

## Multiple levels of information around an event of production

**Katri Hirvonen-Nurmi**  
*MA, Curator*  
*Helina Rautavaara Museum*  
*Espoo, Finland*  
*katri.hirvonen-nurmi(at)helinamuseo.fi*

## Introduction

The paper is based on an optimistic view on the new possibilities of sharing museum and archival data for mutual enrichment. Ethnographic museums can be monuments to colonialism, but that is not the fate of all of them. The Helinä Rautavaara Museum is an ethnographic museum. The museum's mission is to introduce people to religions and cultures from non-European countries. As the Brazilian Minister of Education, Sr. Cristóvão Buarque stated last July (in the context of debates about internationalization of the Amazonian):

*“Me gustaría ver la internacionalización de los grandes museos del mundo. ... No se puede dejar que ese patrimonio cultural, como es el patrimonio natural amazónico, sea destruido y manipulado por el sólo placer de un propietario o de un país”.*

His polemical message was that if we want to keep on speaking about humanist ethics and *global* natural or cultural heritage, also private collectors as well as state museums have to take it seriously, too, instead of being jealous about their property.

An ethnographic museum can be a positive actor of globalization, publishing culturally relevant and empowering information on its collections via the Internet. Intercultural dialogue is of major importance for Helinä Rautavaara museum, and that is one of the reasons why objects, photos, audio tapes and even a few footages of film are being digitized and catalogued in Helinä Rautavaara museum for a wider use of researchers and other interested audience.

For enhancing cultural diversity, what is required from both those who do documentation and from those who enjoy the results is public access via internet. Although access to computers and to Internet is still a privilege of the rich part of the world, it is a way of enhancing accessibility and sharing information. Museum archives used to be restricted to students, journalists, researchers and other highly educated people. In the digital era they are opening up. Initial feedback from the users of our museum's Web site has given the impression that the power of first hand visual impulses and images as icons are growing. What visitors of the Web collections want are good quality prints or the best photos – or files for printing out photos. Youtubization is competing with hollywoodization, but the museum institution still holds on to the importance of research and written texts, and that is what we want to offer.

The possibilities for tracing and enhancing commonalities between cultures has increased along with new portals making internet searches possible among digital content in Europe. Europeana is a new portal applying e.g. the LIDO schema for harvesting common data fields across different cultural heritage institutions. For a small museum in Northern Europe even to get its collections digitized is time-consuming. And to get them within reach of an international audience requires carefully balanced management of resources in cataloguing: an equilibrium between background research and richness of the content on one hand, and the use of a standardized, narrowed down

presentation format of the data on the other hand. Another additional problem is the language barrier.

The fields titles seen in Table 1 in English (in bold type) are those that will appear in Europeana. The rest will not show. Mapping one's collections metadata with a metadata standard is a challenge from a content provider's view, because lots of contents are ripped off, resulting in impoverished information, making cultural comparison difficult.

An example of cross-fertilization will be given below with more examples from Helinä Rautavaara museum: information on capoeira, a newly globalized Afro-Brazilian martial art. Capoeira had and still has an important role in the struggles over ethnic and national identity in Brazil. Globally it reverberates different waves of Black movements.

## Mestre Pastinha pelaa capoeiraa



Mestre Pastinha pelaa capoeiraa; Rautavaara, Helinä

<b>Name</b>	Mestre Pastinha pelaa capoeiraa
<b>Museum</b>	Helinä Rautavaaran museo
<b>Type</b>	mustavalkoinen negatiivi
<b>Number</b>	Rvk3.1:199
<b>Subjects</b>	Pastinha, Vicente Ferreira
<b>Subject places</b>	Brasilia, Salvador da Bahia, Bahia
<b>Authors</b>	Rautavaara, Helinä
<b>Time of subject</b>	1963 – 1964

<b>Description</b>	Mustavalkoisessa kuvassa Mestre Pastinha pelaa capoeiraa toisen miehen kanssa. Pastinhalla on yllään valkoiset housut ja paita ja hän on kumartunut maahan toisen miehen eteen. Toisella pelaajalla on yllään tummat housut ja vaalea paita ja hän on selin kameraan hiukan kumartuneena. Taustalla on miehiä, jotka soittavat berimbautta ja muita soittimia capoeiran säestykseksi sekä yleisöä.
Kokoelma	Rautavaaran valokuvakokoelma
Kuvanpohjamateriaali	Selluloosa-asettaatti
Mitat	58 x 58 mm, korkeus, suurin 61 mm, leveys, suurin 62 mm
Kuvaaja	Rautavaara, Helinä

*Table 1: Mestre Pastinha & information based on sheet from catalogue.*

## Museum material

The common goal of developing and sharing information infrastructures globally, such as the work that is carried out by the CIDOC Co-reference Working Group, is something to look forward to. If specialists and content providers continue working together, hopefully in the future it's possible to unite the scarce and scattered information on capoeira in meaningful hypertexts, regardless of the country of origin of the user.

Helinä Rautavaara museum has been visited by old masters of capoeira, together with their followers. They have seen archival photos of capoeira players, listened to recorded tapes of radio programs that Rautavaara had made, and read Rautavaara's transcriptions of her interviews with Brazilian capoeiristas and even seen sequences of documentary film. Today part of all types of material is digitized, and the material is easier to present to visitors. Devoted capoeiristas are still visiting the museum, giving their explanations, corrections, interpretations and opinions about the material. But in the future, most of them will probably visit our material by the WWW.



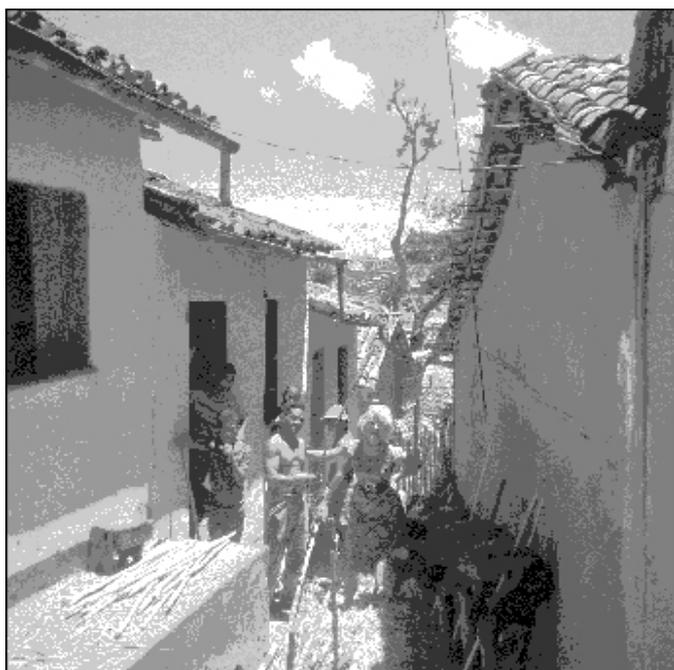
*Image 1: Detail of the HRE436 Berimbau at the Helinä Rautavaara Museum*

The Berimbau Instrument is an interesting object as such, a cordophone. The cord was

since the mid-nineteenthundreds made of wire used to strengthen tyres. The wooden bow made from biribá wood – therefore the name – is very simple. A calabash serves as the resonating cage. Helinä Rautavaara museum has three berimbaus. One of them, HRE436 is a real treasure in regard to many direction it refers to.<sup>1</sup> The berimbau was a gift from Mestre Waldemar Rodrigues da Paixão.

## Tracing references with global ID:s

In the documentation of this object the museum has used various documents from its own archive, as sources of information. The collector's memoirs mention shortly the acquirement of the instrument from Waldemar. This is backed up by photos by the collector, where Waldemar plays a same kind of instrument. There are tape recordings by her where Mestre Waldemar speaks, and there are notes by the collector's own documentation about the content of the tapes. Again, the visiting masters have been interviewed in the museum and new layers of information are added. What becomes messy, is the amount of cross-referencing, even inside the museum. The referred titles have to be searched from different files.



*Image 2: Mestre Waldemar's berimbaus being produced, with the collector, Helinä Rautavaara.*

The previous photo is the subject of a popular capoeira song, "Eu fui na Bahia pra tocar Berimbau de mestre Waldemar", made by capoeirista Mestre Boa Voz. Mestre Waldemar was well known for his innovations in producing berimbaus, and there is another song commemorating his career as capoeirista and artisan.

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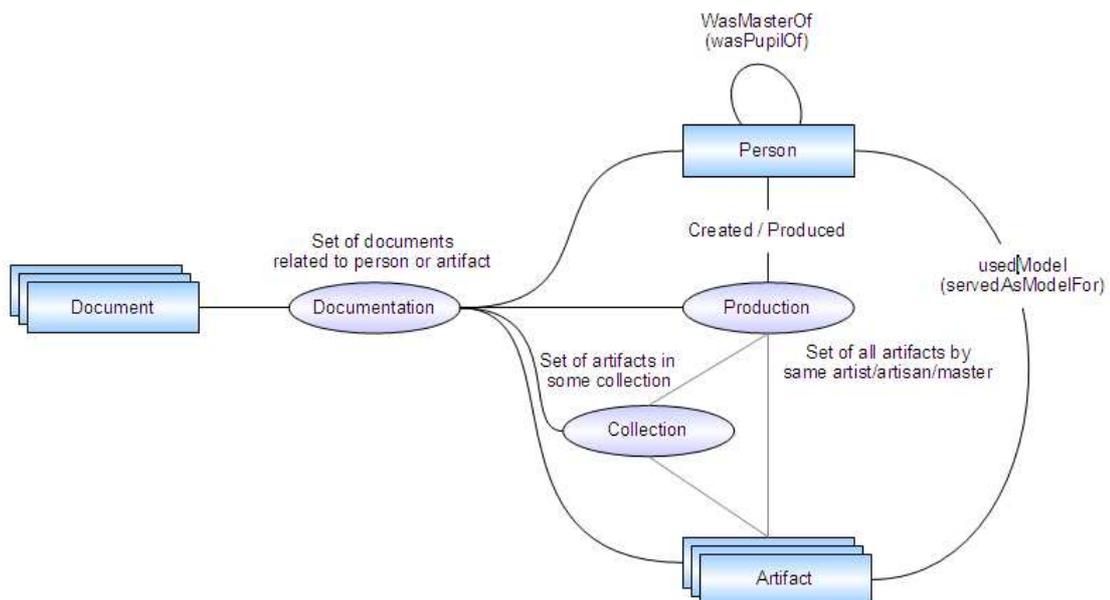
<sup>1</sup>

<http://suomenmuseotonline.fi/fi/selaa?freetextSearch=HRE436a-c&action=search>

The photo archive digitization is moving on, and more color slides are documented and digitized. There are several photos where Waldemar plays berimbau made by him. One of his contemporaries, Mestre Joao Grande leader of his Capoeira Angola school in New York, honoured the museum with a visit in his old age, and gave invaluable commentaries to the photos, that will soon be digitized. Knowledgeable about Waldemar's style he could depict him by his bright white shoes, even in the very dark night shots that, without him, would have been considered almost lacking any information. Further cross-fertilization would happen if visitors in the internet site could add their comments and links to more documents.

Each of the photos have an identification number (catalogue number, for ex. Rvk3.1:195), which is repeated in the ID of the digitized photo resource. A third identification, a URI will be fixed for publishing the photo resources later during 2010, as the database is incorporated in Europeana. Now the link to each image will depend on what kind of search you have made. In a relational database program the references across the digitized objects in the same museum, within the same program, function without problems. The challenge is, how to complement or correct this information with data from external sources. This enrichment of data often occurs in unforeseen (serendipitous) ways. The CIDOC Co-reference Working Group is developing strategies and tools for making these quotations from outside the museum possible. This requires use of global ID:s as an addition to local ones or resolution of parallel ID:s.

## Modeling genealogies



*Graph 1. An attempt to model the genealogy instruments*

In Graph 1 an Artifact (a berimbau) instrument) was built by a Person. The builder used as model another berimbau built by another person (a master). In order to link instruments with builders and show the genealogy instruments as well as the chains of master – pupil relations, global ID:s are needed for all instances of persons, artifacts and documents within the domain of interest.

Today there are academic scholars searching for a true history of capoeira as opposed to both opportunistic historically uninterested entrepreneurs and traditionalists, who view capoeira as heritage descended from the slaves brought to Brazil, and transmitted down as an unaltered “essence”. In an emerging scholarship there is a lack of preserved source materials. The subject of the photos is of interest to capoeira players. Followers of different capoeira traditions may use them as a reference point when making claims of authenticity and old age of their current of capoeira in the style "We are a angoleiro group, we do the gestures in the way that Mestre Pastinha does".

The people who today are well experienced in the practice of capoeira and who have personal knowledge of its oral history often do not have the resources to travel to important preserved historical sources in museums or archives, for example in Finland. Helinä Rautavaara Museum, on the other hand, does not have the best possibilities to show this corpus of cultural heritage information in its native context. The Finnish capoeira community is interested in finding out, who were the teachers of each teacher today, and consequently, what is the history and genealogy of the colours, songs and movements used in their plays (rodas) and their paraphernalia. The digitized museum material has both an educative meaning for new players and an aura of the era of capoeira's founding fathers in the 1950's and 1960's.

## Conclusion

The paper has discussed suggestions on the relevant information fields of catalogued capoeira-related materials. The aim is that a varied user community can have the best possible use of it. They should be able to trace the genealogies of the different colors, rhythms and compositions of both the objects, music and gestures, visible or audible in this museum's and in other museum collections. At a certain point, however, the authoritative voice of the museums, should quiet down, and an invitation for commentary from the contemporary practitioners be heard instead.

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**Thank you:**

Mika Nyman, Synapse Computing

**Author:**

Katri Hirvonen-Nurmi, MA, Curator

Helina Rautavaara Museum

Address: Po. Box 6667, Ahertajantie 5, 02070 Espoo City, Finland

Telephone: +358-9-81631432

Fax: +358-9-81631438

Email: [katri.hirvonen-nurmi\(at\)helinamuseo.fi](mailto:katri.hirvonen-nurmi(at)helinamuseo.fi)