Australia. The exhibition reveals the migrant and refugee contribution to Australian life and art history in the inter-war period and post-Second World War years.

The famous Bauhaus school started in Germany in 1919 and was closed by the Nazis in 1933. From the 1930s onwards, a significant number of central European, Austrian and German refugees and emigres came to Australia seeking refuge from war and fascism, many of whom were active in arts education. Through these exiles and internees, educational ideas filtered into Australia that revealed the influence of the Bauhaus.

Bauhaus Now will feature original artworks from this period, plus a series of vivid contemporary recreations that demonstrate both the impact of this movement in Brisbane and Australian art history. The exhibition will also show how the legacy of these powerful ideas is being re-interpreted today.



Hirschfeld, Mack. "Untitled". © Carl-Warner / Museum of Brisbane

EXHIBITION THEME

50 Designers, 50 Ideas, 50 Wards

Dates & Place

online
 Chicago Architecture Center, Chicago, USA

Information online at

<http://www.architecture.org/exhibits/50-designers-50-ideas-50-wards/>

Description

What is the role of design in solving community challenges, both locally and citywide?

In celebration of its 50th anniversary (2016), the Chicago Architecture Foundation (CAF) asked 50 designers to create transformative proposals aimed at improving the quality of life for residents in each of Chicago's 50 wards. Seeking inspiration and answers about how Chicago might grow, enhance and improve present conditions, the designers studied all elements of the city—streets, bridges, buildings, waterways, vacant lots and everything in between.

The Chicago Architecture Foundation's ambitious exhibition features 50 transformative proposals for building a better Chicago, presented by 50 of the city's top architecture and design firms, reimagining Chicago, ward by ward and offering solutions to the city's most urgent urban issues.

50 Designers, 50 Ideas, 50 Wards was curated for the CAF by Martin Felsen, Sarah Dunn, and Reed Kroloff. The exhibition is now available online. ▶



Food Infrastructure, JGMA, Ward 22. © Chicago Architecture Center

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

EXHIBITION THEME

Virtual Views:

New York, Open City

Dates & Place

online

MoMA – Museum of Modern Art

New York, USA

Information online at

<https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/5238>

Description

In the long months of the COVID-19 lockdown, many citizens have found their cities emptied of human presence and transformed into places of eerie unfamiliarity. Conversely, this experience has allowed many of us to freshly appreciate the architectural achievements that our cities are made of. Meanwhile, the protests following the Black Lives Matter movement and the boarding up of entire neighborhoods brought to the fore questions of ownership and inequity, and the way architectural monuments work as markers of capital.

Taking some of the most prominent built, and unbuilt, examples of New York City's skyline and urban fabric as a cue, *New York, Open City* explores a selection of projects—from the UN Secretariat and Seagram Buildings, to MoMA's expanded campus and the High Line, to unrealized projects from the 1960s, including one for the "Instant Slum Clearance" of Harlem—which will allow us to ask what these approaches mean in a moment when New York is looking once again for a more equitable future.



Mr. and Mrs. Joe Louis Out for a Stroll. September 25, 1935. © The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

EXHIBITION THEME

Disease X: London's Next Epidemic?

Dates & Place

online

Museum of London, UK

Information online at

<https://virtualexhibitions.museumoflondon.org.uk/disease-x/>

Description

Disease X: London's next epidemic? was a temporary exhibition at the Museum of London between November 2018 and March 2019. To mark the 100-year anniversary of the deadliest wave of the Spanish Flu, the Museum looked back at the past history of epidemics on Londoners. It wondered if the city might be at risk from an unknown 'Disease X', as the World Health Organisation called it.

London has been hit by many deadly epidemics over the centuries, including plague, cholera, smallpox, influenza and HIV/AIDS. We used our collections, new historical research and interviews with public health experts and epidemiologists to consider what impact a future outbreak could have on London.

Today London, like the rest of the world, has fallen victim to the Covid-19 pandemic. Life has changed in a way almost unimaginable when we created this exhibition. Hundreds of thousands of lives have been cut short and millions have been infected with a previously unknown virus. Here the stories, objects and words of the Disease X exhibition are shared, to demonstrate what the past can tell us about epidemics and their impact on London..



Impact: The sudden death of Prince Albert Victor Queen Victoria's mourning gown, 1892. Handkerchiefs made to commemorate Prince Albert Victor after his death. © museumoflondon.org

Conference Alert

CONFERENCE THEME

Webinar: Small but Mighty: Navigating the New Normal as a Small or Mid-Sized Museum

Dates & Place

Launched July 2020, available online

Information online at

<https://cuseum.com/webinars/small-but-mighty-overview>

Description

Now, several months after lockdown began, museums are gradually beginning to reopen their doors to visitors. While cultural organizations face many common hurdles, small and mid-sized institutions, with fewer staff and resources, may be facing unique challenges around this “new normal”. Many may be concerned they lack the budgets and bandwidth needed to implement necessary changes, like contactless experience design and new digital initiatives.

The panelists, Brendan Ciecko (Cuseum), John Echeveste (LA Plaza de Cultura y Artes), Maryam Nabi (Conservatory of Flowers), and Rich Bradway (Norman Rockwell Museum) talk through strategies to navigate the new normal as a smaller cultural institution, delving into the unique challenges that small to mid-sized organizations face.

Organized by

Cuseum

CONFERENCE THEME

The 2020 Rome Charter Conference

Dates & Place

1-3 October 2020

online

Information online at

<https://www.2020romecharter.org/conference/>

Description

The 2020 Rome Charter is led by Roma Capitale and the UCLG Committee on Culture. It aims at promoting the right to participate in cultural life as a condition for a better society. The initiative began in 2019 and it has involved more than 20 cities and 50 contributors, to respond to the important and urgent need to create together a new future in the places that represent a challenge as well as an opportunity today: our cities and communities.

The outcome of this initiative is the 2020 Charter of Rome.

Public authorities, national and local governments have legal duties in respect of participation in culture, enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international treaties and conventions. Together with every stakeholder, they must put in place effective policies and adequate resources to meet those obligations, or their promises are mere rhetoric.

A city working towards cultural democracy fulfils its duty to support its inhabitants to:

DISCOVER cultural roots, so that they can recognise their heritage, identity and place in the city, as well as understand the contexts of others;

CREATE cultural expressions, so that they can be part of and enrich the life of the city;

SHARE cultures and creativity, so that social and democratic life is deepened by the exchange;

ENJOY the city's cultural resources and spaces, so that all can be inspired, educated and refreshed;

PROTECT the city's common cultural resources, so that all can benefit from them, today and in years to come.

The 2020 Rome Charter imagines a more inclusive, democratic and sustainable city. Its achievement is in the hands of all who live here.

In October this year, three days of debates, international interventions and dialogues will take place, online, in order to discuss the implications of the 2020 Charter of Rome in the development of sustainable cities and communities through participation in culture. Eleven sessions online, all translated in English and in Italian, some of them held in Spanish and French are foreseen. Over 50 stories will be shared, tackling common questions and a collective reflection on how to build and develop better societies for the future, starting from today.

Organized by

Roma Capitale and UCLG Committee on Culture



CONFERENCE THEME

Museums Facing a Planetary Emergency

Dates & Place

14 November 2020

online

Information online at

<https://icom-deutschland.de/de/veranstaltung/109-jahrestagung-2020-von-icom-deutschland.html>



ICOM Germany Annual Conference - together with ICOM Cyprus and ICOM Greece. © Dimitris Kiriakakis at Unsplash

and also local disasters? What new roles could our institutions, and ICOM itself, play in the age of Fridays for Future and Extinction Rebellion?

The conference will be divided into a general part with invited keynote lectures by environmental scientists, social investigators, cultural practitioners and political activists, and a more practical part based on case studies from the point of view of museum individuals, associations and authorities that will examine possible future scenarios and inform a panel discussion. Due to the current Covid-19 situation, the conference will take place online.

Organized by

ICOM Germany, Greece and Cyprus

Description

Over the last century, humanity has benefited from remarkable improvements in health and in quality of life. Yet at the same time, we have been exploiting the Earth's resources in unprecedented and unsustainable ways. Our world is now changing rapidly under the influence of human behaviour: climate change and biodiversity loss but also pandemics are just some of the most dramatic manifestations. These changes threaten the security of critical ecosystems and jeopardise the gains made over the past century in human health and well-being. As trusted sources of information and sites of transformative engagement, museums can and must play a role in addressing these issues. How should museums reinvent themselves in the face of a planetary emergency? How should we prepare ourselves for increasingly frequent extreme weather events and social unrest? What is the role of our collections and how can they be protected, in the face of global changes

CONFERENCE THEME

Museums Making Sense:

NEMO European Museum Conference

Dates & Place

15 – 17 November 2020

online

Information online at

<https://www.ne-mo.org/about-us/european-museum-conference.html>

Description

In November 2020, NEMO will organize an online meeting to explore the important role museums play in translating the complex to the digestible.

NEMO European Museum Conference 2020 - *Museums making sense* will discuss how museums can help visitors make sense of complicated matters – be it climate change or migration processes or economic relations. Through storytelling methods, museums can help us understand complex interrelations. Multiperspective approaches can help us appreciate different perspectives. Museums can work as innovative labs to test different complex scenarios, giving the opportunity to find answers for questions like: How do we want to live? How could the future look like?

In view of how the pandemic is developing, NEMO has decided to develop a completely new online format of the European Museum Conference. The new dates and adapted programme will soon be released.

Organized by

NEMO



CONFERENCE THEME

Digital Transformation in Cultural Heritage Institutions

Dates & Place

7-10 December 2020

online

Information online at

<https://cidoc.mahgeneve.news/en/home/>

Description

The CIDOC Conference 2020 will address an important societal theme that cannot be ignored nowadays: digital transformation in cultural heritage institutions. The use of digital technology, though marginal at first, has gradually reshaped documentation practices and transformed almost all aspects of museum work, sometimes even pushing institutions to deviate from traditional conceptions of what their roles should be.

The web conference*, organized by the Museum of Art and History of the City of Geneva, will take place from December 7 to 10, 2020.

Organized by

ICOM – CIDOC and the Museum of Art and History of the City of Geneva

CONFERENCE THEME

The URBAN FUTURE global conference

Dates & Place

Tbd - 2021

Rotterdam, the Netherlands

Information online at

<https://www.urban-future.org/about/#the-conference>

Description

The *URBAN FUTURE global conference* is Europe's largest event for sustainable cities. But it is also so much more than that. It's a community of passionate CityChangers from all over the world. Active, passionate and visionary decision-makers – the CityChangers – are the ones who drive change and create sustainable urban spaces.

The next UFGC edition in Rotterdam will shape around the following core themes:

- URBAN MOBILITY:

Whether you want to get cars off of streets, to become the new cycling capital, or to encourage more men to take public transport, you'll soon run into both systemic and behavioural obstacles. The objective is to learn how to overcome them: by, for and with the next generation.

- SKILLS & LEADERSHIP:

Any project's success depends on leaders who are able to convene a powerful team, who nurture their followers and teach the skills they learned by winning and making mistakes along the way. Some of the most exciting urban leaders of today will share their experiences.

- CIRCULAR:

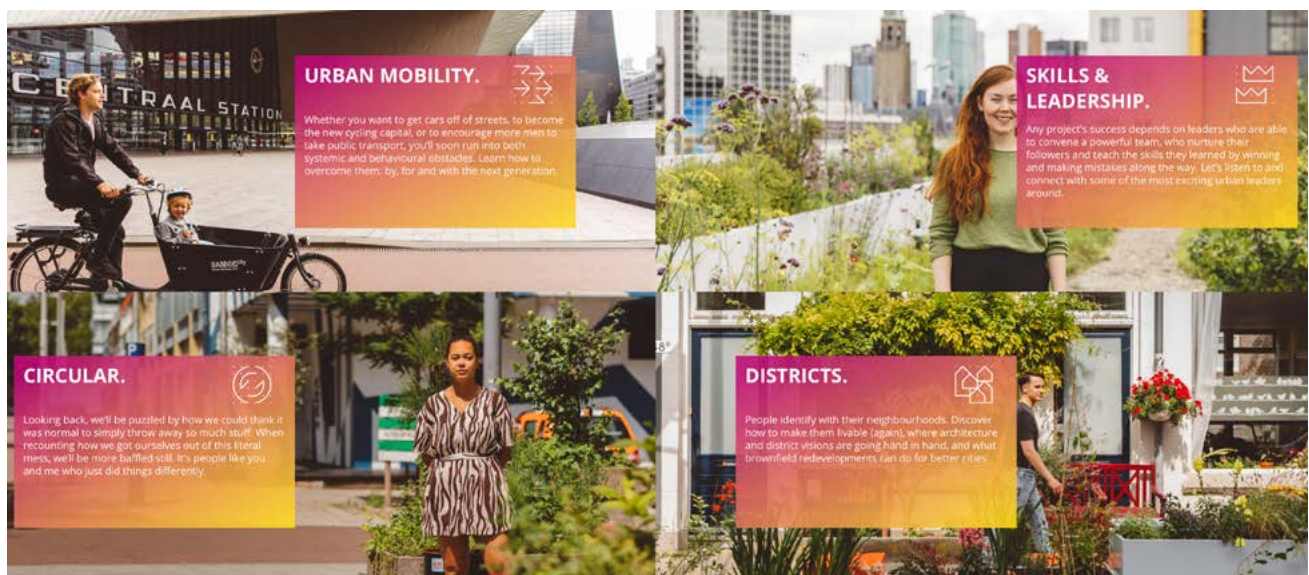
Looking back, we'll be puzzled by how we could think it was normal to simply throw away so much stuff. However, the participants will have an opportunity to learn from people who do things differently.

- DISTRICTS:

People identify with their neighbourhoods. The aim of this conference stream is to discover how to make them livable (again), where architecture and district visions are going hand in hand, and what brownfield redevelopments can do for better cities.

Organized by

UFGC



ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

CONFERENCE THEME

WRLDCTY 2020 Virtual Festival

Dates & Place

22-24 October, 2020
online

Information online at

<https://www.wrldcty.com>

Description

WRLDCTY is the first global city event of its kind—bringing together thought leaders, urbanists and city lovers on a single digital platform for 3 days of conversations, connections and experiences broadcast from leading cities around the world.

WRLDCTY is bringing together more thought leaders, authors and experts than any city event in history. The City Stage features broadcast-quality keynotes presentations and

conversations coming from iconic venues such as The New York Times Center, the Museum of London and Gardens by the Bay in Singapore. The World Stage brings together an equally impressive array of experts and practitioners from cities around the world for thought-provoking virtual panels on key topics and issues facing cities today.

The Experience Stage features eclectic experiences from cities around the world—from live yoga classes overlooking the Manhattan skyline, cooking classes from Singapore, virtual tours of an L.A. movie studio with special celebrity guests, hip-hop artists on the Toronto waterfront and many more.

The festival will involve renowned subject matter experts for in-depth Workshops and Master Classes on some of the key issues facing cities and businesses today such as housing, urban tourism, civic identity and the future of the experience economy.

The world's first virtual city festival crosses countries and time zones to explore the best of urban life, to learn from our cities, explore them, shape them, share them, fight for them.

Organized by

Resonance, host cities (New York, Los Angeles, Toronto, Hong Kong and London) + partners



CONFERENCE THEME

CONVERGENCES - Memory Studies Association Conference 2021 Museums and Memory Working Group

Dates & Place

5-9 July, 2021
Warsaw, Poland, and/or online

Information online at

<https://www.memorystudiesassociation.org/conference-warsaw-2021-call-for-papers-groups/>

Description

The 2021 conference will be the inaugural in-person meetup of the Museums and Memory working group of the Memory Studies Association. The newly formed Working Group welcomes panels, workshops, exhibitions, events, or papers related to next year's conference theme convergences that speak specifically to the relationship between memory and museum institutions. Topics addressed might include:

- Rethinking national memory with #BLM
- Decolonising the museum
- Recoding the museum – going digital
- Public institutions in private spaces #museumathome
- Letting go of curatorial control: what happens to memory when museum objects and narratives circulate on social media?
- Transnational memory and museum partnerships
- Lockdown online-only commemoration activities in 2020
- Memory/History ... exhibition, research, commemoration, community, education – how does the relationship between memory and history play out across different museum departments?

The Museums and Memory working group also plans a workshop in which academics and museum professionals together will devise a manifesto for the post-pandemic museum.

Organized by

Memory Studies Association