

ICME Newsletter 48, October 2007

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1. WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

What a wonderful meeting we had in Vienna just two short months ago. The papers addressing the theme of "The World under One Roof: Past, Present and Future Ethnographic Approaches to Universality" and its two sub-themes presented a variety of approaches and experiences from colleagues in many nations. We opened on the first day with a good session held in tandem with the International Committee of Regional Museums. Towards the end of the week, a special session on Diversity in Museums drew away a number of ICME members, with discussions relevant to our concerns.

After long days at the University of Vienna, ICME members were introduced to some of the ethnographic and ethnological museums in Vienna. These evenings were enlightening. They also provided easy times for socializing and sharing in relaxed settings. Not enough thanks can go to Matthias Beitzl, our man in Vienna, for all the arrangements he made.

Another way ICME members have found of sharing is during our legendary post-conference tours organized in conjunction with the annual meetings.

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2. NEW ICME BOARD

At the conference in Vienna a new ICME board was elected for the period 2007-2010.

The members of the new board are:

Annette Fromm, USA
President

Victoria Phiri, Zambia
Secretary

Zvezdana Antos, Croatia
Treasurer

Matthias Beitzl, Austria
Webmaster

Peter Bjerregaard, Denmark

3. THE WORLD UNDER ONE ROOF: THE ICME SESSIONS AT THE ICOM GENERAL CONFERENCE IN VIENNA 2007

5. THE AVICOM MEETINGS IN VIENNA 2007

The AVICOM (International committee of museums promoting audiovisuals, new images and sound technologies,

www.unesco.org/webworld/avicom/index.php)

www.museum.vic.gov.au/infosheets/11137.pdf

www.museum.vic.gov.au/infosheets/11137.pdf).

Museum of Albert Kahn in Paris keeps a rich collection of photographs and films, shot by banker Kahn (one of the pioneers in the field of visual anthropology) on his travels around the world. Director Gilles Baud-Bertier reported how they document and archive visual materials, kept by the museum. The interest for their materials is growing bigger and bigger, so they can hardly meet the demand. The copyrights are mostly respected, and when not, they usually avoid lawsuits, especially in countries outside Europe, where copyright law is not well established.

Institutions that are caught using the materials without permission are invited to sponsor the future projects, if possible in their own country.

Mostly the negotiations are successful for the museum. (The museum does not yet have its own website - you can find some information on judaisme.sdv.fr/perso/akahn.htm, english.pidf.com/page/p-291/art_id-1025/idf-PCUIDF592000007/).

Nadja Valentincic Furlan, a curator of ethnographic film at the Slovene Ethnographic Museum in Ljubljana, Slovenia, reported how they have applied audiovisual media at the first part of their permanent exhibition

www.unesco.org/webworld/avicom/

<http://www.unesco.org/webworld/avicom/>) to present the production policies, awarded

programmes (films, DVDs, CDs, websites, multimedia kiosks) and the integration of new technologies in their exhibition design.

Stephane Bezombes and Christine Hemmet presented Museum Quai Branly from Paris ([www.quaibrantly.fr/en/accueil/index.html]

6. UP-COMING CONFERENCES www.sru.uea.ac.uk/embodiment-workshop-nov07.php

College London in cooperation with the British Museum.

www.ucl.ac.uk/extreme-collecting/

www.namu.se www.sacaaa.org/sacmeetings.htm www.sfaa.net www.aesonline.org

] www.aesonline.org/ or [sananet.org www.arts.ulster.ac.uk/sief2008/docs/sief2008_firstcall.pdf

www.icaes2008.org

7. CALL FOR PAPERS

MUSEUMS AND REFUGEES, Museum in Docklands, London, 13-14 March 2008 End of call date: 17 October 2007

How do museums and more broadly the heritage sector engage with refugees and asylum seekers and the increased global focus on forced migration?

The collective and individual voices of the people are rarely heard and often misrepresented in the media. Museums, academic research centres, non-government organisations and government departments/agencies now see the need to explore the cultural contributions to and impact of refugee and asylum seeker groups on urban and regional centres.

The conference aims to explore how museums and other heritage agencies are responding to complex ethical, legal, social and political issues. How can museums inform debate and, given recent trends in immigration and asylum policies, highlight international and national obligations to protect people from persecution?

These issues impact on the work practices of museums in terms of curatorial decisions, collecting strategies, partnerships, approaches to programming, as well as shared decision making in collaborative exhibitions and public events. Are museums agents and forums of cultural change or do they reflect social change? Is there a new role for museums in terms of cultural facilitation and mediation? Should museums be more proactive as places for cross-cultural exchange and developing understanding between 'new' communities and peoples of diverse backgrounds? Are there appropriate ethical codes of practice in place to facilitate these new agendas?

We invite a range of papers that might be prompted by these questions as well as the three strands of the conference:

1. Giving voice: the museological agenda

- what are the current museological strategies to record, engage and reflect diverse tangible and intangible heritage?

- what resources and expertise can museums offer to and exchange with individuals and community groups and in turn serve as a counterpoint to the dominant discourses?
- to what extent do current practices inform museological policies, practices and long term agendas for working with refugee and asylum seeker groups?

2. Culture as a key player: evidencing social impact

- how can social capital be an effective means of to measure museums' effectiveness, develop responsive practices and inform policies and funding opportunities?
- can museums be effective forums for bridging and encouraging cross-cultural discussions, debate, understanding and active participation
- and, if so, how can this be realised measured in terms of evidence that will convince policy makers?
- where does the work of museums sit with political and social policies on measuring social impact, eg in terms of regeneration, social cohesion?
- can we ensure that notions of citizenship and values are not used to promote the cultural values of a more dominant group over another?

3. Innovation and research

- how can museums and heritage agencies be more creative and innovative in addressing these issues?
- how can museums develop more flexible spaces to present plural perspectives of groups and their histories and heritage (tangible and intangible)?
- how can museums work better with refugee and asylum seek groups, universities and other agencies as a knowledge base and communicate these issues to the public.

We would welcome abstracts of 1-2 pages on these issues and other issues pertinent to the aims of this conference - these might include partnership work, community cantered museum work, social inclusion, diasporas and translational social movements, gender and sexuality, deportation and detention, and combating racism.

Please send abstracts and/or proposals to dmcintyre@museumoflondon.org.uk or korchard@museumoflondon.org.uk by 17 October 2007. Responses to abstracts will be by 1 December 2007.

A selection of papers will be published in the Museums and Diversity series, which is published by UNESCO.

FIRST CALL FOR PAPERS

'MUSEUM ETHNOGRAPHY AT HOME'

Museum Ethnographers' Group Annual UK Conference 2008, Thursday and Friday 10-11 April 2008, Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford.

Museums of anthropology are supposed to be fascinated by 'the other', the material culture of exotic cultures and remote places, far from the site of the museums. However, the Pitt Rivers Museum is not the only UK ethnographic museum which actually has large ethnographic and archaeological collections from its own country.

This conference will explore the many aspects of museum ethnography at home. It is hoped that participants will explore this theme as widely as possible and it is anticipated that not all of the 'homes' that will be explored will be English or British. Papers might consider the kind of issues that arise when carrying out ethnographic research in a home country or else look at historic research or historic collections of 'home' material.

It is hoped that one of the sessions will be led by Chris Gosden, Professor of European Archaeology at Oxford University, who is currently the leader of an ESRC-funded 3 year research project looking into precisely these issues regarding the large English collections at the Pitt Rivers Museum. Other sessions may focus on other museums and collections.

In addition, a 'work in progress' session is planned for up-to-date information on current and on-going projects, this may relate to any field of museum ethnography not just this year's conference theme (informal 5-10 minute presentations are required).

Papers from the conference may be considered for publication in the Journal of Museum Ethnography published annual by the Group.

For further information or to propose papers or sessions contact:

Alison Petch, Pitt Rivers Museum, South Parks Road, Oxford, OX1 3PP, United Kingdom

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The closing date for submissions and abstracts is Friday 1 February 2008.

8. OTHER EVENTS

www.etnografski-muzej.hr/intro.html

Websites of interest

museumanthropology.blogspot.com/Museum Anthropology This Weblog is an Online Supplement to Museum Anthropology, The Journal of the Council for Museum Anthropology. Museum Anthropology is published twice a year by the Council for Museum Anthropology, a section of the American Anthropological Association, in partnership with the University of California Press. Museum Anthropology publishes articles, commentary, review articles, exhibition and book reviews, and research notes relevant to museum anthropology and the study of material culture.

Museum Anthropology

A Peer-Reviewed Journal of Museum and Material Culture Studies

museumanthropology.wordpress.com/index-of-authors/

www.materialworldblog.com

9. WORDS FROM THE EDITOR

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