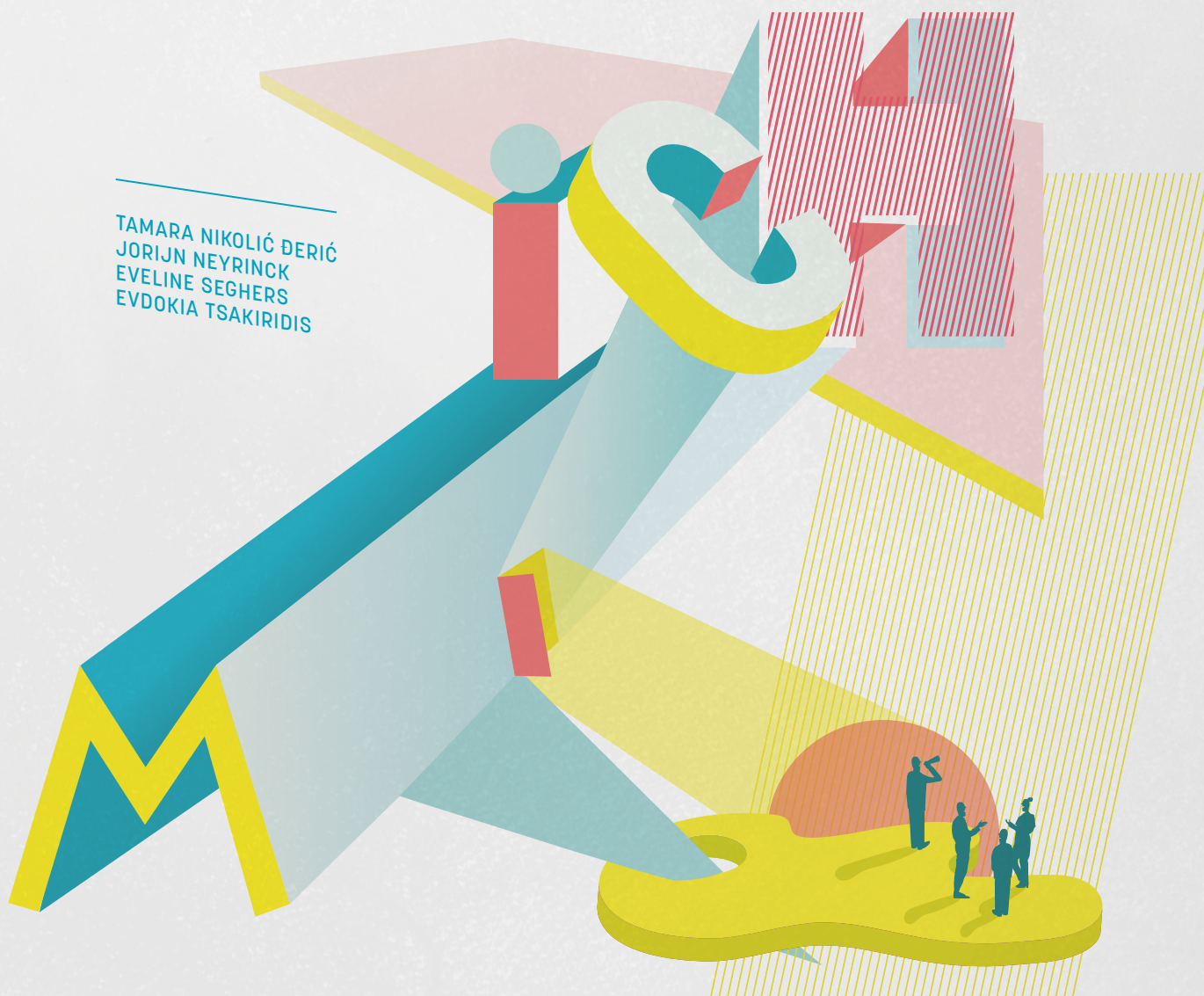


# MUSEUMS AND INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

## TOWARDS A THIRD SPACE IN THE HERITAGE SECTOR

A COMPANION TO DISCOVER  
TRANSFORMATIVE HERITAGE  
PRACTICES FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

TAMARA NIKOLIĆ ĐERIĆ  
JORIJN NEYRINCK  
EVELINE SEGHERS  
EVDOKIA TSAKIRIDIS



“

Museums are important stakeholders for the implementation of the UNESCO 2003 Convention. The *Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project* and its partners have succeeded in raising awareness for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage among the museum communities in Europe, while strengthening their capacities in this field. The project has reinforced linkages between museums, communities and larger heritage networks, contributing to international debates on participatory safeguarding practices.

Tim Curtis, Chief of Living Heritage Entity, UNESCO

“

ICOM believes that the *Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project*, with this book and its toolkit as the project outcomes among others, will be extremely useful to the members of our international museum community, as well as to our stakeholders working with us in order to safeguard living heritage for future generations. We are keen to further promote and disseminate these instruments together with our European partners so that we can also benefit from the experience of other regions to further strengthen the potential of what has already been achieved within the framework of this project. But most importantly, we hope that, with this book, we are providing young museum professionals with the new tools and standards that will help them when engaging with communities and seeking solutions to the problems they inherit from the past.

Afşin Altaylı, ICOM International

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# MUSEUMS AND INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

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## TOWARDS A THIRD SPACE IN THE HERITAGE SECTOR

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A COMPANION TO DISCOVER  
TRANSFORMATIVE HERITAGE  
PRACTICES FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

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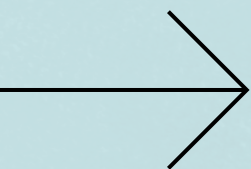


# MUSEUMS AND INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

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# TOWARDS *A THIRD SPACE* IN THE HERITAGE SECTOR

A COMPANION TO DISCOVER  
TRANSFORMATIVE HERITAGE PRACTICES  
FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

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TAMARA NIKOLIĆ ĐERIĆ  
JORIJN NEYRINCK  
EVELINE SEGHERS  
EVDOKIA TSAKIRIDIS

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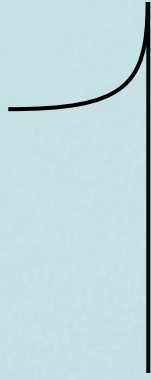
## FREQUENTLY USED ABBREVIATIONS

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<b>CE</b>	ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums
<b>CGIs</b>	Communities, groups and individuals
<b>ICH</b>	Intangible cultural heritage
<b>ICOM</b>	International Council of Museums
<b>IMP</b>	Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project
<b>MDPP</b>	Committee on Museum Definition, Prospects and Potentials
<b>NEMO</b>	Network of European Museum Organisations
<b>OD</b>	Operational Directive for the implementation of the UNESCO 2003 Convention
<b>ORF</b>	Overall Results Framework for the UNESCO 2003 Convention
<b>SGDs</b>	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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# THE WHY







AND  
**HOW**

OF THIS  
BOOK



# WHY

## > THIS BOOK? > MUSEUMS AND INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE?

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The times they are a-changin'<sup>1</sup>

Bob Dylan

### HERITAGE IN A TIME OF TRANSFORMATION

Our societies change at a fast pace in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Demographic evolution, climate change, economic shifts, the spread of mass tourism... Contemporary challenges are omnipresent. How to address heritage within this highly challenging and fast-changing environment? These cultural, economic and environmental changes throw a different light on the heritage(s) people cherish and wish to pass on to future generations. Recent calls for decolonising collections, new roles for museums in society, debates on participatory heritage... are signs of the times. These pressing issues collide with a growing awareness of diverging forms and experiences of heritage that we have often overlooked in the past.

### INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

One remarkable shift is the growing attention given to **intangible cultural heritage** (hereinafter referred to as **ICH**). In addition to the heritage we take care of in museums and collections, in the monuments and landscapes, ICH as living heritage pops up everywhere in today's society. ICH is dynamic and is embodied in living humans in a multitude of ways: it is reflected in the ways we play and tell stories; in food culture; in dance and music; in circus; in carnival, festivities and rituals; in farming techniques and knowledge related to nature; in the skills of the craftspeople who know how to make things.



ICH or living heritage is like the cultural equivalent of biodiversity: it is a range of creative solutions that people have come up with over time to address how and where we live together. It gives people a sense of identity and continuity, it is a mainspring of cultural diversity, and through its diverse and practical wisdom it contributes to sustainable development in our world.

In 2003 a new standard-setting international instrument was presented to the world: the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (hereinafter referred to as UNESCO 2003 Convention). It was an instant success, with worldwide ratification by the vast majority of States Parties and a multitude of other actors joining the process.

## MUSEUMS

With today's heritage practice in full transformation, it is time to reconceptualise the museum for the future, taking into account its plurality of visions and responsibilities. Museums increasingly take manifold roles, stretching into areas of wellbeing, education, urban development, biodiversity, et cetera. In 2019, after several attempts in the last decade, the museum field started revisiting the International Council of Museums (ICOM) museum definition as the complexities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the current responsibilities, visions and commitments of museums call for new approaches.

They always say time changes things, but  
you actually have to change them yourself.<sup>2</sup>

Andy Warhol

## MUSEUMS & SAFEGUARDING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

By introducing the notion and values of ICH in the ICOM museum definition in 2007, museums enriched their core functions such as acquiring, conserving, researching, communicating and exhibiting objects with a human-oriented perspective on objects, but also with knowledge, skills, beliefs and world views. ICH has of course been part of museum practice for much longer. However, its inclusion was no common discourse. Pilot practices on the boundaries of museums and ICH are emerging. They open up a multitude of options, questions and reflections to be discussed, experimented with and elaborated on.

How to assist in the safeguarding of ICH (living heritage) while working alongside its practitioners? How to create adequate spaces and representations for knowledge, skills or customs in museums? How to reconcile a conservation approach with the dynamic and future-oriented goal of safeguarding living heritage? How to integrate ICH in museums' collection strategies? What skills and competences to develop with a view to safeguarding living heritage? What policy and practice principles are key? And so many more questions...

Where museum professionals and practitioners of intangible heritage meet, with the intention of safeguarding this heritage, transformative heritage practices for the 21<sup>st</sup> century are germinating. These are fragile explorations of dialogue and co-creation.

[...] all forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity. But for me the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the 'third space' which enables other positions to emerge. This third space displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives [...]. The process of cultural hybridity gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognisable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation.<sup>3</sup>

Homi Bhabha

Paths are made by walking.  
This book is an invitation.

It explores the contact zones and immersion of the safeguarding of living heritage within museums' work. It explores the variety of approaches, interactions and practices that blossom when intangible cultural heritage and museums connect. It promotes reciprocal understanding of different methods, possibilities and approaches. And it fosters fruitful interfaces of museums' activity with living heritage to be taken into further elaboration in the future.

This book aspires to inspire!

The wide range of good practice examples and insights in this book sprouts from the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project (IMP) collaboration, that took place between 2017 and 2020 (more about the project on p.120) Starting from an initiative that has been assembling dozens of cases,

experiences, museums and practitioners of intangible heritage, and professionals and decision makers from Belgium, France, Italy, Switzerland, and the Netherlands, it now reaches out to you.

Some paths are made by walking. Other paths are planned. Today's paths may be co-designed and co-adapted while walking along.  
We only just started.

### Jorijn Neyrinck



//// **Jorijn Neyrinck** is a comparative anthropologist. She coordinates the UNESCO accredited NGO Workshop intangible heritage (Werkplaats immaterieel erfgoed), playing a key role in the field of living heritage policies and practices in Flanders, Belgium, and boosting transnational networking and cooperation. She is also a member of the UNESCO Commission in Flanders, and a trained facilitator in the Global Facilitators Network of the Capacity Building Programme of the UNESCO 2003 Convention. ////

also on behalf of

- **the IMP Steering Group** | Evdokia Tsakiridis, Eveline Seghers, Séverine Cachat, Valentina Lapicciarella Zingari, Sophie Elpers, Cornelia Meyer and Stefan Koslowski;
- **the IMP Think Tank** | Marc Jacobs, Jorijn Neyrinck, Florence Pizzorni, Rosario Perricone, Hendrik Henrichs, Isabelle Raboud-Schüle, Albert van der Zeijden;
- **associated partners** | David Vuillaume and Julia Pagel (NEMO – Network of European Museum Organisations), Afşin Altaylı (ICOM – International Council of Museums), Reme Sakr and Meg Nömgård (ICH NGO Forum)
- **consulting IMP** | Tamara Nikolić Đerić and Jasper Visser

Our task, then, should be to navigate...  
It's a difficult task, because it cannot ever mean  
bringing things to safety away from the mutation,  
but only within the mutation. Because what we do  
salvage will never be what we have kept sheltered  
from time, but what we have allowed to mutate,  
so that it might become itself again, in a new time.<sup>4</sup>

**Alessandro Baricco**



“

*This project fascinated me as researcher from the very beginning because I had the idea that it would bring together material and immaterial culture and their – actually overlapping and entangled – theories and practices in a new way. Also, I found the collaboration of museums and intangible heritage institutions extremely exciting because their fields of expertise and their experiences are still so different. How can they work together in a fruitful way? And how can heritage bearers be involved best as experts of their own heritage?*

//////////

Sophie Elpers, Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage – the Netherlands

“

*The reason to join this project was to find theoretical and practical impulses for safeguarding ICH. Is it something the museums can do in our cultural environment today? The museums are specialists for conserving material testimonies and documentation and showing exhibitions. Is it relevant for ICH?*

//////////

Isabelle Raboud-Schüle, director,  
Musée gruérien de Bulle – Switzerland

“

*As coordinator of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project, I saw it as my mission to bring together as many key players as possible: amateurs, volunteers and professionals from both the fields of intangible cultural heritage and museums. Rethinking and reimagining the manifold ways in which all of their trajectories could connect, and inserting into the conversation their equally crucial expertise linked to the heritage they wish to provide a future, is what we endeavoured. Part of this quest is reflected in what lies before you. Do feel invited in turn to add your own insights to this ongoing aim.*

//////////

Evdokia Tsakiridis, Workshop Intangible Heritage Flanders – Belgium

# HOW

> TO USE THIS BOOK?

> IS THIS BOOK  
ORGANISED?

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//// **Tamara Nikolić Đerić** holds degrees in ethnology and cultural anthropology, and in indology and oriental studies. She has been working as a curator for the Ethnographic Museum of Istria, and runs ETNOFILm, a film festival dedicated

to visual documentation and the interpretation of ICH. In addition, she is the president of Eco-museum Batana (UNESCO Register of Good Safeguarding Practices, 2016), and a PhD candidate at the University of Zagreb. Since 2017 she also collaborates with UNESCO as a trainer for the implementation of the 2003 Convention. ////

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Use this book as an atlas. No need to read from page one towards the end. Explore, shuffle, mix and match. You can read each part of the book from its own perspective, throwing another light on the contact zones where museums and ICH come together.

This book is concentrated around the concept of **intersection**. The many activities conducted by museum professionals and communities, groups and individuals (CGIs) related to intangible cultural heritage, are seen as colourful strings that at some point intersect and form diverse patterns. These patterns represent spaces that offer new and enriched insights into heritage. Throughout the book, we look for ways in which the different 'paradigms' can strengthen each other and how their 'encounter' creates a 'third space'. A range of heritage

professionals and ICH practitioners took part in this quest. We believe that the diversity of theoretical approaches and contribution formats reflects the values behind the diverse, holistic and integrated approach to heritage which this book wishes to promote.

One way to look at these encounters includes the mapping of possible intersections in museum and ICH practice. By doing so we aspire to open up spaces where a participatory and future-oriented safeguarding ICH para-

digm meets the museum context. For this endeavour a combination of museum functions as understood by the ICOM *Code of Ethics for Museums*, and ICH safeguarding measures from the Operational Directives of the 2003 Convention were studied. This will introduce a methodology strongly asserting the important contribution of ICH in museum practice, as well as the role museums (can) play in safeguarding ICH.

Acknowledging the historical and contemporary role museums (especially local museums, ecomuseums, community museums and/or ethnographic museums) play(ed) in identifying, researching and promoting living heritage, we strive to grasp and understand the changes taking place within the museum sector recently, which are also reflected in the debate around the new museum definition. These changes see museums opening up to participation and collaboration understood in contemporary ways, focusing not exclusively on objects (tangible cultural heritage) but on stories, emotions, rights, skills, knowledge and processes alike. This reorientation of today's museums meets the requirements for the safeguarding of ICH very well, whereas at the same time it can lead to misunderstanding, misuse, simplification and/or commercialisation of ICH. Aware of the challenges, needs and substantial differences in related practices, the book tends to serve as an inspiration allowing you, the readers, to choose where, when and how to work with/on ICH in museums. It highlights positive dimensions, opportunities and fruitful collaborations, as well as potential risks, formulated as suggestions and recommendations by ICH practitioners, ICH and museum professionals.

Working on the ICH-museum bond is an open-ended endeavour.

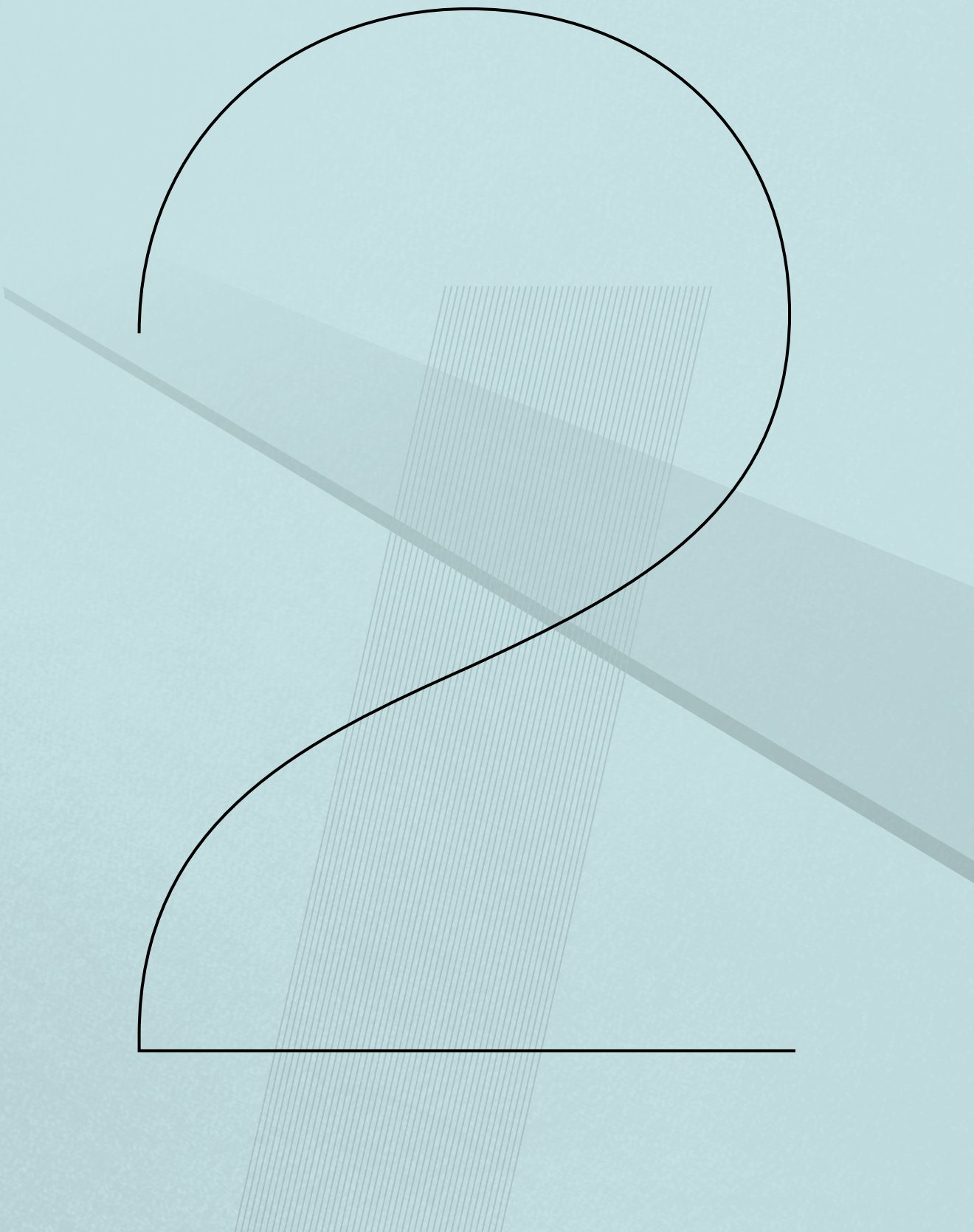
**Tamara Nikolić Đerić**











# KEY CONCEPTS

SHARED



## **Inspired by Conference attendees from IMP, the UNESCO 2003 Convention and Recommendations by ICOM's Standing Committee for Museum Definition, Prospects and Potentials**

Today's heritage sector is strongly differentiated within itself, following separate guiding documents, offices and policies. Nevertheless, the tangible heritage sector is facing much the same conceptual and practical challenges as the intangible one, recognising the need for a holistic approach leading to sustainability, not only in the cultural sector but also in the social, economic, health and environmental realm.

For the purpose of identifying shared concerns and opportunities, we draw on the recommendations by ICOM Standing Committee Museum Definition, Prospects and Potentials as it reflects the present needs of the museum sector with a view to future developments, and on the 2003 Convention, to address the complex nature of intangible cultural heritage and its safeguarding principles.

# **1. THE HERITAGE DISCOURSE**

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contribution: Noel B. Salazar

I am not the first anthropologist to take an interest in heritage. In fact, my discipline played an important role in the historical development of the heritage field, particularly within UNESCO. Because its headquarters are in Paris, UNESCO has been influenced (perhaps disproportionately so) by the French intellectual tradition. During the first decades of its existence, it collaborated regularly with Paris-based anthropologists such as Michel Leiris and Claude Lévi-Strauss. Jack Goody occasionally crossed the Channel to give advice. He was one among many anthropologists who helped UNESCO broaden its narrow concept of heritage to include what came to be known in heritage discourse as 'intangible cultural heritage' (but what many anthro-





//// **Noel B. Salazar**, PhD, is a Research Professor in anthropology, steering group member of the Cultural Heritage Task Force, and founder of the Cultural Mobilities Research (CuMoRe) cluster at the University of Leuven, Belgium. In addition, he is an official consultant of UNESCO and UNWTO, and an expert member of both the

ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Committee, and the UNESCO-UNITWIN Network 'Culture, Tourism and Development.' ////

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pologists would simply call 'culture'). Other key players included Néstor García Canclini (Mexico), Manuela Carneiro da Cunha (Brazil), Junzo Kawada (Japan) and Georges Condominas (France). Major steps were taken at the end of the 1990s, when Mexican anthropologist Lourdes Arizpe (former UNESCO Chair in research on intangible cultural heritage and cultural diversity) was UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Culture (1994-1998).

Earlier on, UNESCO had been instrumental in changing the role and idea of heritage from a vehicle of nation building to an instrument of 'world making', in terms of creating a global, cosmopolitan awareness and identity. This shift culminated in 1978 with the founding of the World Heritage Committee and the World Heritage List, both resulting from the 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. The rationale prompting the 1972 Convention basically reiterated laments made by Claude Lévi-Strauss twenty years earlier regarding the safeguarding of cultural diversity. It would take another quarter of a century, and lots of pressure by non-Western scholars and policy makers (particularly from Japan), before the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was put in place.

What this short history reveals, among other things, is how heritage, in the UNESCO context, has developed as a rather particular discourse. What is gained and what is lost by resorting to a uniform discourse? The current situation gives a false impression that everybody is, indeed, speaking about the same thing because the same standard concepts are being used. However, this is not necessarily the case and we can still get 'lost in translation'.

Moreover, other stakeholders who are less familiar with this dominant heritage discourse may be quite lost when trying to participate in the conversation. After all, heritage is not a word that you commonly hear on the street. The complexity and multi-layeredness of heritage is not always well served by the categories that are currently used: intangible cultural heritage versus tangible (movable or immovable) cultural heritage, or cultural heritage versus natural heritage. One of the consequences of using these typologies is that people tend to focus on how various forms of heritage are different rather than on what unites them and on the multiple connections that exist between them.



“

*Museums are not neutral.*

//////////

Annemarie de Wildt,  
Amsterdam Museum – The Netherlands

“

*Heritage is a discourse;  
we should question it.*

//////////

Noel B. Salazar,  
University of Leuven – Belgium

“

*Museums should provide  
spaces of reflexivity to go  
beyond dichotomous  
othering discourses.*

//////////

Albert van der Zeijden & Sophie Elpers,  
Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage – The Netherlands

## 2. PARTICIPATION

---

“

*It's not so easy, and it especially is not easy when you try to perform or think about ICH in a state-funded, highly political museum as the one I have been working in. The same goes for other museums... But, not trying, in my opinion, is not a good solution. We have to try to look where the boundaries are, where conflicts arise. Then it gets interesting. Then you become this contact zone, which I think we all want to become as museums: this place of dialogue.*

////////

Léontine Meijer-van Mensch,  
Director of the Ethnographic Collections of Saxony, Germany



### INTERVIEW

## JANET BLAKE

interview by Tamara Nikolić Đerić

***Although international cultural heritage law-making has shifted from a paradigm that gives value to tangible heritage, to one that celebrates living heritage as well, in practice we still witness a predominantly tangible-oriented heritage sector. What role do museums play in awareness-raising on ICH among communities and professionals alike?***

I think that museums need to re-think how they present heritage and how they interact with the wider community/society around them. It is clearly a challenge for institutions that are predicated on the exhibition of physical objects to find ways of presenting the intangibility of those objects. Also the way in which museum collections are built and interpreted for the public will play a very important role. Since the definition of 'intangible cultural heritage' given in Article 2(1) of the 2003 Convention includes the objects 'associated' with it, there is no inherent contradiction in museums presenting

objects, while celebrating the intangible elements associated with them. This means giving much more space to the people and cultures that led to the creation of the objects in question, the meanings they have for people and the role they play in people's lives. In addition, it may also mean placing a greater emphasis on more mundane items, rather than the splendid, unique and rare objects. In many ways, ethnographic museums already do much of this, although there remains a further challenge. This refers to my second point: how do museums interact with their wider community and, in particular, the heritage bearers of their collections? This will involve bringing practitioners in to museums where this is possible, in particular in educational programmes designed to encourage transmission of their knowledge and skills to younger people.



//// **Janet Blake**, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Law at the University of Shahid Beheshti (Tehran), and conducted legal and technical preparatory work for the UNESCO 2003 Convention. She is also a member of the Iranian Expert Committee for ICH, and a member of

the Cultural Heritage Law Committee of the International Law Association. Since 1999, she has worked as an international consultant to UNESCO, mostly in the field of ICH and the implementation of the ICH Convention. ////

***'Participation' is a concept shared among various contemporary heritage practices. Based on your rich international experience, can you tell us a little bit more about the reception/understanding of this concept among communities, groups and individuals (CGIs) as well as professionals in different social and cultural contexts? Can you give examples of exercising this approach in different cultural contexts?***

The primary professional context on which I can base this response is the experience I have gained from conducting a number of capacity-building workshops (as a Global Facilitator for UNESCO), mostly in the Western and Central Asia region. From these, I have observed that CGIs who are the heritage bearers, are generally extremely willing and ready to participate in identifying their ICH element(s) and in safeguarding these, including in defining their own safeguarding actions and approaches. At times, they may lack confidence that they are 'qualified' to do this, but they generally design (and may already be carrying out as a matter of course) safeguarding strategies that respond well to their own needs and those of the heritage element. As a good case in point, women bearers of the embroidery element in Armenia work with locally-based development NGO's to transmit their know-how and skills to girls in the region. The local schools provide the venue for this activity, which is very much a locally-driven one. Those who consider themselves as 'scientific experts' and 'heritage professionals', on the other hand, are often not very open to accepting the notion that

'unqualified' (and possibly even illiterate) heritage bearers are also experts where their own heritage is concerned. It is not infrequently stated that heritage bearers provide false information concerning their own ICH, as if there is some fixed and 'true' understanding of it located in the expert or scientific knowledge.

***What ICH safeguarding measures are, in your opinion, most suitable or 'easier' to be implemented by museums worldwide on a participatory basis?***

To my mind, one of the most important safeguarding measures that museums can contribute to is that of awareness-raising, not only among outsiders to the heritage community, but even among bearers themselves. Having 'their' ICH exhibited in a museum can be a powerful way to raise the awareness of the heritage bearers of the value of their ICH and of the importance of safeguarding and continuing it. Museums are also a key venue for information sharing and educational programmes relating to different ICH elements, especially local museums. They also have the potential to serve as 'cultural centres', not only for such educational programmes, but also for hosting transmission activities. Training local people, in particular ICH community members, in order to develop their capacity to identify, document, and safeguard their ICH element(s) is another very important action that museums can be a part of. Finally, I think that they are particularly well-placed to act as a bridge between local heritage bearers and 'the authorities', helping to establish an equal dialogue and ensuring that ICH bearers 'have a voice' in setting safeguarding policies.

***Can you reflect upon and name a few challenges (out of many) of community participation specifically in addressing ICH in museum contexts?***

Museums are themselves perceived as (and see themselves as) expert bodies and this will, naturally, compound the issue of the failure to recognise expertise that exists within communities. Also, there is no doubt that the inheritance of many museums – especially national museums in major western European countries – of colonialism and even slavery means that it is more challenging for them to give significance to the cultural heritage of minority and migrant groups. Moreover, it can be challenging to change their paradigm from being national cultural institutions, reflecting a notion of national identity determined by the dominant cultural group, to being places that celebrate the diversity of cultures in their countries. The fabric of older museums can also be a source of challenge since they were not built with the kinds of spaces that may be required to demonstrate ICH and support its transmission in mind. Lastly, those museums which have tended

towards holding iconic and very 'high art' collections will not necessarily be geared towards dealing with the mundane objects that often represent ICH.

***Do you see any risks in the museum-ICH collaboration?***

There is clearly the potential for mutual lack of understanding of each other's needs and priorities. This might be exacerbated in cases where museum professionals are not well-versed in dealing with ICH and the non-material aspects of heritage. To mitigate these problems and to reduce the possibility of misunderstandings, it is essential that a good and equal dialogue be established between cultural communities and museums. NGOs that work with both sides can be an extremely useful interlocutor in such situations.



## **HOW TO START WORKING TOWARDS PARTICIPATORY PROCESSES THAT ADDRESS ICH?**

- ▶ Make people feel comfortable and 'at home' in the museum
- ▶ Consider the ambience of the museum building
- ▶ Start to use museum spaces for transmission and on-site training by community members
- ▶ Provide workshops and studios on a continual basis for the practice of a variety of ICH elements
- ▶ Key to successful participatory programs with ICH and its CGIs is engaging in an on-going dialogue that is predicated on equity.
- ▶ Take the view that the CGIs involved are experts in relation to the ICH element. Avoid assumptions of – sole or imperative – expert knowledge on the side of heritage professionals.



## Museum: Museum Hof van Busleyden

**Location:** Mechelen, Belgium

**Project name:** A contemporary city museum

**Keywords:** participation, intangible heritage communities

The Museum Hof van Busleyden is the result of a five-year comprehensive thought process in search of a new, inclusive, and widely supported new city museum of Mechelen. It was opened to the public in 2018 in a symbolic, historic palatial townhouse. It centers around the history, people and activities of Mechelen at the height of the Burgundian Netherlands era. Today, participation continues to be at the core of the museum's practice, and runs as a transversal line through all aspects of its current operations. Because of this active community involvement, intangible cultural heritage is a central feature of the Museum Hof van Busleyden. The museum regards the evolution of both the collection and its policy as an outcome of ongoing dialogue with the city's different communities that cherish and wish to safeguard this heritage.

An example of this approach are the participatory spaces in the museum's permanent exhibition rooms. Various Mechelen-based heritage practitioners and organisations are asked to present themselves and their ties to the city, such as a lace bobbin society and



© Museum Hof van Busleyden

a local puppeteer. Their representation embedded in the historical collection functions as an actualisation of past city life that can be explored in the surrounding museum rooms, starting from the premise that the history of the city only becomes meaningful

in its connections with current practitioners and audiences. Through these collaborations, the Museum Hof van Busleyden also fulfills an important safeguarding function for intangible cultural heritage that may be at risk.



## INTERVIEW

# FILOMENA SOUSA

Interview by Tamara Nikolić Đerić

***Recalling Homi K. Bhabha notion of a third space – ‘a space which enables other positions to emerge and which displaces the histories that constitute it and sets up new structures of authority’<sup>5</sup> – we see the encounter of museum and intangible cultural heritage (ICH) practices as a potent generator of hybrid practices. In your work, you are often favouring the intersection of museum functions and ICH safeguarding measures. Can you elaborate more on these ‘encounters’?***




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The relationship of museums and of ICH with ‘space’, ‘locality’ and ‘temporality’ is very important. Museums can provide communities with the necessary space for ‘encounters’ – for meeting, practicing, training, education and ICH promotion. As referred to by Homi K. Bhabha's notion of ‘third space’ or as referred to by James Clifford, it is possible to identify museums as ‘contact zones’: the junction in space and time of people, geographically and historically separated before.<sup>6</sup> In this contact zone the museum can give back what it has received from the communities and can empower CGIs. The contact zone is a space where the public and the museum (belonging to the same community or different communities) can share common concerns, their divergences and aims, and may even constitute a new community. This may positively influence ICH safeguarding or the heritage sector, in general.

Nevertheless, the management of this contact zone raises a number of issues. There is a tendency for museums to overestimate the physical space

of the institution, neglecting the space and time of the ICH, building a relationship more focused on the museum's management than on the safeguarding of the intangible heritage. Also, the presence and performance of the practitioners in the museum space, outside their own context, presupposes a produced and staged situation, risking the detachment of the interests of practitioners from the interests of the institution.

In the actions of museums on ICH safeguarding, encounters ideally take place where the cultural expressions themselves occur: in the space and in the daily life of the communities, respecting the aspects that characterise these expressions, their meanings, their practitioners, their calendars and their rhythms.



***Do you see the intersection of ICH and museums as an innovative way of working with heritage in general, approaching it in a holistic, maybe even a more natural way?***

The relation between museum functions and the implementation of ICH safeguarding measures is not new. It may have new names and specificities but, considering the history of museology, the enhancement of the communities' perspective fits the new museology's approach promoted since the 1980s. New museology raised questions about the performance of the traditional museum – centred on the experts' knowledge concerning collections and objects – and advocates for more active, integrative and social interdisciplinary practices. A museology that promotes participatory community action, social and territorial cohesion, holistic interpretations and sustainable development. The museology seen as an instrument of citizenship and of communities' empowerment: the replacement of singular and authoritative discourses by communities' democratisation and responsibility regarding heritage protection and safeguarding. A museology that brings about new museum formats and, with that, the enhancement of ICH, of the 'living culture' and the collective and social memory.



Sometimes the argument for innovation and a broader perspective is defended by state institutions that have a mission to work on ICH and, perhaps for lack of information about the 2003 Convention, they begin to 'shoot in all directions' and all that is intangible is considered ICH. This attitude becomes problematic when public resources that should serve ICH safeguarding are used in other projects. A truly holistic perspective is still a work in progress. Much remains to be done to value and place ICH at the same level as the tangible, natural and artistic heritage.

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***We often see that general museum visitors are 'covered' by the participative paradigm which transforms them into active participants in the production of programs. Do you see the 2003 Convention as an instrument helping museums in developing diverse participatory and collaborative programs?***

The 2003 Convention does not define the concept of 'communities' and it also does not clarify what is meant by 'participation', how it is accomplished or who represents the communities and groups in a participatory process. However, several documents produced in the last twelve years guide us in the implementation of this convention, and in applying participatory methodologies (including the Operational Directives and the Ethical Principles). We can say that the 2003 Convention can be seen as an instrument that helps museums in developing diverse participatory and collaborative programs. We can also examine the way in which the concept of 'participation' has been disseminated in the past four decades in the context of diverse policies (community and international development, urban planning, environment, et cetera). Participation regards CGIs as principal actors of planning and implementing actions for safeguarding ICH, keeping both democratic and empowering purposes in mind.

Considering the engagement that can be promoted, I identified four levels of participation:

- **Informative/advisory level** – where communities and practitioners are seen as informants, or even advisers in the ICH identification, but they aren't involved in the definition of the safeguarding plan.
- **Advisory/mobiliser basic level** – here, the communities and practitioners are considered as actors in the safeguarding process (identifying, planning, implementing and evaluating), but they don't lead the process.

- **Mobiliser medium level** – where communities participate in the decisions and present themselves as partners in the safeguarding process, but usually external actors have started this process.
- **Mobiliser advanced level** – here, the initiative of the safeguarding process begins with the practitioners and communities, they self-mobilise and manage the entire safeguarding process (perhaps with the collaboration of external actors).

The level of participation one reaches depends on the information available. So, an informed community will reach a higher level of participation.



## HOW TO IMPROVE MUSEUM COLLABORATION WITH ICH PRACTITIONERS?

- *safeguard in situ*
- involve people with their own heritage
- make people want to be part of ICH
- learn from practitioners
- promote greater exchange of information among CGIs and be informed by them
- learn from other heritage-related practices

## Museum: Museo Internazionale delle Marionette Antonio Pasqualino

**Location:** Palermo, Sicily, Italy

**Project name:** A performance museum

**Keywords:** intangible heritage communities, participation

The Antonio Pasqualino International Puppet Museum was founded in 1975, under the umbrella of the Association for the Conservation of Folk Traditions. From the start, the museum has focused its collection on the preservation of Sicilian folk traditions, following social and economic transformations that threatened the safeguarding of traditional Sicilian puppet theatre, or *Opera dei Pupi*. This tradition is now the core subject of the museum, and is part of a collection of around 5000 marionettes, marottes, hand puppets, shadow puppets, theatrical machines and playbills from around the world. The active engagement of the International Puppet Museum in the preservation and promotion of folk traditions has led to the inclusion of *Opera dei Pupi* on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2008.

The museum combines more traditional museological activities with a variety of practical and outreach initiatives on puppet theatre, aimed at increasing knowledge of this tradition and safeguarding it for future generations. These include organising educational activities such as workshops, conferences, seminars, and festivals such as the annual *Festival di Morgana*, and managing the Giuseppe Leggio Library and a multimedia archive. Close collaboration with practitioners of traditional Sicilian puppet theatre is a core feature of all these activities. Moreover, the museum brings the *Opera dei Pupi* alive by facilitating a programme of theatrical productions of new shows. Contemporary artworks created for these shows, such as set designs, puppets and theatrical machines, are subsequently added to the collection.



© Museo Internazionale delle Marionette Antonio Pasqualino

### 3. CGIs AND INTANGIBLE HERITAGE COMMUNITIES, MUSEUMS ENGAGED

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contribution: Marc Jacobs



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The 2003 Convention consistently refers to 'communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals' in its texts. It can be useful to abbreviate this formulation to 'CGIs'. This can help to avoid the unfortunate mistake that tempts lazy users of the 2003 Convention to reduce the powerful formula to just 'the (local) community'. It also facilitates expressing the spirit of that peculiar convention in a tweet: 'When safeguarding ICH, the widest possible participation and active involvement of CGIs is the right thing to do'. Museums are invited to embrace this herculean message. The most courageous organisations and policy makers can even skip the first 22 characters of that IMPOrtant tweet to understand why the 2003 Convention is so vital in influencing and challenging contemporary museum practice.

Fifteen years after launching the influential international framework for heritage work, new enhancements are available that reinforce this 21<sup>st</sup> century perspective. In 2015, an attempt was made to reinvigorate and reformulate the 2003 Convention 'in other words', squeezable onto one A4 page: Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage. It takes some effort to decode that rich but complex document and the multilayered messages it sends. If you feed the 2003 Convention and the 2015 Principles into a word cloud application (that shows the most important, most frequently used words in an image), you see at first glance what is emphasised twelve years later in a dozen statements in order to express the spirit of the safeguarding convention.





The word/seed 'engagement' is planted in one of the recent enhancements of the 2003 Convention paradigm, the *Overall Results Framework*, although it is not yet fully developed as or connected to a co-design discourse. It is part of a theme of the high-level framework of the *Overall Results Framework* ('Engagement of communities, groups and individuals as well as other stakeholders'). One of the indicators uses the softer word 'participation' but also injects another factor: '21.1 Communities, groups and individuals participate, on an inclusive basis and to the widest possible extent, in the safeguarding of ICH in general and of specific elements of ICH, whether or not inscribed.' The word 'inclusive' opens many doors and poses strong challenges, taking into consideration how it is spelled out, since 2016, in Operational Directive 174:

'States Parties shall endeavour to ensure that their safeguarding plans and programmes are fully inclusive of all sectors and strata of society, including indigenous peoples, migrants, immigrants and refugees, people of different ages and genders, persons with disabilities and members of vulnerable groups, in conformity with Article 11 of the Convention.'

Precisely these kinds of developments urge us to keep talking about CGIs, all kinds of groups and individuals, and not to sweep all tensions and debates under the mat of 'the local community'. This is compatible with what a museum is morally obliged to do today.

It even goes much further if you consider another gem in the Ethical Principles text:

7/12: 'The communities, groups and individuals who create intangible cultural heritage should benefit from the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from such heritage, and particularly from its use, research, documentation, promotion or adaptation by members of the communities or others.'

Tourists and other visitors are important stakeholders. Members of the audience or the patrons, too. One of the most important gurus in the museum world is cultural entrepreneur Nina Simon. She became famous with her books and website *The Participatory Museum*<sup>8</sup> ([participatory-museum.org](http://participatory-museum.org)) and *The Art of Relevance*.<sup>9</sup> Her latest project *OF/BY/FOR ALL* ([www.ofbyforall.org](http://www.ofbyforall.org)) gives inspiration, but seems to be trapped in the 'community' framing. Even here, in this state of the art program of museum practice, the 2003 Convention and other basic texts can be used to reinforce and underpin work.

What does Europe have to offer? The notion of 'heritage community' in the *Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Heritage for Society* is instructive. It is in the Flemish appropriation and redesign that it shows promising applications: 'a "(cultural) heritage community" consists of organisations and people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage, which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations.' The underlying idea is that of a network of different actors, both (groups of) living human beings and institutions. One of the consequences is that some museums (networks) can, as organisations, be part of the (heritage) community and this changes the perspectives, alliances and assemblages therein. It really can help to think outside the 'museum' or 'community' boxes and to embrace co-design strategies and practices.

Museums are also invited to discover the possibilities opened up by the sixth chapter of the Operational Directives in the Basic Texts. Do check out ODs 170 to 193 and understand that actors like museums can be partners of CGIs, or even be part of the 'heritage community' (according to the Flemish interpretation), or can act as mediators or cultural brokers (mentioned in OD 170 and 171). Reject notions like the 'museum context' and think and act in terms of networks and processes. It seems almost a secret formula, so do check it out yourselves when thinking about your strategies, practices and how to legitimate them. If you allow yourself to also think 'museums' when CGIs are mentioned in the sixth chapter on sustainable development in the Operational Directives and how it turns everything into an open invitation to act, then much more becomes possible.

#### Read more?

- Jacobs, M., 'Glocal Perspectives on Safeguarding. CGIs, ICH, Ethics and Cultural Brokerage', in: Uesugi, T. and Shiba, M. (eds.), *Glocal Perspectives on Intangible Cultural Heritage: Local Communities, Researchers, States and UNESCO, with the Special Focus on Global and National Perspectives* (Tokyo 2017) pp. 49-71.
- Jacobs M., 不能孤立存在的社区 —— 作为联合国教科文组织 2003 年《保护非物质文化遗产公约》防冻剂的“CGIs”与“遗产社区”, in: *Northwestern Journal of Ethnology*, 97, 2018, 2, pp. 12-23.
- Jacobs, M., *Article 15: CGIs, not just 'the community'*, in: Blake, J. & Lixinski, L. (eds.), *The 2003 Convention – A Commentary*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2020
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## Museum: NAVIGO – Nationaal Visserijmuseum Oostduinkerke

**Location:** Oostduinkerke, Belgium

**Project name:** Shrimp fishing on horseback

**Keywords:** intangible heritage communities, participation

The National Fisheries Museum is located on the coast of the Belgian North Sea, and reopened with new buildings and exhibitions in 2008. It displays the history of the fishing industry and displays objects and artefacts relating to this practice: an original pre-World War II fishing boat, an aquarium, and paintings depicting historic fishing in general, and the local tradition of shrimp fishing on horseback in particular. This tradition was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2013. The craft of shrimp fishing is on display at the beaches of Oostduinkerke during the summer season, but is also actively integrated in the museum. Shrimp fishermen give workshops to children, and guided tours sometimes start on the beach and end in the museum.

During the years preceding the inscription of shrimp fishing on UNESCO's Representative List, the museum mostly functioned as a facilitator for bringing the different elements of this ICH practice together. The recognition of shrimp fishing in 2013 led



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to a renewed interest, as well as a number of requests from individuals wishing to become shrimp fishers themselves. To accommodate these developments, NAVIGO established a safeguarding committee, which gave rise to a co-creative project with the museum, the shrimp fishers, and the organisation

Workshop intangible heritage Flanders. Through interviews with the fishers and questionnaires for the audience, the collection increasingly came to life, and interactive spaces emerged. Throughout this process, NAVIGO grew more and more into its current role as a community centre.





## 4. THE SOCIAL ROLE OF MUSEUMS

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contribution: Afşin Altaylı

Institutions change as does society. They often follow fixed patterns, regularly rethinking their missions, but they rarely experience a paradigm shift. The latter requires distancing oneself from the usual and freeing oneself from past and present conditioning, which may no longer be adequate when seeking new and persistent ways to address societal challenges such as inequality, or environmental issues like climate change.

Today's museum environment reflects such a paradigm shift. Our expectations of museums and the role they assume within society have become substantially different from what they were in the past. The growing emphasis on the social role of museums necessitates close monitoring of societal trends as well as a willingness to address, in a proactive manner, contemporary societal issues which are often contested and political in nature.

Solutions can only be found if we are willing to question our path dependencies, go beyond the existing dichotomies and divisions that dominate our civilisation and our minds, such as culture/nature, rational/emotional, mind/body, central/peripheral, as well as tangible/intangible. This is only possible through the principles of *restorative justice*: applying these principles we can repair historical and contemporary injustices, not only those inflicted by humans on other humans but also on their memories and heritages, on all precious stories that have ever been told or all forms of being, living and knowing that have been imagined or experienced so far by diverse cultures and peoples, on nature, on other species, and therefore on future generations.

Just a decade ago, it was difficult to envisage holistically what local development and sustainability would mean for museums from a social, economic, environmental and intergenerational ethics perspective. Today, museums' contribution to community wellbeing and social inclusion is being acknowledged increasingly within the local development discourse, even by other non-heritage related sectors. In order to achieve greater social impact, local and regional governments are involving museums in their policy-making processes. Implementation of the *UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Devel-*

opment is no longer limited to the activities of a specific group of concerned museums (e.g. science or natural history museums); it is increasingly perceived as the collective responsibility of all museum types, a responsibility to be pursued through engagement with their respective diverse communities and through cross-sectoral collaboration.

Museums are exploring, and will need to continue exploring, innovative strategies in their practices, in order to support society to meet today's unprecedented challenges. As museums are at the nexus between tradition, innovation and communities, they have a part to play in nurturing sustainable futures and to contribute to human dignity and social justice, global equality and planetary wellbeing.

This does not mean that museums should stop safeguarding heritage and lose the singularities that distinguish them from other cultural or heritage organisations. The roundtables ICOM organised all around the world as part of the active listening process in search of a new museum definition, indicate that museum professionals see the social role of museums not in contradiction with the core museum functions but in direct relation to them.

[...] while in the past a separation, opposition or contradiction has often been presumed between core museum functions and the social responsibilities of museums, in the current museum landscape these are seen increasingly as an interconnected whole. Museums want to retain the unique and characteristic unity of the museum functions of collecting, preserving, documenting, researching, exhibiting and communicating the collections and other evidence of cultural heritage, and strive to address and fulfil their social and humanitarian purposes exactly through these specific museum functions and methods.<sup>10</sup>

**Jette Sandahl, Chair of the Standing Committee for  
Museum Definition, Prospects and Potentials**

In such contexts, living heritage (ICH) is a crucial instrument as it challenges the binaries by valuing diverse knowledge. These world views, knowledge and practices have long been considered simply a theme to be covered by museums in their exhibitions and public programmes, but hardly found



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their way into our institutional culture, and most importantly into our museological practices.

ICOM is the only international organisation dedicated to museums and museum professionals, which contributed to the drafting of the UNESCO 2015 *Recommendation Concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society* and assumes an advisory role on the implementation of the 2003 *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* as an accredited NGO. It is essential for ICOM to support not only museums and museum professionals, but also policy makers, intergovernmental organisations and other NGOs operating at local, regional and international levels to ensure that communities have a voice in defining our common future. This is exactly why we see our work about and around living heritage as a vital part of our sustainability, diversity and inclusion agenda and of our efforts in protecting cultural heritage.

**Peter Keller, ICOM Director General**

Are museums individual institutions separate from communities, or are they spaces through which communities value their own collections held in trust by museums on their behalf, either in tangible or intangible forms? How can museums become more permeable, transparent and accountable, especially for those communities who hardly relate to the institutional language used in our highly institutionalised museum and heritage field, or those who chose to live and function with non-institutional forms and structures? How can museology and museum practice reflect diverse epistemologies and worldviews? How can museums make sure that their collection policies value the intangible elements that are not necessarily part of their material collections, but remain outside of their walls as embedded within the diverse communities they serve? What does the safeguarding of living heritage mean when all these complexities are considered, and how can museums contribute to this? These are some of the many questions that drive museums to redefine what they are and what they do.

It is us, [...] who will transmit our professional values to the future generations of museum professionals. Our aim should be to provide them with the tools that will serve them the best when solving their problems, both as citizens of our planet and as prospective members of the international museum community.<sup>11</sup>

**Suay Aksoy, ICOM President**

## 5. 'AS WELL AS THE INSTRUMENTS, OBJECTS, ARTEFACTS AND CULTURAL SPACES ASSOCIATED THEREWITH'

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contribution: Marc Jacobs

There is a strange battle going on between lobby groups for immovable and those for intangible heritage. Some protagonists that earn their living by selecting, restoring and exploiting monuments seem not to like that the attention, and a fraction of potential resources, are being 'diverted' from their classical heritage preoccupations to fuzzy, colourful and ephemeral phenomena called 'intangible cultural heritage', and to the ministerial departments, professionals and amateurs involved. Laurajane Smith and her partner Gary Campbell have unmasked the strategy of smooth talking about 'intangible values' attached to objects and locations, granting that there are nice stories associated with a monument, landscape or masterpieces with (much more important) special and even outstanding 'tangible values'. It seems to make sense, monuments advocates seem to argue, to take this bypath a bit seriously because it enriches the immovable heritage. But it makes little sense to also talk about, or invest in, other types of 'intangible heritage' or for instance any convention other than the 1972 royal road: first come, first served. But, as Smith asks rhetorically: are not all values by definition intangible? There is, she insists, no such thing as 'tangible values'.<sup>12</sup>

Another attempt to try to push the genius of the 2003 Convention back in the bottle, is to assume that there is something called 'heritage', and that the adjectives 'tangible' and 'intangible' actually refer to two sides of one



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coin. Is it not such a pity that they are now divided, instead of treated as a whole, 'holistically'? It is a misconception often made by politicians and even heritage workers. Although it is a tricky and sometimes dangerous term, the adjective 'living' that is replacing 'intangible' can help to make clear that the dichotomy is false.

Heritage: there is no such thing. All heritage is intangible.<sup>13</sup> Or a thing is just a very slow process. These one-liners used by Laurajane Smith or Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett help you to think twice. The former, a brilliant scholar, warns against the attempts to smother the '2003 paradigm', the CGIs participation incentives and the embodied and emotional heritage experiences by emphasising the 'intangible aspects of tangibility'. The latter Grande Lady emphasises notions like performance and framing. Of course there are collections and they are valuable and important, but hopefully none of the collected or exhibited items, in particular if they are human, are really breathing and alive. Unless perhaps in a zoo (but the human kind is 'not done' anymore today) or framed in a(n artistic) performance. Or with agency from an actor-network theory perspective.

So be aware about some holistic discourses: look deeper, higher and wider, and do so critically. Human beings need objects, material things, to do their thing, to survive, to live. In recent literature this is emphasised over and over. The words 'entangled' or 'entanglement' used by authors like Ian Hodder (to express the increasing mutual dependency between humans and things), are not part of the vocabulary of the 2003 Convention. But they are needed in the arsenal or toolbox when discussing the relation between objects (instruments, artefacts) and CGIs. It is a mistake to leave out the part of the definition of 'intangible heritage' (for the purposes of the 2003 Convention) quoted in the title of this contribution. Indeed it includes 'the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith'.

Although it is recommendable not to only use the name of a product in order not to overshadow the process of making (e.g. in referring to an item on a 'representative' list of intangible heritage) sometimes instructions and Operational Directives seem to go too far. It is a pity or potentially counter-productive that in OD 109, precisely the one where 'museums, archives, libraries, documentation centres and similar entities' are mentioned as playing 'an important role in collecting, documenting, archiving and conserving data on intangible cultural heritage, as well as in providing information and raising awareness about its importance', the advice is given that:

'In order to enhance their awareness-raising functions about intangible cultural heritage, these entities are encouraged to: [...] (c) focus on the continuous recreation and transmission of knowledge and



skills necessary for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, rather than on the objects that are associated with it.'

But why? It can be and/or, in particular in those entities. It is a pity that this meddling suggestion is presented next to and in combination with excellent advice like:

'(b) introduce and develop participatory approaches to presenting intangible cultural heritage as living heritage in constant evolution; [...] (d) employ, when appropriate, information and communication technologies to communicate the meaning and value of intangible cultural heritage; (e) involve practitioners and bearers in their management, putting in place participatory systems for local development.'

Luckily, Operational Directives can be easily changed and expanded. There are better methods of highlighting the importance of objects and spaces in (safeguarding) intangible heritage, e.g. in museums, but they have to be 'seen to be applied' first.

There is no reason to shy away from material culture. Its importance is identified also in Ethical Principle 5/12: 'Access of communities, groups and individuals to the instruments, objects, artefacts, cultural and natural spaces and places of memory whose existence is necessary for expressing the intangible cultural heritage should be ensured, including in situations of armed conflict.' Or the link that is made to sustainable development, waiting for museums to jump in: OD 180(d) promotes 'education for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the protection of natural spaces and places of memory whose existence is necessary for expressing the intangible cultural heritage.'

#### Read more?

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- Michael, M., *Actor-Network Theory. Trials, Trails and Translations* (Los Angeles 2017).
- Smith, L. and Campbell, G., 'The Tautology of "Intangible Values" and the Misrecognition of Intangible Cultural Heritage', in: *Heritage & Society* 10 (2017) 1, pp. 26-44.

## Museum: Castello d'Albertis – Museo delle Culture del Mondo

**Location:** Genoa, Italy

**Project name:** Behind the glass they become objects

**Keywords:** intangible heritage communities, capacity building

In ethnographic collections from indigenous people in Africa, the Americas and Oceania, such as the one housed in Castello d'Albertis, intangible cultural heritage has always gone hand in hand with the object itself. Material culture and tangible objects are perceived as the embodiment of knowledge, of know-how, of rituals and performances, where objects stand as processes rather than a result per se. The museum continuously emphasises these connections through exhibitions, projects and workshops, reconnecting the collections with the artisanship they incorporate through videos, storytelling, and explanations of what lies behind the glass.

Over time, the Museo delle Culture del Mondo has developed a new attitude and understanding, based on responsibility and respect for native communities and their cultures. To acknowledge their voices, both non-European and local migrant communities are actively included as cultural mediators in the work of the museum, such as in the development of exhibitions, through storytelling about specific artefacts, and the organisation of cultural programmes. This



© Castello d'Albertis Museum of Word Cultures, Genoa

strategy combats stereotypes, prevents sacred or religious objects from being trivialised, and validates the beliefs and practices of native groups as central in the presentation of museum artefacts. In addition, the museum staff invited native specialists

such as Hopi Native Americans to the museum, and actively engaged in fieldwork explorations of intangible aspects of their objects, such as creating feather head-dresses among the Bororo in the Brazilian rainforest.



## 6. DIVERSITY

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contribution: Albert van der Zeijden and Sophie Elpers

New demographic realities pose challenges for larger conurbations in which museums can also play a role. Not least of which is what English sociologist Steven Vertovec has called the challenge of superdiversity.<sup>14</sup> This refers to a new demographic reality, a diversification of diversity in which city populations are more dynamic than ever before. Where until recently the challenge was mainly restricted to the integration of a limited group of migrants in a dominant 'white' heritage discourse, we now see much more diversification in which the notion of majority versus minority cultures is no longer relevant.

In these 'contact zones' 'cultures' do not remain unaltered and do not have a clearly delineated set of traditions. The coming together of many different ethnicities and traditions implies new dynamics of social cohesion. Old and new traditions are appropriated in a new and diverse context, and new hybrid forms of culture arise. The approach of superdiversity is focusing on difference not as a lack, but as a stimulus for interplay between various identities and a motor for creativity. The lens of superdiversity increases possibilities for people to negotiate and combine 'several cultural repertoires that they can selectively deploy in response to the opportunities and challenges they face'.<sup>15</sup> It also presents heritage institutions with new challenges.

Of course, it is possible to criticise the concept of superdiversity. If it is only applicable to large city conurbations, where does that leave the smaller cities and the countryside? Some would even argue that superdiversity is first and foremost a political concept, just as multiculturalism was before. But in reference to new demographic realities the concept of superdiversity is useful in directing our attention to new kinds of diversity. Our idea is that the intangible heritage perspective might be a useful starting point to address the



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writes about controversial heritage, heritage and tourism, and the role of heritage institutions in implementing the UNESCO 2003 Convention. ////



challenge of superdiversity. This might be included in a shift for museums towards 'new museology' and 'socio-museology'. For many years already, these two concepts have implied that museums should take on crucial challenges of our time and play a social role in society. Social inclusion, community empowerment and museums as 'contact zones'<sup>16</sup> are the key-words in this context. These ideas are very much in line with the position of UNESCO about the central role the bearers of intangible heritage should play in heritage issues.

**For the intangible heritage sector the focus on superdiversity opens new perspectives to interpret intangible heritage from a more dynamic, global perspective – heritage which is always on the move and becomes meaningful in ever changing fluid contexts. This focus shows that intangible heritage is NOT being carried by stable homogeneous groups, 'distinct from the rest of society and lost in time', as Ramon de la Combé once provocatively formulated it.<sup>17</sup> Instead, heritage is about dynamics, flow, and fusion. It is determined by multiple perspectives. This means that different people have diverse ideas about a certain intangible heritage.**

In recent years, museums began to collect objects and stories from the new migrant groups, which differed from 'their own' culture. In this they adopted a more or less essentialist approach to the new 'other' cultures. With the new superdiversity there is a growing awareness that museums should be more attentive to the dynamics of culture. Through this they can avoid the pitfall of essentialism and go beyond dichotomous 'othering' discourses in which 'migrant' otherness is described as the opposite of the Self.

What makes intangible heritage attractive for museums to work with is its strong connection with 'meaning' and its connection with social practices important in processes of identification and social cohesion within society. Intangible heritage presents opportunities for working together with groups and networks in the process of heritage making. During that process, it is important to adopt an open and inclusive approach, in which negotiations and controversies about specific social practices and concerns surrounding objects and stories in connection with these social practices are taken into account and conflicts about identity and the politics of identification are faced. Furthermore, museums



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should reflect on their own role as institutions that create identities and make heritage, which means to address questions of power. In this, a museum should be as open and inclusive as possible.

*Shared authority*, introduced by the American scholar Michael Frisch, calls for a new role for museums in which the authority on what is displayed and what is not is shared with others – in our case the bearers of ICH. This asks for new forms of expertise of the museum professional, not just working with objects but also with people who function in ever-changing, fluid networks.

## Museum: Museum Rotterdam

**Location:** Rotterdam, the Netherlands

**Project name:** The Active Collection Centre: Authentic Rotterdam Heritage

**Keywords:** diversity, contemporary collecting

The Museum Rotterdam was founded in 1953 as the Historic Museum, by a bourgeois elite that wanted to educate Rotterdam's growing working class population that was attracted by the development of the city as a transit port. As of 2011, the museum is known as the Museum Rotterdam, to reflect its changing aims and ambitions. The contemporary superdiverse city, and not the past, has become central to the Museum's policies. At the beginning of 2016, the museum opened its new location in the historical heart of the city, adjacent to City Hall. Here, the story of Rotterdam – a city with a young heart and an old soul – is recounted in new ways.

Rotterdam's superdiverse cultural composition is one of the city's main challenges today. The stories and heritage of its inhabitants are one of the most defining characteristics of the city, and thus also of the museum. Within the Active Collection Centre, residents are invited to explore the contemporary heritage of the city and to create increased communication among citizens, using tools from urban anthropology. The term 'Active Collection' refers to heritage that is still functioning in the city, and the ongoing generation of meaning around this heritage. In order to accomplish this task,



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the museum started to use storytelling as a tool for building 'bridges' of communication between its people. Personal experiences of diverse Rotterdammers, their stories, memories and feelings became an important tool, and living heritage became a thread connecting the social fabric of Rotterdam. Communities are thus not only the carriers of particular cultures and traditions, but are also co-creators and co-participants of the museum.

## 7. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: WHY IS CULTURE MISSING?

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contribution: Valentina Lapicciarella Zingari

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*Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage is a concern of humanity. It has to be seen in the context of human rights and sustainable development.*

//////////

Janet Blake, University of Shahid Beheshti, Iran



//// **Valentina Lapicciarella Zingari**, PhD, is a cultural anthropologist, and has been developing ethnographic participatory approaches to the process of heritage making since 1996. As of 2009, she follows the implementation of the UNESCO 2003 Convention and the international dialogue between accredited NGOs on ICH

for SIMBDEA, the Italian Society for Museum and Heritage Anthropology. Since 2017, she is part of the Global Facilitators Network of the Capacity Building Programme of the UNESCO 2003 Convention. ////

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Since the publication of the *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*<sup>18</sup> in 1987, the concept of development has been evolving into the ubiquitous and overused paradigm of ‘sustainable development’. This paradigm has been systematically related and reduced to the so-called ‘three pillars’ of sustainability – environment, economy and society – neglecting the substantial place and role of culture(s) and cultural heritage. It is indeed surprising that the 300 pages of the Report do not even contain the world

‘culture’, excluding a chapter on the ‘world armaments and arms culture’ (!). Today we commonly hear the political and technical discourse on development or growth delivered with the adjective ‘sustainable’. Sometimes the noun ‘sustainability’ stands alone. But, either adjective or noun, what does it really mean, beyond the current stereotyped use? And what is the place and role of culture in development (or growth)?

Already in 1988 Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, Secretary-General of the United Nations, observed that 'development efforts had often failed because the importance of the human factor – that complex web of relationships and beliefs, values and motivations, which lies at the very heart of a culture – had been underestimated in many development projects.'<sup>19</sup> Why was culture 'missing in action' within the planetary negotiations and decisions on environment and development? Why did sustainable development essentially ignore the cultural dimension beside – or even as the foundation of – the three pillars?

The ambiguous position of culture within the sustainable development paradigm is perhaps best articulated in the 1995 *Our Creative Diversity* report through Marshall Sahlins question: 'is culture an aspect or a means of development, the latter understood as material progress; or is culture the end and aim of development, the latter understood as the flourishing of human existence in its several forms and as a whole?'<sup>20</sup> In other words, is culture the starting and final point of any development, as Léopold Sédar Senghor used to ask throughout his life? Possible answers and orientations are provided in the same report and notably in the chapter devoted to cultural heritage for development:

**'Our generation has inherited a wealth of tangible and intangible cultural resources that embody the collective memory of communities across the world and buttress their sense of identity in times of uncertainty.'**

However, in our current period of uncertainty and in this reflection on development, sustainability and culture, we are at a critical point. If the links between development and culture have not been fully recognised at the global level, at the local level CGIs keep expressing them in innumerable living, evolving and creative ways.

Indeed, often local, grass-root communities and groups, or more generally civil societies, play an essential role in any form of initiative where rights, responsibilities, benefits and values are recognised and respected.

‘It is culture that defines how people relate to nature and their physical environment, to the earth and to the cosmos, and through which we express our attitudes to and beliefs in other forms of life, both animal and plant. It is in this sense that all forms of development, including human development, ultimately are determined by cultural factors.’<sup>21</sup>

The local sphere embeds the living cultural diversity while it is upon institutions to recognise this fact and consider development as an aspect of people’s culture.

This is the part where museums can play a vital role in addressing culture, or specifically intangible cultural heritage, as an intrinsic dimension of the notion of development.



### **HOW TO PROMOTE ICH IN MUSEUMS AS A DRIVER OF SUSTAINABILITY?**

- ▶ Putting into light, in a public space, the living expressions of CGIs – the custodians and bearers of ICH – museums can contribute to acknowledge their manifold roles, and raise awareness about their value to society as resources from an environmental, social and economic point of view.
- ▶ As documentation and research centres, museums can promote participatory methodologies to inventory ICH, stressing the importance of community-based knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe as sources of sustainability.
- ▶ By recognising social practices, rituals and festive events as cultural expressions, and by improving the link between social groups, museums can contribute to reconciliation and social cohesion.
- ▶ Highlighting the cultural value of traditional craftsmanship, museums can promote, and even accommodate, alternative, sustainable economies.



## Museum: Casa Lussu – Sistema Museale Armungia

**Location:** Armungia, Sardinia, Italy

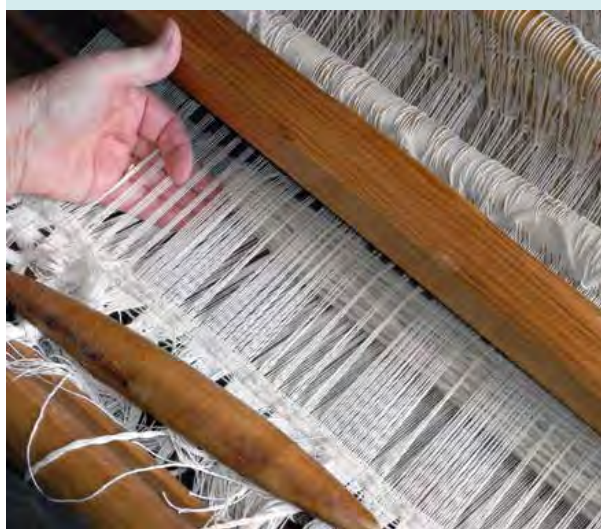
**Project:** Un caffè ad Armungia

**Keywords:** intangible heritage communities, sustainability

The Casa Lussu Association was founded by Tommaso Lussu and Barbara Candia in Armungia, in order to safeguard and promote the traditional craft of weaving on horizontal wooden handlooms. On a daily basis they study and research the production of textile fabrics (especially rugs), while also organising seminars, workshops, training courses and open days on handweaving and natural yarn dyeing. The Association has also produced a second working group on agrobiodiversity, and has combined these two fields by, for example, exploring the use of herbs for dyeing yarn. In order to make connections with the present, Casa Lussu has been re-inter-

preting traditional methods and decorative motifs, for example by applying a new sense of design and increased scientific knowledge, and by reaching out to other international production methods such as the Finnish handloom. In addition, the Association collaborates with graphic artists, other craftspeople and the local community in order to take their own craft beyond the medium of textile.

Many of Casa Lussu's activities take place within the Armungia Municipality Ethnographic Museum. Since 2016 the Festival *Un Caffè ad Armungia* also takes place. The collaboration of the Association and the Museum sees local communities, associations, territorial operators and researchers meet in Armungia to discuss and formulate strategies towards the rebirth of small villages. The common idea behind this networking project is the resistance against depopulation and enhancing the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of territories. Following the 2003 Convention and the FARO 2005 Convention, intangible cultural heritage can be a strong force in the revival of small communities and more isolated, mountainous villages.



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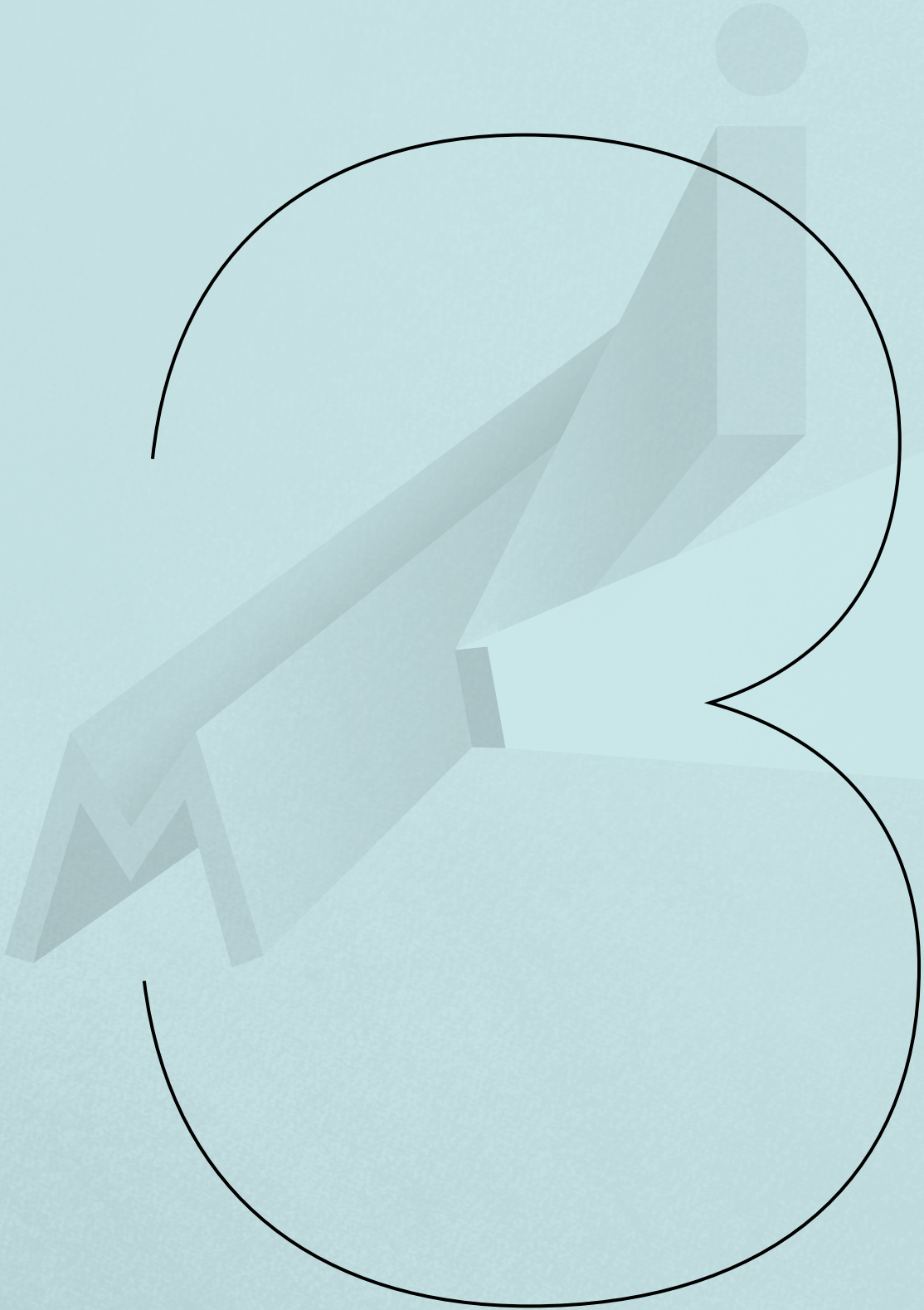
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INSPIRING  
INTERSECTIONS

TOWARDS  
A THIRD  
SPACE





# 1. INNOVATIVE POWER: THE STRENGTH OF WEAK TIES

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contribution: Francesca Cominelli

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*Museums have to be agents  
of transformation.*

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Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, museologist

ICH does not exist without people practicing it. ICH is a living heritage, its safeguarding means its use, its appropriation, its transformation, its continuous innovation. This has focused attention on the issue of safeguarding and governance. ICH has thus widely transformed the approach to heritage, and in the sphere of museums, we wonder: how can ICH transform these institutions, their role, the approach to their collections, their relations with visitors and local communities? Moreover, how can this dialogue between ICH and museums become a source of innovation and creativity within and outside the museums?

Creativity and innovation have been central concepts of the economic perspective, since the pioneering work of Joseph Schumpeter<sup>22</sup> focused on a crucial player, the entrepreneur, and his ability to generate new ideas, products or processes. Nevertheless, these first approaches did not explain how creativity and new ideas can be inspired. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi<sup>23</sup> explains creativity as the interaction of three elements: the excellence of individual knowledge and skills; the working context; the social dimension that can facilitate access to new opportunities. Other theories are more



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related to the fact that innovation and creativity come from the overlapping of different domains, allowing a convergence of references, paradigms and values. These interactions can create synergies among different fields, and unpredictable results.

Another remarkable contribution to the subject of creativity comes from Mark Granovetter<sup>24</sup>, who talks about *The Strength of Weak Ties*. In his analysis of creativity and social networks, he distinguishes between strong and weak ties. **Strong ties** are the result of frequent interaction, emotional involvement, and are based on reciprocity. **Weak ties** are built through less frequent interactions, less emotional involvement, and need less reciprocity. Strong ties are essential for explaining relations within stable groups and organisations, while weak ties establish unexpected relations between groups or organisations and permit to access new information, that can incite innovation and creativity.

If we analyse the relations within a museum, the ties among its workers can be interpreted as strong ties: people spend a lot of time together which creates emotional intensity, intimacy and reciprocal services that make for a functional structure. While weak ties come, for example, from the interactions with researchers involved in a temporary exhibition, artists organising a performance in the museum, students coming for a school activity, families enjoying the museum's workshops on holidays. All these are occasions for creating weak ties.

These different approaches to creativity lead us to consider that the origin of creativity is not only related to specific, exceptional and individual characteristics. Creativity can also be the result of sharing personal and tacit knowledge embodied in people, of unexpected meetings and discussions, of weak ties created between individuals, of synergies generated by exchanges between individuals, their environment and the social context. Thus, the simple fact of working together can have an impact on creativity.<sup>25</sup>

ICH practices within a museum can contribute to the creation of new ties, bringing together new practitioners, ideas and skills. Museums as 'institution[s] in the service of society and its development, open to the public' (ICOM 2007) are places where ICH practitioners can meet, where ICH can be performed and transmitted, and where new links and relations can be created and reinvented. ICH can connect new users to museum activity, linking the skill sets of museums with external skill sets, developing the creative potential of everybody. Thus ICH finds a space in museums, not to be frozen, as we have often been afraid of, but in order to be part of a dynamic creative process.

## 2. THE 'LIQUID' MUSEUM

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### DEBATE ON NEW MUSEUM DEFINITION

In the aftermath of the 2016 ICOM General Conference in Milan, a new Standing Committee for **Museum Definition, Prospects and Potentials** (MDPP, 2017-2019) has been appointed to study the current definition and explore the shared but also the profoundly dissimilar conditions, values and practices of museums in diverse and rapidly changing societies. In December 2018, based on the discussions held at the museum definition roundtables and conferences organised all over the world, the MDPP concluded that the current ICOM museum definition no longer seems to reflect the challenges, manifold visions and responsibilities of today's museums. The Committee also recommended that ICOM should initiate a process of reinterpretation, revision, rewriting, and reformulation of the current museum definition.

As a result, ICOM invited its members, committees and other interested parties to take part in creating a new definition. New proposals were published online on a continuous basis. The Executive Board of ICOM, at its 139<sup>th</sup> session in Paris (July 21-22, 2019), selected the following new alternative definition for a vote to be included in the ICOM Statutes instead of the current one at ICOM's Extraordinary General Assembly (EGA) that took place on September 7, 2019, in Kyoto, Japan:

'Museums are democratising, inclusive and polyphonic spaces for critical dialogue about the pasts and the futures. Acknowledging and addressing the conflicts and challenges of the present, they hold artefacts and specimens in trust for society, safeguard diverse memories for future generations and guarantee equal rights and equal access to heritage for all people. Museums are not for profit. They are participatory and transparent, and work in active partnership with and for diverse communities to collect, preserve, research, interpret, exhibit, and enhance understandings of the world, aiming to contribute to human dignity and social justice, global equality and planetary wellbeing.'

The EGA in Kyoto decided to postpone the vote on a new museum definition. As a result, the ICOM museum definition remains unchanged for the time being:

'A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.'

## INTERVIEW

***Many museum professionals have been closely following the ICOM General Conference held in Kyoto in 2019, and many eyes were focused on 'the debate' relating to the new museum definition proposal. Can you share with us your first impressions of this debate? How does it impact on the future collaborations of museum and intangible cultural heritage (ICH)?***

In relation to the debate on the new museum definition, I think the public eye was focused as never before on the museum sector. In this sense it is something good, it speaks to its relevance to society. Something has been put in motion by the former Executive Board of ICOM and the Standing Committee for Museum Definition, Prospects and Potentials, that can't be stopped, maybe only slightly altered.

In my opinion, the concept of ICH is a fundamental element of the DNA of this new museum definition proposal; first of all because it challenges the concept of collecting, acknowledging the fundamental rights of CGIs as well as the active partnership between them and museums.

ICH is also enormously important as an activist element of this museum definition draft because it contributes to human dignity, social justice, global equality and planetary wellbeing. Combining the two, I believe it enriches the method of acquiring and documenting, making it stronger or at least innovative as a heritage practice.

Finally, the proposal for the new museum definition is much more processual and dynamic in its approach. In this proposal the word 'permanent' is gone, which has been so fundamental



//// **Léontine Meijer-van Mensch** held academic positions at museum and heritage studies programmes in the Netherlands and Germany. She worked for various Jewish and Ethnological Museums in Amsterdam and Berlin. At present, she is the director of the Ethnographic Collections of Saxony (i.e. the ethnographical museums of Dresden,

Leipzig and Herrnhut). She is member of the Executive Board of ICOM. Previously she was president of ICOM's International Committee for Collecting. ////



to the definition that we had until now. However, looking at contemporary museum practice, this idea of permanence of museums as organisations is not accurate anymore.

Museums and ICH collaboration will continue, whether there will be a new museum definition or not. Nevertheless, this new museum definition proposal would make it a bit easier or more natural to work strongly together.

***Zygmunt Bauman's idea of 'Liquid Modernity' that you adopted in your museum related work, fits well with the understanding of ICH as cultural phenomena which are in a state of constant change and which communities shape in response to their environment (natural/physical, social and cultural). Is it (fully) possible to apply this concept on the tangible heritage sector where preservation is constituted by statics and fixation? Or does it then apply 'only' to certain museum functions?***

I find the concepts of liquid modernity<sup>26</sup> or liquid museum<sup>27</sup>, derived from Bauman and shaped very strongly by Fiona Cameron, indeed thoroughly inspiring. This *liquid museum* tries to be an answer to contemporary museum work issues; a sort of mould to reframe museum realities that we have been living for the past twenty years. Cameron puts it in juxtaposition with the modernist museum, which is all about classification and about objectification, saying that in our liquid modernity times we need different museums. This is where the concept of liquid museum originates.

The liquid museum is unpredictable. It is much more about soft powers and mutual genius practices which museums seek to accommodate. It is about embracing different world views and operating in complex networks internationally and nationally. The liquid museum concept urges us to reflect upon all these dynamic forces.

As such, the liquid museum concept is fully applicable to the tangible heritage sector as well. Nevertheless, in order to adhere to this concept, especially in conservation and collection management, one would need to rethink and reshuffle what he/she has learned and put in practice for so many years. I truly believe preservation is not at all about statics and fixation anymore, especially if you apply indigenous or in situ conservation policies. And here I found Janet Marstine's words very inspirational: 'Museum ethics of the twenty-first century does not prioritise the institution's responsibility to objects above all else'.<sup>28</sup>

***How do you see the role of communities, groups and individuals (in the ICH context) in addressing the authorised heritage discourse as discussed by Laurajane Smith, both in museum and ICH practice?***

CGIs are very important in deconstructing the authorised heritage discourse, although that discourse can also relate to groups or individuals that are not currently engaged in it. It is undeniable that we still need to reflect on this authorised heritage discourse, because part of what was discussed at the ICOM General Conference in Kyoto related to the new museum definition proposal was an authorised heritage discourse clashing with people who look differently at contemporary museum practices.

The dynamics that CGIs have within the ICH context and hopefully within the museum as well, deconstructs this authorised heritage discourse by means of multifocality and polyphonicity. Still, some relevant questions remain, such as 'Who decides?' 'Who is an expert?' 'What is an expertise knowledge and what isn't?' It is relevant for museums to embrace the reflections that are embedded in the definition of ICH.

***Can you explain the ways in which the Jewish Museum Berlin managed to include ICH in its regular programmes during your working time at the museum? You touched upon loss-ness and ICH. How are these two connected based on your experience?***

What I tried to do when I was programme director in the museum – and what the museum did before and is trying today – is to reflect on Jewish religion and culture, addressing and critically reflecting upon contemporary social and political issues which are often part of the ICH. It is an interesting question to explore how museum objects can play a role in a contemporary religious context. They symbolically move back and forth between being a museum object and being an object applied in religious practice. This practice adds new layers of significance to the cultural biography of the object.

For example, we had a Jewish wedding ceremony in the museum, and during that ceremony objects of the collections were being used and therefore new layers of values and meaning were added to the cultural biography of the object. This wedding was also documented so the stories of that wedding became part of the collection and an exhibition. The message behind this was to show that although part of the Jewish culture has been musealised, there is still a Jewish life, also in Germany.

Such practices build stronger ties with the community. Even if there is always the risk of unacceptance by other community members, who, for

example, feel irritated by it. These processes are not easy, but they are important.

When it comes to 'loss-ness' there's one theory saying that museums can play an important role as places of belonging. An example would be the second generation of Russian Jewish immigrants living in Berlin, who don't have very strong ties with the religious Jewish life but still culturally identify themselves as Jews.

The Jewish museums can be spaces where you learn, and you get introduced to 'Jewishness' as a part of who you are. Museums have this opportunity of dealing with religion in cultural history, becoming a secular space that touches upon certain cultural and religious elements. In this regard the Jewish Museum Berlin plays a huge, important role for many younger Jews in Germany with a secular background.



## HOW TO WORK WITH DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS IN SUPERDIVERSE SOCIETIES?

- ▶ Deconstruct the homogeneous perspective of communities.
- ▶ Embrace the multifocality within a certain person and within yourself.
- ▶ Reflect and act on the talents and perspectives of your museum staff
- ▶ Become a network museum. Do not only work with other museums, archives or libraries, but build active collaborations with different community organisations. Build new alliances that go beyond the cultural heritage sector.
- ▶ Embrace the concept of hospitality, not in the neoliberal sense, but hospitality as part of intercultural communication as well as in the context of the leisure industry.

### 3. LINKING MUSEUM FUNCTIONS AND ICH SAFEGUARDING MEASURES

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There is no doubt that museum and intangible cultural heritage practices have common ground from which new perspectives on heritage continue to sprout. In what follows we suggest a rich diversity of approaches in specific heritage fields, meeting the needs of cultural workers in fulfilling their professional roles. You will find an exploration of the possible intersections of museum functions and ICH safeguarding measures, using the ICOM *Code of Ethics for Museums* and the UNESCO 2003 Convention's Operational Directives. In addition we also mention the assessment criteria of the Overall Results Framework (ORF) that UNESCO uses to monitor the safeguarding of ICH and the results of the 2003 Convention. Starting from within one practice, one may discover the other. What in the museum field is seen as a process of acquiring objects, for the ICH sector offers an opportunity to identify ICH and vice versa. What is more, it is on the very intersection of both practices that new approaches are perhaps born.

[...] if you keep referring those new sites to old principles, then you are not actually able to participate in them fully and productively and creatively.<sup>29</sup>

Homi Bhabha

What follows are proposals for ways to *fully, productively and creatively* engage with ICH in a museum context. The methodology is straightforward; the only precondition is open-mindedness.

# PRESERVATION (UNESCO Recommendations, 2015) AND SAFEGUARDING (UNESCO 2003 Convention)

The **preservation** of heritage comprises activities related to **acquisition**, **collection management**, including risk analysis, preventive and remedial **conservation** as well as **restoration** of museum objects. A key component of collection management in museums is the creation and maintenance of a professional inventory and regular control of collections.






Intangible cultural heritage is 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. **Safeguarding** means measures aimed at ensuring the **viability** of the intangible cultural heritage. In other words, safeguarding is about supporting communities in **practicing** their **living heritage** in the way that is meaningful to them.

The key difference is that preservation implies the need for keeping objects unaltered and preventing the decay of materials and thus communicating cultural values embodied in these objects, while safeguarding implies socio-cultural dynamics that allow people to appropriate activities (and related objects) to the needs of their lives.

Both preservation and safeguarding comprise a set of activities or measures. The specific activities will thus be further distinguished, illustrating the variety of possibilities in working with ICH in everyday museum life.

This overview makes no claim to being complete; consider it as an open-ended sampler.

## Symbols and abbreviations used:

	Museum function
	ICH safeguarding measure
	ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums
	Operational Directives for the implementation of the UNESCO 2003 Convention
	Overall Results Framework for the UNESCO 2003 Convention



# INTERSECTION TABLE

## Museums & functions

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## Intangible cultural heritage & safeguarding

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### ACQUISITION / COLLECTING

Collaboration with CGIs  
Culturally sensitive objects  
Field collecting  
Working collections

### IDENTIFYING

### CONSERVATION

What does  
authenticity entail?  
Living context / objects temporarily  
leaving the museum  
ICH as source of knowledge for  
preservation of objects

### ICH RELATED OBJECTS

### RESEARCH AND STUDY

Participation of CGIs  
Informed consent  
Accessibility of research  
and collections

### RESEARCH AND STUDY

### DOCUMENTATION

CGI based inventorying  
to be linked to  
Object ID

### INVENTORYING

## Museums & functions

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## Intangible cultural heritage & safeguarding

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### COMMUNICATION

Space for ICH related  
information in the museum  
Joint communicating initiatives –  
exhibitions, publications, etc.  
Free, prior, sustained and  
informed consent of CGIs  
Contribution to community  
wellbeing and social  
inclusion

### AWARENESS RAISING

### EDUCATION

Non-formal education  
Transmission of and education on ICH  
Contemporaneity of ICH

### EDUCATION

### LIVING COLLECTIONS

Environmental change  
Addressing climate change  
and sustaining biodiversity

### ICH AND ENVIRONMENT

### CAPACITY BUILDING

Ongoing training of CGIs  
and heritage professionals alike  
Dialogue between ICH  
and museums  
Co-creation

### CAPACITY BUILDING

## ACQUISITION / COLLECTING AND IDENTIFYING

One of the first actions in establishing a museum, and of course one of its core functions afterwards, is the acquisition and collection of objects. Similarly, the safeguarding of ICH starts with identifying it. Identifying objects (and acquiring them) for our collections or ICH for the purpose of safeguarding it, must be done in accordance with shared ethical principles. These ethical principles help us better understand the connection between ICH and museums in this specific activity. The ICOM *Code of Ethics for Museums* says that:

‘culturally sensitive material collections of human remains and material of sacred significance should be acquired only if they can be housed securely and cared for respectfully. This must be accomplished in a manner consistent with professional standards and the interests and beliefs of members of the community, ethnic or religious groups from which the objects originated, where these are known.’ (CE 2.5)

Museum professionals are thus invited to collaborate with CGIs when acquiring objects that are culturally sensitive. These are very often related to ICH knowledge and practices. Nevertheless, objects from everyday life also relate to ICH and therefore to the CGIs concerned. To consult communities is not only about following museum legal requirements or having rich information; working with communities when acquiring objects can lead to identifying ICH and vice versa. Let us here recall that OD 80 of the 2003 Convention instructs States Parties to create consultative bodies who would facilitate CGIs participation in the identification and definition of different elements of intangible cultural heritage. In this context, museums can play

an important role in identifying ICH while doing 'classical' museum work. Besides field collecting (CE 3.3), the ICOM *Code of Ethics for Museums* also instructs on working collections (CE 2.8) where the emphasis is on preserving cultural, scientific, or technical processes rather than the object, or where objects or specimens are assembled for regular handling and teaching purposes. Focusing on processes can be beneficial for ICH bearers.

### ORF ASSESSMENT CRITERION 11.1

- Cultural policies and/or legal and administrative measures integrating ICH and its safeguarding, and reflecting its diversity, have been established or revised and are being implemented.

*Include ICH in collection plans and policies in order to comply with this criterion.*

## Museum: Ecomusée du Val-De-Bièvre

**Location:** Fresnes, France

**Project name:** Windows on gardens

**Keywords:** contemporary collecting, intangible heritage communities

The Ecomusée du Val-de-Bièvre is committed to transmitting and promoting suburban heritage in and around Fresnes. The museum works with local residents to develop temporary exhibitions, based on researching and collecting objects and testimonies. These testimonies, often gathered through surveys and interviews, lead to increased knowledge of the territory for the museum.

They are recorded in the archives of the museum, and are integrated in the exhibitions by means of written excerpts. This method of participatory collecting is at the core of the Ecomusée, and allows for continuously experimenting with new forms of appropriation of the territory. The local inhabitants are regarded as custodians of knowledge and culture, and objects are valued for their contributions to a common history and heritage.



In 2019 and 2020, the Ecomusée du Val-de-Bièvre focuses on the particular suburban aspect of gardens, and especially their intangible cultural heritage dimension. Gardens can vary from bigger individual gardens to allotments and shared gardens. The exhibition explores the feelings inhabitants have towards their gardens and the idea of sharing them, by means of surveys, interviews, and the establishment of a collaborative herbarium. This collection gathers plants chosen by gardeners as representative of their plots, registering aspects such as their names for the plants and their particular interest in them. In addition, the Ecomusée collects and maps the emotional ties gardeners have to objects such as gnomes and wheelbarrows as garden decoration.

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## CONSERVATION (M) AND ICH RELATED OBJECTS (ICH)

Specific museum functions, such as the conservation and restoration of objects, seem very distant from ICH as a continuously changing practice. This is because the main aim of conservation is to keep an object as authentic as possible, leaving little space for actual enactment of objects in various practices, festivities or similar activities which would be characteristic for ICH.

Even though bearers might feel the objects are detached from their living context, fruitful collaborations that still need to be thoroughly assessed and promoted, show that there is a mutual appreciation for the endeavours to respectfully protect ICH related objects from decay. Also, interesting insights come up if museum professionals and ICH practitioners engage in a dialogue around their respective experiences of what 'as authentic as possible' may mean.

There is a growing number of examples, moreover, where museums are setting up partnerships and concrete agreements with ICH communities regarding exceptional or specific contexts in which the object leaves the museum to take part in the ICH practice temporarily or recurrently.

Alongside this, if we approach conservation as a continuously evolving learning process, then ICH can be a vital source of specific knowledge and skills supporting preservation processes in the museum.

## Museum: Amsterdam Museum

**Location:** Amsterdam, the Netherlands

**Project name:** Conservation and restoration of intangible  
cultural heritage-related objects

**Keywords:** conservation, capacity building



The collection and activities of the Amsterdam Museum reflect many different areas of intangible cultural heritage. The museum often works with oral traditions and language, such as social interactions and conversations in neighbourhood shops, and the inclusion of foreign words in Dutch street language.

Personal testimonies and interviews are often included in exhibitions, and the museum also runs the interactive website *Geheugen van Amsterdam* (Memory of Amsterdam), where the inhabitants of the city can share stories and memories. In addition, the museum also explores socio-historical subjects such as slavery, has investigated ritualised interaction such as football as a new religion, and takes a stance in contemporary discussions such as the Black Pete debate.

In order to preserve its material aspects of intangible cultural heritage, the Museum employs restorers that are trained in a variety of crafts. Occasionally the museum's restorers work with craftspeople and practitioners from outside the museum who can offer specialised skills and knowledge about specific objects, such as clockmakers, ceramists and cabinet makers. These current collaborations mark a change from earlier decades, when craftspeople were often reluctant to share their knowledge with outsiders, such as museum staff. The Amsterdam Museum continuously embarks upon new projects, such as the 2019 restoration of a street organ. New cooperative and communicative interactions between the restorers and outside craftspeople are ongoing, in line with the general openness of the Amsterdam Museum to working closely with the inhabitants of the city.



© Annemarie de Wildt, Amsterdam Museum

Museum specialists undertake research on tangible and intangible cultural heritage, usually related to their collection. Many questions have arisen around accessibility to this research and the way in which communities have participated in past research activities, especially for non-European or rural collections-related knowledge gathered far away from the very museum building and its staff. The ICOM *Code of Ethics for Museums* has a whole section (VI) dedicated to strengthening the collaboration with communities. Also, it particularly emphasises the need of making collections and all relevant information as accessible as possible (CE 3.2). OD 85 also recommends facilitating access to results of research carried out among CGIs. These results should be prepared in a manner that would be understandable for the majority. As museums have a special position in local communities, by working on this recommendation they have the opportunity to correct some past practices which excluded CGIs in later research phases.

### ORF ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- ▶ 9.3 Practitioners and bearers of ICH participate in the management, implementation and dissemination of research findings and scientific, technical and artistic studies, all done with their free, prior, sustained and informed consent.
- ▶ 10.1 Documentation and research findings are accessible to CGIs, while respecting customary practices governing access to specific aspects of ICH.



## Collaboration: Musée du Lötschental, Université de Neuchâtel & Universität Basel

Location: Neuchâtel, Switzerland

Project name: In the Valley of Images

Keywords: documentation, research and study



© Grégoire Mayor

The Musée d'ethnographie de Neuchâtel (MEN) was established in 1904 and in the historical tradition of European ethnographic museums, combines a cabinet of curiosities with artistic collections from non-Western regions of the world. In 2006 Grégoire Mayor, curator of the Musée d'Ethnographie, initiated and ran a video project on the tradition of mask carving for *Tschäggättä*, a traditional custom during the carnival week in Lötschental, in collaboration with the Musée du Lötschental, Université de Neuchâtel, and Universität Basel. The project consisted of documenting and archiving, through the medium of film, discourses and practices around mask carving and carnival traditions. In order to gain a temporal perspective on the evolution of these traditions

and to assess the impact of tourism, performances were filmed over the course of a decade.

During the process of filming, collaborations were developed with practitioners of mask carving and mask bearing, with the Museum of Löschental, and with a craftsman who developed a scenographical presentation of the *Tschäggättä* for the museum. Interviews with carvers discussing sometimes conflictual aspects of the aesthetic of the masks lead to the establishment of a reflexive archive. Over the course of the project several issues occurred, such as having to make decisions for editing the video material that did not essentialise the tradition of mask carving and carnival, but instead reflected its complexity and dynamics.



## DOCUMENTATION AND INVENTORING

The standards of documenting objects within the museum practice is almost radically opposite to inventorying ICH. Nevertheless, from an intersection methodology perspective the two might generate an enriched version of heritage documentation.

Standard museum practice requires a full identification and description of the objects in their collections, and most frequently use Object ID as a standard. Speaking in terms of documenting practices of intangible cultural heritage, States Parties are encouraged to develop inventories that meet the needs of the CGIs concerned, making inventory requirements very diverse.

Community-based inventorying is a possible intersecting pattern which can enrich the Object ID information for museum purposes on the one hand, and help CGIs clearly organise their ICH related information on the other. Moreover, museums could encourage and assist CGIs in establishing specialised inventories reflecting their needs and related practices.

### ORF ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- ▶ 7.1 One or more inventorying systems oriented towards safeguarding and reflecting the diversity of ICH have been established or revised since ratification.
- ▶ 7.2 Specialised inventories and/or inventories of varying scope reflect diversity and contribute to safeguarding.



© Vera Bos



© Vera Bos



© Joel Schweizer

## Museum: Stadsmuseum Lier

**Location:** Lier, Belgium

**Project name:** Traditional lace-making (Lierse Kant)

**Keywords:** intangible heritage communities, documentation

The Stadsmuseum Lier opened its doors to the public in 2018. Intangible cultural heritage is a central feature of its practice, and the integration of this heritage in the collection occurs in close, participatory collaboration with practitioners and heritage communities. Choosing particular heritage practices to be integrated in the museum often stems from the needs of the collection, i.e. the identification of subjects or themes that

are not yet part of the museum's set-up, but of importance to the city. The integration of a new heritage practice thus also goes hand in hand with mapping, documenting and managing information about the practice.

The local tradition of lace embroidery (Lierse Kant) is now part of the permanent collection. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century this embroidery was a booming industry.



© Jeroen Broeckx



A lot of local manufacturers provided women with paid assignments. These women took the designs and materials to their homes in order to craft the embroidery. Since the Stadsmuseum only had a few objects related to this craft, and even less information, a collection and documentation process was initiated. To increase knowledge of the industry, the museum facilitated several days on which people, mostly descendants of former manufacturers, presented them-

selves to share their materials and stories. Afterwards, the museum made video portraits of the different embroidery communities that are still active in this heritage practice. The way people handle their craft objects is very specific and symbolises their relationship with lace embroidery. These videos are available in the permanent exhibition by means of a touchscreen, alongside a practical display where visitors can try their hand at embroidery themselves.



© Jeroen Broeckx

## COMMUNICATION AND AWARENESS RAISING

Maybe the most visible out of many possible collaborations, museums do play a vital role in promoting ICH and raising awareness on:

- the existence and diversity of ICH
- the value and function of ICH
- the role of CGIs concerned
- threats or risks to the viability of ICH
- ...

This can be done by means of joint exhibitions, publications, usage of ICT, seminars, and by establishing information centres on ICH within the museum facilities (OD 105b and 109). At all times such activities are being challenged to take into account the Ethical Principles underlying the work around ICH, securing free, prior, sustained and informed consent of CGIs concerned, and reflecting their inclusive and widest possible participation in the process of awareness raising actions. It may not be easy, but the process will, however, enrich the understanding of the subject at hand, thereby fulfilling museums' contributions to community wellbeing and social inclusion. It will also contribute to the implementation of the ethical principle for museums, which relates to the appropriate consideration of represented groups or beliefs in exhibiting activities (CE 4.2).

### ORF ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- ▶ 17.1 Awareness-raising actions reflect the inclusive and widest possible participation of CGIs concerned.
- ▶ 17.2 The free, prior, sustained and informed consent of CGIs concerned is secured for conducting awareness-raising activities concerning specific elements of their intangible cultural heritage.



## Museum: Fédération des Ecomusées et des Musées de Société

**Location:** travelling exhibition, France

**Project name:** *Sortons des clichés!*

**Keywords:** intangible heritage communities, awareness raising

The Fédération des Ecomusées et Musées de Société (FEMS) unites innovative non-profit heritage institutions that focus on social topics, the solidarity economy, and local development. The network specifically federates museums that place humans and their territory at the centre of their activities, with subjects such as the evolution of rural communities, urban cultures, sustainable development, et cetera. Many of these museums are closely aligned with an ethnographic approach to their subject matter. At the same time, the 2003 Convention has redefined roles and balances in the heritage field, leading to local populations and museum visitors to be increasingly regarded as active agents, rather than merely visitors or spectators to existing collections.

In 2011 FEMS initiated the travelling exhibition *Sortons des clichés!* to explore to a greater extent these ongoing dynamics of living cultural expressions, memory and transmission in the museums that are part of the network. Two photographers, Jean-Christophe Bardot and Olivier Pasquiers, were commissioned to realise a photographic series on themes suggested by members of the Fédération. The project has a documentary ambition, but also aims at producing a sensitive and distanced interpretation, which is neither the museum discourse nor that of the communities concerned. It is a space where different points of view on the intangible cultural heritage can meet and gain in reflexivity.



© Olivier Pasquiers

## Museum: Musée gruérien

**Location:** Bulle, Switzerland

**Project name:** *La vie en ville/Lebendige Stadt*

**Keywords:** intangible heritage communities, awareness raising

The Musée gruérien has been studying and exhibiting the heritage of the Swiss district of Gruyère since 1917. Since 2012, the permanent exhibition *La Gruyère – itinéraires et empreintes* is on show at the museum. The museum's objects were collected in close collaboration with a range of specialists, and provide keys to understanding both the past and present of this region. The collection is not merely object-based and also incorporates many aspects of intangible cultural heritage, such as dress and costumes and regional culinary traditions. As a result, the Musée gruérien is now recognised as a contact point for expertise on local history, traditions, expressions, and arts and crafts. Practitioners are actively engaged in the museum's daily operations, through initiatives such as theatre performances and demonstrations of handicrafts.

In 2018, the Musée gruérien hosted the competition and exhibition *La vie en ville/Lebendige Stadt*, in collaboration with a local paper cutting association. The museum selected the theme of urban life, and this unconventional theme for paper cutting lead participants to submit innovative, non-traditional work for the competition. Based on historical research in its collections and documentation, the Musée gruérien was able to highlight to the participants many dynamic aspects of the techniques of paper cutting, such as the use of colour, and double-sided use of the paper. In addition, innovative possibilities for paper cutting, such as creating cartoons and using smartphone applications, came to the forefront throughout the project. This evolving approach to the tradition of paper cutting also reaches out to younger generations, and helps in safeguarding this craft.



© Katharina Cuthbertson-Merki (2017)



## NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Following the 2003 Convention, museums are invited to take part in a wider movement which ensures recognition of, respect for, and enhancement of the intangible cultural heritage in society, in particular through non-formal education provided in their spaces (OD 108). As education is at the very core of the museum definition it is thus also reflected in the ICOM *Code of Ethics for Museums* (p. 17). Museums surely can play a vital role in supporting the transmission of and education on intangible cultural heritage, fulfilling at the same time their educational and wider social role. The cases presented show that education on/in ICH is not reserved only for museums dealing with traditional culture, rather it may encompass contemporaneity in its diverse forms.

## Museum: Gallerie degli Uffizi

**Location:** Florence, Italy

**Project name:** Botteghe artigiane

**Keywords:** education, intangible heritage communities

The Uffizi Galleries are renowned for their collection of artworks, with an emphasis on the Italian Renaissance. The museum's Education Department has been running a comprehensive and extended training programme on aspects of the museum's collection, aimed at transmitting traditional craft skills as a form of intangible cultural heritage, and their related methodologies to future generations. In a first phase, high school students acquire both historical and practical knowledge of the materials and environment of the Uffizi Galleries, including painting techniques, porcelain, restoration, semi-precious stones, sculpture, applied arts, and the art of designing and maintaining green spaces. In addition to this, the students visit companies with activities related to those of the museum, with the aim of deepening their business insight and gaining understanding of contemporary craft work.

In the second phase of the project, the students are hosted by artisans or artistic craft enterprises, where they can increase their skills and techniques in areas such as inlay and mosaic, and where they can learn more about materials such as ceramics, wood, textiles, stones, gold, leather and artisan perfumery. With this project the Uffizi Galleries are building an appreciation and recognition of the artworks in the city and the museum among younger



© Uffizi Galleries

generations. The core aim is to make evident the cultural value of manual skill in artisanship, the centrality of these activities in the cultural and economic development of the region, and the risk of their disappearance in the light of an increasingly virtual vision of the future. This educational project thus contributes to safeguarding traditional craft skills and knowledge as central aspects of intangible cultural heritage.



## LIVING COLLECTIONS AND ENVIRONMENT

Humanity is facing severe environmental crises. The knowledge accumulated and transmitted among generations of people as part of intangible cultural heritage can strongly contribute to mitigating climate change and sustaining biodiversity. Museums, especially the ones dealing with living heritage, are playing an active role in addressing this omnipresent threat by means of education as well as respecting local/national laws or treaties on wildlife protection (CE 2.6, 2.7). Intersecting ICH knowledge of nature with the powerful communication tools museums can provide, the heritage sector is once more proving its relevance in the context of the sustainable development paradigm.

## Museum: Texture – Museum over Leie en Vlas

**Location:** Kortrijk, Belgium

**Project name:** Biolace

**Keywords:** contemporary collecting, intangible heritage communities

The roots of Texture stem from the 1960s, when former flax and linen workers realised the importance of this regional heritage, and started collecting objects and stories for future generations. Societal challenges were met by establishing a recently renewed museum building and presentation. Research and oral history have gained a steady place. Entrepreneurship and craftsmanship are central themes, and a programme of participatory and creative collaborations constantly supplements the collection. For each collection theme, such as flax or textiles, dedicated ICH strategies are in place, such as a focus on the transfer and re-launch of textile technological knowhow.

The Biolace exhibition ran in 2018 and 2019, and projected visitors into an imaginative future where overpopulation, climate change and resource shortage challenge us to think in radically different ways. In a hypothetical 2050 scenario, new organisms have been genetically engineered to produce textiles and improved food crops – all in one plant. Researcher Carole Collet combined design and science to explore efficient and sustainable alternatives. Biolace introduces four imaginary plants: Basil n° 5, Gold Nano Spinach, Factor 60 Tomato en Strawberry Noir. Their DNA has been reprogrammed so that their roots grow in a lace pattern. To these four plant themes, Texture linked unique historical pieces from the museum's traditional lace collection. The success of Biolace was ensured by working together with ICH practitioners such as the Kortrijk Lace Studio, which is housed in the museum and keeps regional lace heritage alive. At the same time, co-creations occurred, in which more traditional lace workers interacted with the project's futuristic vision of lacemaking, for example by using technological design software.



© Iwert Bernakiewicz

## CAPACITY BUILDING

Although last in this intersection list, capacity building is maybe the most relevant of all. It is from knowledge and understanding that all other intersections arise. The ICOM *Code of Ethics* promotes training of personnel (CE 1.15) on an ongoing basis in order to maintain an effective workforce. The same goes for the 2003 Convention: capacity building related to safeguarding ICH is aimed at CGIs (OD 82) and heritage professionals alike (OD 154b). The *Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project* (IMP) can be seen as a good example of capacity building, which complies with the intersection methodology promoted in this book. By bringing museum professionals and practitioners together, fostering dialogue and co-creation activities, IMP made a step forward in accommodating ICH in museums in a meaningful and beneficial way for the different stakeholders involved.

### ORF ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- ▶ 3.1 Training programmes, including those operated by communities themselves, provide capacity building in ICH delivered on an inclusive basis to CGIs.
- ▶ 3.2. Training programmes provide capacity building in ICH delivered on an inclusive basis to those working in the fields of culture and heritage.

## TESTIMONY

## CAPACITY BUILDING

Meg Nömgård

Despite the raised voices on the need for greater attention to ICH, employees at museums are often educated in what can be called 'traditional' subjects when it comes to the field of museums. Reading through job advertisements, archaeology, art history and building preservation seem to be the most attractive competences, while competences in the field of ICH are not so much asked for. Of course, this imbalance reflects the imbalance in the kind of education we offer our students in the field of cultural heritage. We have many great university programmes in the studies of cultural heritage. In all these traditional fields, you can pursue a master's degree and a PhD. However, if you wish to study some of the ICH domains in a practical way you will find it harder, or in some cases impossible. For instance, in the domain that I am active in, which is oral storytelling – there isn't a master's degree in the whole of Europe. Of course, you can study it in a theoretical way, as a folklorist, although this means that you are studying *about it*, not learning the art or craftsmanship of it.

For some time now, museums have been increasingly aware of the need to collaborate with civil society and ICH related CGIs, taking part in social issues and working with the so-called soft values. **Museums play an important role in providing capacity building via a two-way process; for the museum staff and for CGIs.**



//// **Meg Nömgård** is a museologist and storyteller. She is the director of The Land of Legends, which includes The Museum of Legends, and is adopted by UNESCO in the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices. In 2016 she was awarded the Swedish UNE-

SCO prize for her work with the UNESCO 2003 Convention. Since November 2018, she is a member of the Steering Committee of the ICH NGO Forum as a representative of the electoral group Western Europe and North America. ////

### AN EXPLORATION OF RELEVANT COMPETENCES

- mediation skills
- field-research techniques, including participatory video-making and semi-structured interviews
- community-based inventorying
- special ICH techniques and skills (ex. wood-carving) applied in conservation
- storytelling as ICH practice improving museum presentation, interpretation and guiding tours
- ...

## Museum: Kenniscentrum Immaterieel Erfgoed Nederland / Nederlands Openluchtmuseum

**Location:** Arnhem, the Netherlands

**Project name:** CraftsLab (AmbachtenLab)

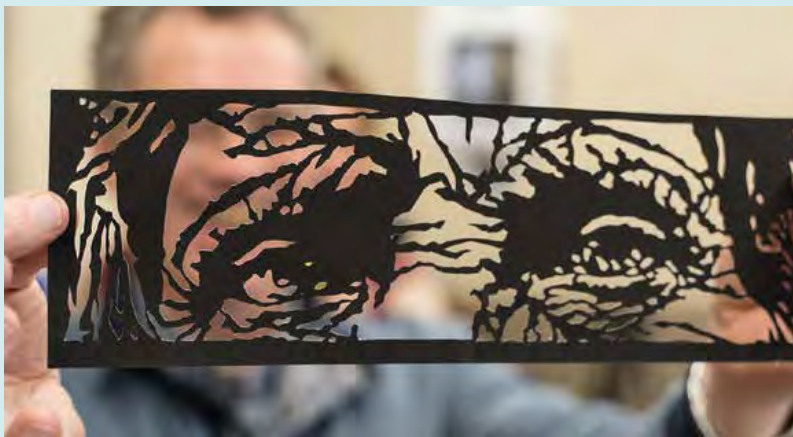
**Keywords:** capacity building, participation

The Dutch Open Air Museum is located in Arnhem, and reflects Dutch daily life from 1900 up to approximately 1970 in exhibits of traditional housing, clothing, traditions, crafts, and subsistence activities. In 2018 the Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage (Kenniscentrum Immaterieel Erfgoed Nederland) collaborated with the Dutch Open Air Museum to create the CraftsLab (AmbachtenLab). This CraftsLab provides a meeting space and experimental platform for craftspeople to meet artists, designers and crafts students. This interaction allows for exploring the possibilities of particular crafts, how various techniques derived from the crafts can function and have their place in today's world, and often give rise to ideas for innovation.

These interactive processes are filmed and photographed, and eventually dis-

played in the museum. Rather than showing finished products or heritage trajectories, these displays are intended to be starting points for discussion. Visitors are invited to walk along at certain times, and to join in the reflection. Because the CraftsLab is embedded in the Dutch Open Air Museum, this creates a unique context for the worlds of ICH and museums to meet. The craftspeople, artists, designers and students often work with museum staff who offer additional historical expertise on traditional housing, crafts, clothing, et cetera. Adopting the museum's framework for exploring the innovation of traditional crafts in contemporary settings, the CraftsLab succeeds in establishing strong links between the past, the present and the future. In 2019, the Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage started the CraftsLab project in several other crafts related museums in the Netherlands.



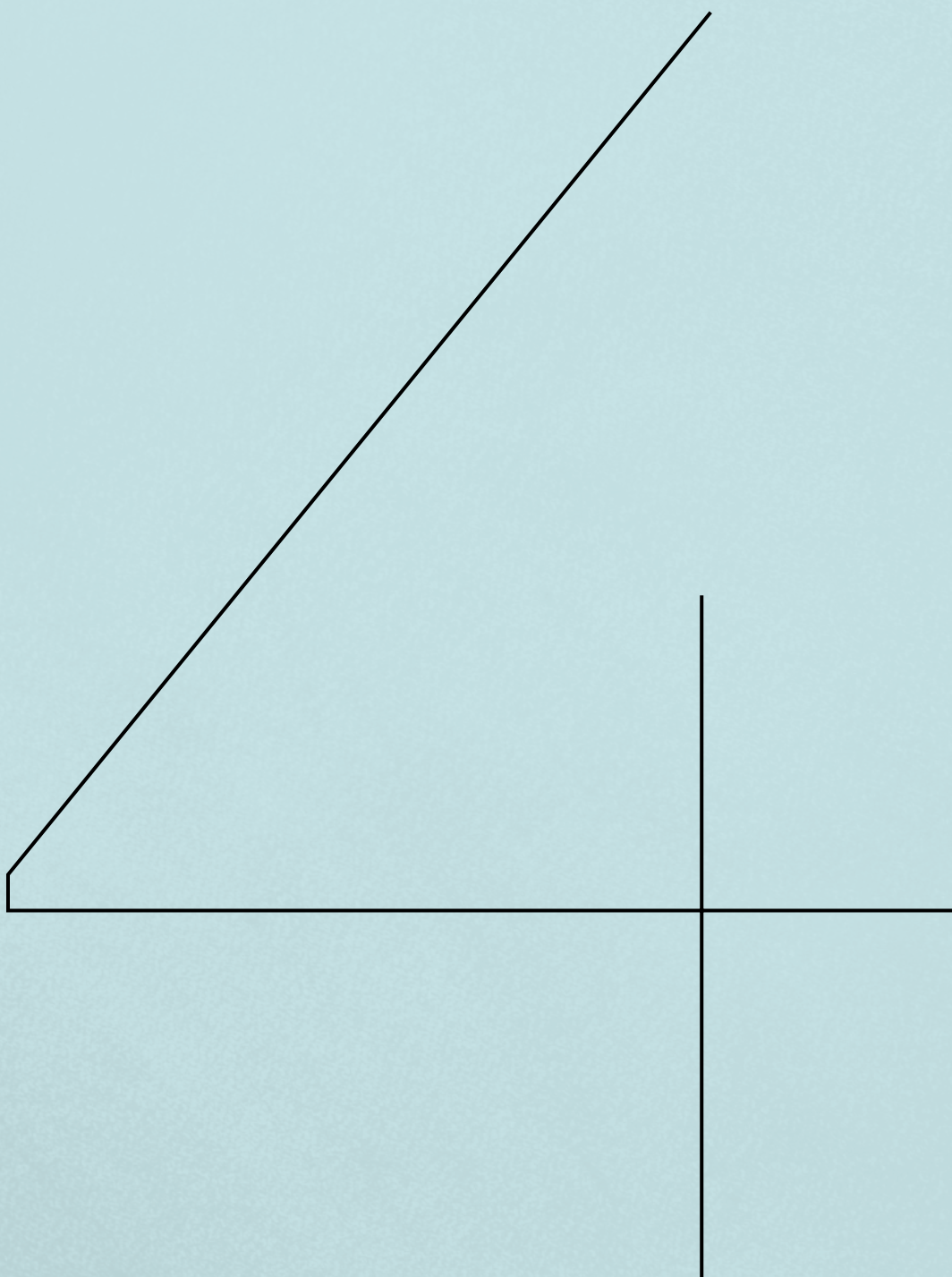


© Marco Gerritsen, Marco@Beeldblik













# **RISKY OPPORTUNITIES**





In 21<sup>st</sup> century heritage practice, museums contribute to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (ICH). Even if nowadays this endeavour is still limited to awareness raising for many museums, the examples highlighted in this book reveal the variety of safeguarding measures to be developed jointly. Practice has shown this is not a unidirectional benefit. Sharing their challenges, their knowledge and skills, ICH practitioners and wider CGIs contribute in turn to capacity building of museum staff, for example connected to specific restoration/conservation requirements, mediation skills, or – a crucial quest of the tangible heritage sector – to societal relevance. In summary, participatory and inclusive collaboration among museums and ICH actors contributes to the ongoing transformational process of a cultural heritage sector rethinking and re-inventing itself in a changing world facing sustainable development.

### **The opportunities are already here: seize them.**

In order to work together and take advantage of the collaboration between the museum and the ICH practices for the benefit of heritage preservation/safeguarding, as well as environmental and social sustainability, there has to be a high level of understanding and mutual respect. Something that appears to be an opportunity to museums, might be harmful to the ICH practitioners concerned. Equally, CGIs might place high expectations on museum staff who need to strike a balance between preserving objects and communicating with a diverse public (age, social profile, education level et cetera). In such cases, threats to the viability of an ICH element as well as neglect of objects under museum custody might develop.

In the following paragraphs some of the possible risks that the ICH and museum collaboration may generate are addressed, including ways to mitigate them. Wherever possible we used the UNESCO 2003 Convention Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage as a guiding tool.

## Ethical Principle 10


Communities, groups and, where applicable, individuals should play a significant role in determining what constitutes threats to their intangible cultural heritage including the decontextualization, commodification and misrepresentation of it and in deciding how to prevent and mitigate such threats.

MIND THE GAP!

# LOSS OF MEANING AND DECONTEXTUALIZATION

**Intangible cultural heritage can be safeguarded only if meaningful to the communities, groups and individuals (CGIs) concerned.**

Alessandro Ervas (El Felze, Venice) is a blacksmith who works in the metals restoration and archaeometallurgy of iron and copper alloys. Ervas has collaborated with museums and research centres for technological research and the production of compliant copies. In his opinion any specific craft and skill should be practiced at the place where they are actually developed and transmitted. In a museum setting they risk being isolated from their context. Museums are wonderful partners for showing and understanding (promotion, sensitising the public) ICH, but not as final resting places.


- 
- Being aware of the context where encounters and exchanges take place has to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

# COMMERCIALISATION

MIND THE GAP!

**Although specific ICH practices, for example crafts, are dependent on commercial activities, unethical economic exploitation can seriously harm the viability of these elements.**

Thanks to their visibility, museum can contribute to economic sustainability of ICH practitioners, especially within the crafts field. Many museum souvenir shops already support local economies and contribute to the promotion of ICH manifested in objects. Nevertheless, it is important to prevent over-commercialisation, which can easily happen if left to market forces. Over-commercialisation is closely connected with loss of meaning, especially when its only purpose becomes the generation of economic benefit for a very restricted part of the community.

- 
- Emphasising the different functions and values ICH has for CGIs as well as societies worldwide will have a positive impact in diminishing the exclusively economic side of the development paradigm.

## Ethical Principle 7

The communities, groups and individuals who create intangible cultural heritage should benefit from the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from such heritage, and particularly from its use, research, documentation, promotion or adaptation by members of the communities or others.

# THE INTANGIBLE DIMENSION OF TANGIBLE HERITAGE

Intangible cultural heritage ‘... means the **practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills** – as well as the **instruments, objects, artefacts** and cultural spaces associated therewith...’

Article 2 of the 2003 Convention

The concept of intangible cultural heritage is a complex one, and debates continue to sprout on various issues pertaining to it. One of the biggest misunderstandings is the difference between intangible cultural heritage and the ‘intangible dimension of tangible heritage’<sup>30</sup>.

The intangible dimension of tangible heritage may, for example, refer to values, memories, or testimonies associated with heritage sites or museum objects. It is indeed important to value oral history, historic sites, cherish memories or remember memorial days but these actions are not identified as ICH. Be aware, do not confuse these intangibles with ICH.

Be sure to answer these questions before targeting something as ICH:

- ▶ Have the CGIs been actively involved in identifying something to be ICH? ----->
- ▶ Is it a living heritage that is being practiced? ----->
- ▶ Is it transmitted within at least two generations? ----->

YES / NO



# AUTHENTICITY

MIND THE GAP!

[...] 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 [...]

Article 2 of the 2003 Convention

Although the concept of authenticity is commonly connected with World Heritage sites, it also touches upon the notion of universal value and authenticity within the tangible cultural sector, and thus also the museum field.

While sites and objects have to comply with the classification of uniqueness and timelessness, ICH is constantly changing in its manifold representations. There is no better or worse ICH, every practice and belief is precious to its bearers.

- 
- In working with CGIs related to ICH practices, avoid any tendency to classification and competency. Instead support the very diverse, dynamic and ever-evolving expressions of ICH.

## Ethical Principle 8

The dynamic and living nature of intangible cultural heritage should be continuously respected. Authenticity and exclusivity should not constitute concerns and obstacles in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.

Always keep in mind: 'When safeguarding ICH, the widest possible participation and active involvement of CGIs is the right thing to do'.

Do a quick check: Evaluate your actions on the basis of the 2003 Convention Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage



# REFERENCE FRAMEWORK, KEY TEXTS AND NETWORKS IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY



## INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MUSEUMS (ICOM)

pp.112-113

Museum definition

2004 Seoul Resolution

Resolution on museums and  
intangible cultural heritage

Code of Ethics

Object ID



NEMO

WORLDWIDE

p.116

MUSEUMS

SUSTAINABLE



## UNESCO

pp.116-119

### 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

Basic Texts

Basics of  
the 2003  
Convention

Operational  
Directives

Ethical  
Principles

Overall Results  
Framework



ICH  
NGO Forum



Global network  
of facilitators &  
Global capacity-  
building  
programme



## EUROPE

pp.114-115

The **Treaty on European Union** states that the Union shall 'ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced'.

Focus on heritage & participatory governance, integrated approach, and cultural diversity in a social Europe

Network  
of European  
Museum  
organisations

**2005**

Convention on the  
Value of Cultural  
Heritage for Society  
(Faro Convention)  
*Council of Europe*

**2014**

The Council of the European Union cites  
'cultural heritage as a strategic resource  
for a sustainable Europe'

*Tangible and intangible (and digital) cultural  
heritage are side by side in a vision on heritage  
as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe*

**2019**

Resolution – Safeguarding and enhancing  
intangible cultural heritage in Europe  
*Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly*

## INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

## DEVELOPMENT GOALS

UN Agenda 2030 > 17 goals to transform our world

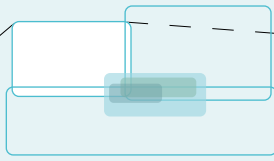
**1972**

World Heritage Convention

**2015**

Recommendation  
concerning the Protection  
and Promotion of  
Museums and Collections,  
their Diversity, and their  
Role in Society





## INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MUSEUMS (ICOM)



### International Council of Museums

ICOM is an international organisation of museums and museum professionals which is committed to the research, conservation, continuation and communication to society of the world's natural and cultural heritage, present and future, tangible and intangible.

[icom.museum/en/about-us/missions-and-objectives/](http://icom.museum/en/about-us/missions-and-objectives/)



### Museum definition

Since ICOM's creation in 1946, the ICOM definition has played a central role for museums and museum professionals, and became a reference in the international museum community.

According to the ICOM Statutes, adopted by the 22nd General Assembly in Vienna, Austria, on 24 August, 2007:

**'A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.'**

In the aftermath of the 2016 ICOM General Conference in Milan, a new Standing Committee has been appointed to study the current definition. The Committee on Museum Definition, Prospects and Potentials (MDPP, 2017-2019) explores the shared but also the profoundly dissimilar conditions, values and practices of museums in diverse and rapidly changing societies. Combining broad dialogue across the membership with dedicated expert fora, the Committee is addressing the ambiguous and often contradictory trends in society, and the subsequent new conditions, obligations and possibilities for museums.

[icom.museum/en/activities/standards-guidelines/museum-definition](http://icom.museum/en/activities/standards-guidelines/museum-definition)





### Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO)

NEMO is an independent network of national museum organisations representing the museum community of the member states of the Council of Europe. Together, NEMO's members speak for more than 30.000 museums in 43 countries across Europe.

[www.ne-mo.org/about-us/who-we-are.html](http://www.ne-mo.org/about-us/who-we-are.html)



### 2004 Seoul Resolution

The ICOM *Seoul Resolution* on museums and intangible cultural heritage, was adopted by ICOM's 21<sup>st</sup> General Assembly (2004 – Seoul, Korea). It raised awareness about the importance of intangible cultural heritage for cultural diversity, and gathered 1.462 participants from more than one hundred countries. One of the long-term

outcomes of the Conference is the *International Journal of Intangible Heritage*, published by the National Folk Museum of Korea since 2006.

[icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ICOMs-Resolutions\\_2004\\_Eng.pdf](http://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ICOMs-Resolutions_2004_Eng.pdf)



### Code of Ethics

The ICOM *Code of Ethics for Museums* is a reference text setting standards for the practice of museum professionals. It sets minimum professional standards and encourages the recognition of values shared by the international museum community. This reference tool provides guidance and is presented as a series of principles supported by guidelines detailing expected professional practice.

[icom.museum/en/activities/standards-guidelines/code-of-ethics](http://icom.museum/en/activities/standards-guidelines/code-of-ethics)



**'Museums are responsible for the tangible and intangible natural and cultural heritage. Governing bodies and those concerned with the strategic direction and oversight of museums have a primary responsibility to protect and promote this heritage as well as the human, physical and financial resources made available for that purpose.'**

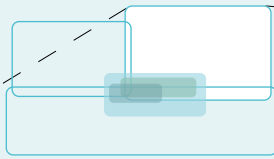
### Object ID

Object Identification is an internationally recognized standard conceived to document and identify cultural goods.

[icom.museum/en/activities/standards-guidelines/objectid/](http://icom.museum/en/activities/standards-guidelines/objectid/)







## EUROPE

### Treaty on European Union

In legal perspective, cultural policy and care for cultural heritage are the responsibility of the Member States. Even so, Article 3(3) of the *Treaty on European Union* states that the Union shall 'ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced'.

[eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A12012M/TXT](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A12012M/TXT)



### 2005 Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention)

*Council of Europe*

The 2005 *Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society* defines an all-embracing framework ensuring that cultural heritage has its rightful place at the centre of a new vision for sustainable development.

It recognises that cultural heritage is valuable for its own sake and for the contribution it can make to other policies. It promotes a wider understanding of heritage and its relationship to communities and society.

The convention highlights the link between cultural heritage and the development of a peaceful and stable society, founded

on respect for human rights, the rule of law and democracy.

[www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/0900001680083746](http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/0900001680083746)



**'A heritage community consists of people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations.'**

### 2019 Resolution – Safeguarding and enhancing intangible cultural heritage in Europe

*Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly*

Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly votes the resolution *Safeguarding and enhancing intangible cultural heritage in Europe*.

[assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=26468&lang=en](http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=26468&lang=en)



## 2014

### The **Council of the European Union**

cites 'cultural heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe'.

Tangible and intangible (and digital) cultural heritage are side by side in a vision on heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe:

[eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52014XG0614%2808%29](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52014XG0614%2808%29)



'Cultural heritage consists of the resources inherited from the past in all forms and aspects – tangible, intangible and digital (born digital and digitized), including monuments, sites, landscapes, skills, practices, knowledge and expressions of human creativity, as well as collections conserved and managed by public and private bodies such as museums, libraries and archives. It originates from the interaction between people and places through time and it is constantly evolving. These resources are of great value to society from a cultural, environmental, social and economic point of view and thus their sustainable management constitutes a strategic choice for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.'

## > *Focus on heritage and participatory governance, integrated approach and cultural diversity in a social Europe*

**2014** – The Council of the European Union calls for participatory governance of cultural heritage in their Council conclusions.

[eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52014XG1223\(01\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52014XG1223(01))



**2015** – The European Parliament adopts the resolution *Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe*.

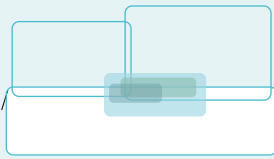
[www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2015-0293\\_EN.html](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2015-0293_EN.html)



**2017** – The Rome Declaration identified the preservation of cultural heritage, together with the promotion of cultural diversity, as an element of a social Europe.

[www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/03/25/rome-declaration/](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/03/25/rome-declaration/)





## WORLDWIDE

### MUSEUMS

### INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

#### Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

##### UN Agenda 2030: 17 goals to transform our world

The SDGs are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They were adopted by world leaders in September 2015 at an historic UN Summit and then entered into force until 2030. The SDGs address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate, environmental degradation, prosperity, and peace and justice. The Goals interconnect and in order to leave no one behind, it is important that we achieve each Goal and target by 2030.

[www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/](http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/)



## UNESCO 1/2

#### 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

The Preamble of the Convention positions the importance of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) as a mainspring of cultural diversity and as a guarantee for sustainable development. The Convention came about after the analysis that globalisation and social transformation often create situations in which intangible heritage declines or disappears, given that there is a lack of resistance and means of help that can protect and strengthen ICH in these circumstances.

[ich.unesco.org/en/convention](http://ich.unesco.org/en/convention)



#### Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention

The *Basic Texts* are conceived as a practical tool for all those concerned – government officials, policy makers, NGOs and international organizations – to better understand the functioning of the 2003 Convention to ensure optimum implementation.

They are periodically revised to reflect the resolutions of the General Assembly of the States Parties to the Convention.

[ich.unesco.org/doc/src/2003\\_Convention\\_Basic\\_Texts-2018\\_version-EN.pdf](http://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/2003_Convention_Basic_Texts-2018_version-EN.pdf)



## Operational Directives

The text of the Convention is unchangeable. The *Operational Directives* are the adjustable and dynamic tools for making the Convention work in its implementation. Article 7 of the Convention stipulates that one of the functions of the Committee is to prepare and submit to the General Assembly for approval Operational Directives for the implementation of the Convention.

The General Assembly adopted for the first time the Operational Directives in June 2008, and amended them in June 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016 and 2018. It will continue to complete and revise them in future meetings.

Among other things, the Operational Directives indicate the procedures to be followed for inscribing intangible heritage on the lists of the Convention, the provision of international financial assistance, the accreditation of non-governmental organizations to act in an advisory capacity to the Committee, or the involvement of communities in implementing the Convention.

[ich.unesco.org/en/directives](http://ich.unesco.org/en/directives)



## Basics of the 2003 Convention

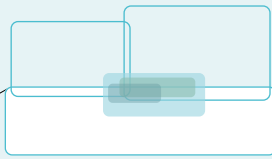
According to the definition in the UNESCO 2003 Convention, the intangible cultural heritage concerns practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills, transmitted from generation to generation, and constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature, and their history.

The Convention sums up that ICH is manifested inter alia in the following domains:

- A. oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage;
- B. performing arts;
- C. social practices, rituals and festive events;
- D. knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe;
- E. traditional craftsmanship.

The ICH definition of UNESCO concludes with the words that 'consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development.'

**'Safeguarding' 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.'**



## UNESCO 2/2

### Ethical Principles

The *Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage* represent a set of overarching aspirational principles that are widely accepted as constituting good practices for governments, organizations and individuals directly or indirectly affecting intangible cultural heritage in order to ensure its viability, thereby recognizing its contribution to peace and sustainable development.

These Ethical Principles are intended to serve as a basis for the development of specific codes of ethics and tools adapted to local and sectoral conditions, complementary to the Convention text and the Operational Directives, the implementation of the Convention and national legislative frameworks.

[ich.unesco.org/en/ethics-and-ich-00866](http://ich.unesco.org/en/ethics-and-ich-00866)



### Overall Results Framework

The *Overall Results Framework* for monitoring the global implementation and outcomes of the 2003 Convention has been launched in 2018. To this aim, it monitors eight thematic areas, such as 'transmission and education', 'engagement of communities,

groups and individuals as well as other stakeholders', 'policies (...)'.

[ich.unesco.org/en/overall-results-framework-00984](http://ich.unesco.org/en/overall-results-framework-00984)

[ich.unesco.org/doc/src/Information\\_and\\_exchange\\_session\\_ORF-EN.pdf](http://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/Information_and_exchange_session_ORF-EN.pdf)



### Global network of facilitators & Capacity-building programme

The facilitators network is a dedicated and competent partner for countries and stakeholders that seek guidance and training for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. This network is trained by UNESCO and supports countries to

safeguard intangible cultural heritage and harness its potential for sustainable development, while promoting broad public knowledge and support for the 2003 Convention.

[ich.unesco.org/en/facilitator](http://ich.unesco.org/en/facilitator)





## 1972 World Heritage Convention

The 1972 Convention concerns the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. This Convention is probably the best-known international instrument regarding heritage, famous for its World Heritage List.

Its most significant feature is that it links together in a single document the concepts of nature conservation and the preservation of cultural properties. The convention recognizes the ways in which people interact with nature, and the fundamental need to preserve the balance between the two.

[whc.unesco.org](http://whc.unesco.org)



## 2015 Recommendation concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity, and their Role in Society

This Recommendation, formally adopted at the 38th session of the General Conference on 17 November 2015, originated from the desire to supplement and extend the application of standards and principles laid down in existing international instruments referring to the place of museums, and to their related roles and responsibilities. This issue was increasingly called for, noting especially that the last international instrument wholly dedicated to museums dates to 1960.

[unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/museums/recommendation-on-the-protection-and-promotion-of-museums-and-collections](http://unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/museums/recommendation-on-the-protection-and-promotion-of-museums-and-collections)



## ICH NGO Forum

NGO's – numerous – accredited under the UNESCO 2003 Convention have set up a (global) ICH NGO Forum since 2009, aiming at fostering deliberation and cooperation processes among NGOs, as well as offering a contact point for third parties. The Forum is developed as a platform for sharing information and experiences internationally, and as a general programme for NGOs to engage in ongoing networking and skills sharing at a regional and national level.

[www.ichngoforum.org](http://www.ichngoforum.org)



## ABOUT THE COLLABORATION FROM WHICH THIS BOOK ORIGINATED

### **The Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project**

Between 2017 and 2020 the *Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project* (IMP) explored the variety of approaches, interactions and practices on intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in museums. It sought to explore the contact zones where the safeguarding of living heritage and museums connect to each other. It aimed to grow cooperation and learning networks around museums and ICH in Europe and abroad.

The initiative grew out of the emerging field of intangible cultural heritage. In the dynamics around the UNESCO 2003 *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage*, experiences and challenges often reveal themselves when shared by others. Alongside possibilities for exchange and learning, it also enables the creation of collaborative platforms where shared barriers can be tackled, or development perspectives may be cultivated, by joining forces.

Amongst many issues faced, one recurrent theme is the relationship between ICH and museums, especially in the European context. Museums are paramount in the heritage sector(s) across Europe, of course, playing vital roles in the heritage care being developed, from the very local context up to national levels. It is no surprise then that the question of the museum's role in living 'intangible' heritage is being raised.

Europe being itself a forum for international cooperation and development, the *Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project* soon took shape. A networking platform involving a multitude of experiences was initiated through a partnership of NGOs accredited to the 2003 Convention. Not much later, three crucial international networking partners in the museum field and from the ICH field associated and joined the process.

## **Partners**

- Workshop intangible heritage Flanders | in Dutch: Werkplaats immaterieel erfgoed (Belgium) | [www.immaterieelerfgoed.be](http://www.immaterieelerfgoed.be)
- Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage | in Dutch: Kenniscentrum Immaterieel Erfgoed Nederland (the Netherlands) [www.immaterieelerfgoed.nl](http://www.immaterieelerfgoed.nl)
- MCM-CFPCI | Maison des Cultures du Monde-Centre Français du Patrimoine Culturel Immatériel (France) [www.maisonsdesculturesdumonde.org](http://www.maisonsdesculturesdumonde.org)
- SIMBDEA | Società Italiana per la Museografia e I beni Demoetnoantropologici (Italy) | [www.simbdea.it](http://www.simbdea.it)
- VMS | Verband der Museen der Schweiz, supported by the Bundesamt für Kultur (Switzerland) | [www.museums.ch](http://www.museums.ch)

## **Associated partners**

- ICOM | International Council of Museums | [icom.museum](http://icom.museum)
- NEMO | Network of European Museum Organisations | [www.ne-mo.org](http://www.ne-mo.org)
- ICH NGO FORUM | the international platform of NGOs accredited to the 2003 Convention | [www.ichngoforum.org](http://www.ichngoforum.org)

## THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AND MUSEUMS PROJECT IS ...

### ... the Museums & ICH Toolbox (including this book)

The Museums & ICH Toolbox provides museum professionals with inspirational and pragmatic methodological tools for engaging with safeguarding living heritage. Over the course of the project, in co-creation with the event participants, practical guidelines, recommendations and brainstorming exercises are developed as part of the toolbox.

### ... [www.ICHandmuseums.eu](http://www.ICHandmuseums.eu)

[www.ICHandmuseums.eu](http://www.ICHandmuseums.eu) is the online sharing platform for (practical) knowledge and knowhow on the intersection of ICH and museums. It provides rich resources of assembled experience and expertise evolving out of the IMP. Aside from the Toolbox, the website bundles all information produced throughout the IMP process: event information, texts and presentations, inspiring examples and ideas, case studies, a bibliography on intangible heritage and museums, ...

### ... five contemporary co-creations

To stimulate the development of innovative practice experiences and offer future inspiration for museums to engage in living heritage, the IMP project provides incentives for a series of contemporary (co-)creations or performances by ICH-communities, groups or practitioners in interaction with a museum.

### ... five international conferences and expert meetings

From 2017 until 2019, five seminars explored possible connections with, angles on and points of convergence between museums and the safeguarding of living heritage.

To this end, each session was designed to address another 'key challenge' that museums as well as ICH practices are facing today. Each of the meetings were comprised of a two-day program, including introductory lectures, keynotes, workshops, position papers, debates, Q&A with ICH-practitioners, debate and reflection, ... around one of the five key challenges addressed:

**ICH, museums ... and diversity**

@ Museum Rotterdam (the Netherlands) — 7-8 November 2017

**ICH, museums ... and participation**

@ Museo internazionale delle marionette Antonio Pasqualino  
(Palermo, Italy) — 27-28 February 2018

**ICH, museums ... urbanized society**

@ Alpines Museum der Schweiz (Berne, Switzerland)  
25-26 September 2018

**ICH, museums ... and innovation**

@ Cité internationale de la tapisserie (Aubusson, France)  
5-6 February 2019

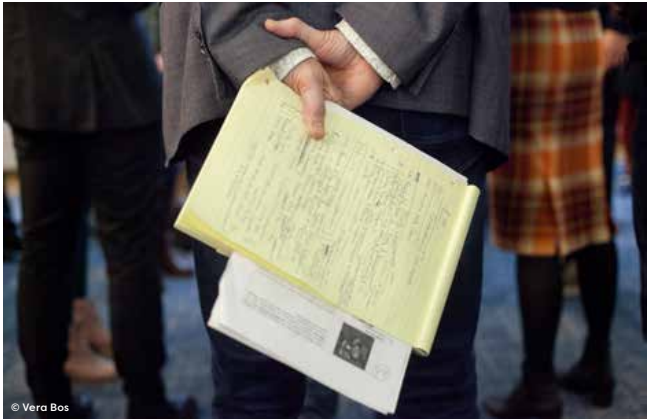
**ICH, museums ... and cultural policies**

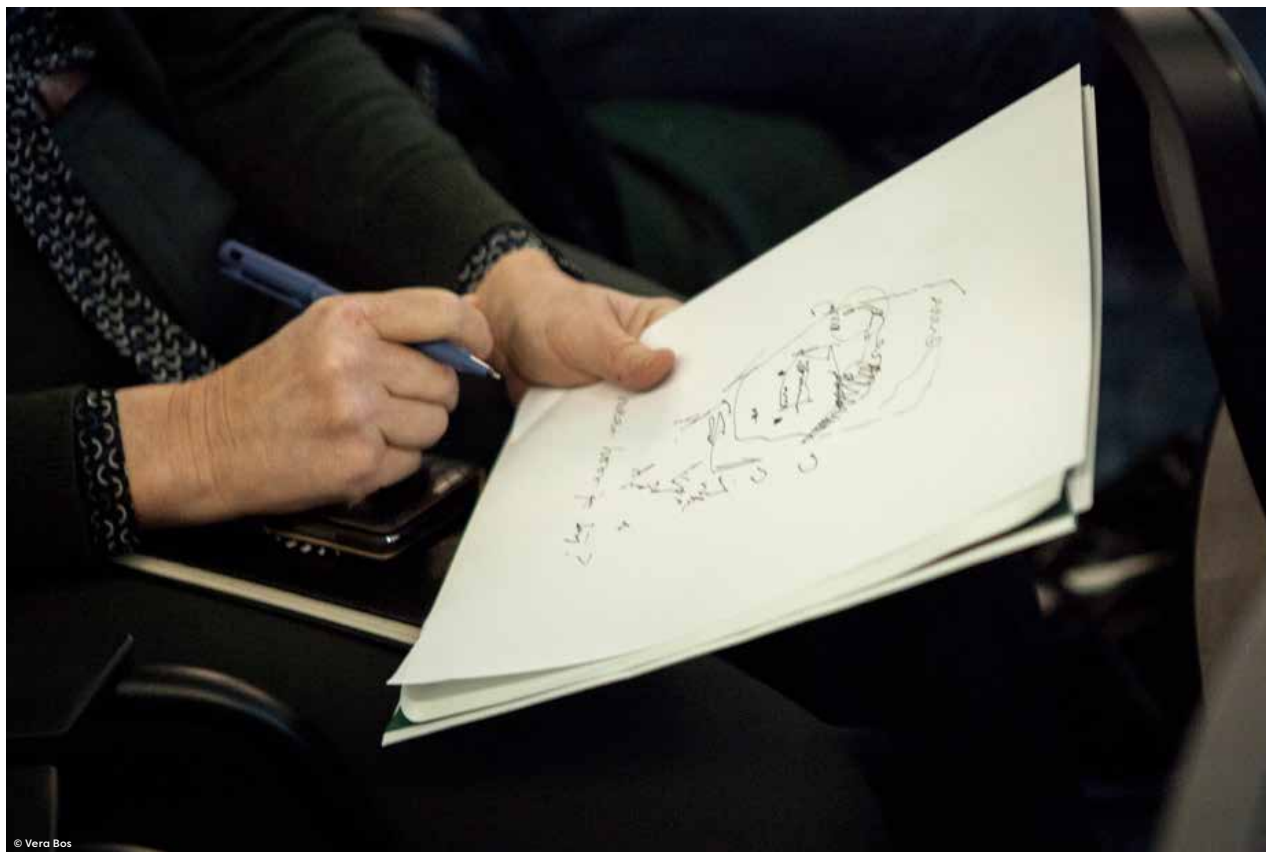
@ Hof van Busleyden (Mechelen, Belgium) — 7-8 May 2019

**... a concluding symposium on intangible heritage and museums**

Concluding the project, the international Symposium "Museums and intangible heritage: towards a third space in the heritage sector" (26 February 2020 – Brussels, BE) brings future perspectives and recommendations.







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- 30 See also the contribution by Marc Jacobs earlier in this book on p. 47.





This publication is part of the *Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project (IMP)*.  
[www.ICHandmuseums.eu](http://www.ICHandmuseums.eu)

#### IMP PROJECT PARTNERS



Verband der Museen der Schweiz  
 Association des musées suisses  
 Associazione dei musei svizzeri  
 Swiss Museums Association



#### IMP ASSOCIATED PARTNERS



#### MAIN FUNDING AND SUPPORT

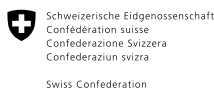


Co-funded by the  
 Creative Europe Programme  
 of the European Union



The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

#### ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AND FUNDING THANKS TO



Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA  
 Federal Office of Culture FOC



Werkplaats immaterieel erfgoed | Workshop Intangible Heritage Flanders (BE), Kenniscentrum Immaterieel Erfgoed Nederland | Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage (NL), Maison des Cultures du Monde – Centre français du patrimoine culturel immatériel (FR), Società Italiana per la museografia e i beni demotnoantropologici (IT) and Verband der Museen der Schweiz | Swiss Museums Association (CH)

#### WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO

- the members of the IMP Steering Group | Séverine Cachat, Sophie Elpers, Stefan Koslowski, Valentina Lapicciarella Zingari, Cornelia Meyer, Eveline Seghers and Evdokia Tsakiridis;
- the members of the IMP Think Tank | Hendrik Henrichs, Marc Jacobs, Jorijn Neyrinck, Rosario Perricone, Florence Pizzorni, Isabelle Raboud-Schüle and Albert van der Zeijden;
- the representatives of the IMP associated partners | Afşin Altaylı and France Desmarais (ICOM – International Council of Museums), Diego Gradis, Meg Nömgård and Reme Sakr (ICH NGO Forum), David Vuillaume and Julia Pagel (NEMO – Network of European Museum Organisations);
- the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Section;
- all the participants to the IMP events;
- Siska Sarlet, Peter Tielemans and Inge Deketelaere (Karakters);
- Marijke Deweerdt (FOLIO atelier).

**Museums and intangible cultural heritage:  
towards a *third space* in the heritage sector**

A companion to discover transformative  
heritage practices for the 21<sup>st</sup> century

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**PUBLISHER**

Werkplaats immaterieel erfgoed  
Sint-Jakobsstraat 36, 8000 Bruges (BE)

2020

**EDITORS**

Chris Dunkley, Geert Van der Hallen  
controltaaldelete.be

**GRAPHIC DESIGN & ILLUSTRATIONS**

karakters.be

**PRINTING**

Stevens Print nv



ISBN 978 94 6400 720 6

D/2020/14895/01

NUR 612



“

As a European network of museums we realised that we do not have much knowledge and experience when it comes to working with intangible heritage. Through engaging in the *Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project*, we wanted to change this and make intangible heritage more visible to the museums in Europe. Most national museum organisations do not have intangible heritage as a priority on their agendas, which means that there is still a lot to do to fully tap the potential that museums gain when engaging with intangible heritage!

NEMO – Network of European Museum Organisations

“

As ICH NGO Forum of accredited NGOs under the UNESCO 2003 Convention, we are committed to the collaboration in the *Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project*. One of the core missions of the Forum is to promote intangible cultural heritage safeguarding experiences and strengthen competences, expertise and capacities by involving ICH NGOs and other relevant actors and stakeholders. Museums undeniably are foremost relevant actors to join the efforts being made worldwide towards the safeguarding of living heritage. We hereby warmly welcome the concrete steps that the project has taken in contributing to unfolding ‘lighter ways for sharing safeguarding experiences’ in a fascinating dialogue with the museums.

ICH NGO Forum

# MUSEUMS AND INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

## TOWARDS A THIRD SPACE IN THE HERITAGE SECTOR

This book explores the contact zones and immersion of the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage within museums' work. It explores the variety of approaches, interactions and practices that blossom when intangible cultural heritage and museums connect. It promotes reciprocal understanding of different methods, possibilities and approaches, and it fosters fruitful interfaces of museums' activity with intangible heritage to be taken into further elaboration in the future.

IMP

INTANGIBLE &  
CULTURAL MUSEUMS  
HERITAGE PROJECT