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JW Power

**Femme á l'ombrelle (woman with umbrella)**

1926

Oil on canvas

130 X 79cms

Edith Power Bequest 1961, University Art Collection, Chau Chak Wing  
Museum, the University of Sydney

PW1961.83

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial: University museums and collections moving beyond Covid-19 with reflection and analysis <i>Andrew Simpson</i>	65
Digging up the remains of King Oedipus: Performance memories at University of New South Wales <i>Paul Bentley and Jonathan Bollen</i>	70
Stealing Culture: Digital Repatriation (A Case Study) <i>Nicole M. Crawford and Darrell D. Jackson</i>	77
How Does a Museum Achieve Basic Functions without Architecture: Case and Thinking of the Shanghai University Museum <i>Ji Guo</i>	84
Learning in university museums: for what? (on examples of institutions of higher education In Ukraine) <i>Svitlana Muravska</i>	99
Using different learning methodologies and tools to exploit the educational impact of a University Art Collection: a pilot phase at Roma Tre University (IT) <i>Antonella Poce, Maria Rosaria Re, Francesca Amenduni, Carlo De Medio, Mara Valente</i>	107
Attracting the General Public: the Kokugakuin University Museum's experience <i>Rira Sasaki</i>	118
Archaeology Museums at the University of Sydney and MSU Baroda, a cross-cultural comparison <i>Sareeta Zaid</i>	132
University Museums from Home: observations on responses to the impact of Covid-19 <i>Elisabetta Cioppi, Nuria García Gutiérrez, Eilidh Lawrence, Yi-Jung Lin, Marta Lourenço, Nathalie Nyst, Ingrid Frederick Obregon, Mark Osterman, Douglas Perkins, Mariana Santamaría, Andrew Simpson and Sian Tiley-Nel</i>	138

## EDITORIAL

# University museums and collections moving beyond Covid-19 with reflection and analysis

**Andrew Simpson**

On the 14th and 15th of September, 2000 there was a conference at the University of Glasgow organised by University Museums in Scotland with the title “The Death of Museums?” The provocation was only slightly diminished by the question mark, as an opening speaker suggested that they should be allowed to die, albeit in the sense by which museums were traditionally considered at the time. The conference attracted a small international audience and considered issues around the question of whether university museums should be considered a resource or a liability. A few days later on the 18th and 19th of September the Finnish Cultural Centre in Paris hosted an international seminar on The Management of University Museums on behalf of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The premise of the meeting was the changing needs of teaching and research and how museums and collections within the sector would need to change their practices and adjust to a new higher education reality.

These two meetings both predated the formation of UMAC as an International Committee of ICOM, and many of the people who attended one of the meetings also attended the other. There has been a clear and consistent memory of a sense of excitement and aspiration for change that attendees felt at the time. This has come through in the series [UMAC Origins](#), one of the YouTube series initiated by UMAC during our pandemic year, when face to face meetings of colleagues were replaced by ubiquitous communication technologies such as zoom. Most of those people who attended these two pre-UMAC meetings recall that there was much animated informal discussion between formal presentations. There was much comparison of familiar issues and problems working in university museums, those who were there expressed surprise to discover that people in similar jobs on either sides of the world experienced similar problems. There was a feeling that the changing nature of higher education was threatening the future existence of material collections in the sector. There was also a shared feeling that university leaders didn't understand how museums and collections could be central to university business. That gulf between leadership and university museum professionals perhaps best captured in the title of one Vice-Chancellor's presentation in Glasgow entitled "The View from the Other Side".

More significantly, however, are the recollections of those who attended, as featured in the UMAC Origins series, when they talk about the need to do something about the predicament that university museums and collections found themselves in, globally. There was much informal discussion about what needed to be done. As a result, eventually a proposal was put forward to ICOM to form a new International Committee for university museums and collections. The proposal initially met some resistance with people arguing that individual university museums and collections would be better aligned by joining international committees based on their disciplinary speciality. Eventually, the argument that the new group should be formed along the lines of institutional setting rather than disciplinary context won out mainly because it served a perceived membership need at the time. UMAC held its first official meeting as a new International Committee of ICOM in Barcelona in 2001.

We sincerely thank all of those people who have generously discussed the early days of UMAC with us on our UMAC YouTube channel, your thoughts and reflections provide invaluable oral history source material. All organisations need a good knowledge of their history. There will be additional material added to this series in 2021.

column before (SIMPSON & LOURENÇO 2020). Much has already been written about the impact of the pandemic on higher education. ICOM has undertaken a [survey](#) of museums, it is clear that the pandemic has disrupted museum activity globally, threatening the financial viability of many and the livelihood of thousands of museum professionals. Our “[Post-Lockdown Series](#)” explored the impact on our own sector, it was another of our YouTube series. In this issue of University Museums and Collections Journal we compile some of the information shared by colleagues with the group into a paper that captures a range of different university museum and collection responses to the crisis.

Another lesson from the pandemic is that despite all of the challenges and difficulty brought about by the pandemic, there are still some remarkable new projects emerging. This is the subject of another UMAC YouTube series, “UMAC Zoom In, New Projects”. In this series we take a close forensic look at some fantastic new developments in our sector. The first of these is already on-line. Make sure you hear from Jess Castellote, the Director of the Yemisi Shyllon Museum of Art (YSMA), of the Pan-Atlantic University, Lagos. It is the first university museum in Nigeria and the 2020 winner of Apollo Magazine’s “[Museum Opening of the Year Award](#)”.

This new series also made the Editorial Board of University Museums and Collections Journal realise that we need to accommodate a new article format in the pages of the journal. Next year we will accept review articles that will allow for some incisive writing with a focus on individual projects. We will accept reviews of museums, exhibitions, programs, books, in fact anything of relevance to material collections in higher education. These review articles will be published as short essays, rather than papers structured as scientific articles, and will appear in a separate section of the journal issues.

So much for reflecting on the past trajectory of UMAC, now we report on the results of analysis that will be available in the next couple of years. Our next publishing venture for the first issue of UMACJ in 2021 will be another type of first for the journal. Your international committee has been active with project work in recent years. Between 2017 and 2019, UMAC developed the research project ‘Professionalising museum work in higher education: A global approach (P-MUS)’. The project was supported by an ICOM Special Projects grant, it resulted from a partnership between UMAC, the ICOM Committee for the Training of Personnel (ICTOP), our partners in the 2018 Miami conference the Association of Academic Museums and Galleries (AAMG, USA) and our partners for the 2021 conference the European Academic Heritage Network (Universeum).



The P-Mus project was designed to promote museological training among university museums and collections professionals worldwide. It aimed to increase the use of university museums and collections as museum training resources. To do this we compiled and analysed literature and information about professional profiles, positions and standards in university museums and collections with survey data to identify and discuss museum training content and issues specific to university museums and collections. The project included the first ever systematic survey aimed at profiling professionals of higher education museums and collections worldwide.

The [questionnaire](#) generated interesting data from some countries. Some results can be found online. It is interesting to note that arts and natural history seem to be the two most predominant types of collections in higher education according to our respondents. The demographics of those who work in university museums and collections show there was a strong influx of professionals in the first half of the last decade (2010-2014), but that the most important component of their training for working with the museums and collections of higher education was seen to be on the job learning in preference to different formal tertiary study pathways.

The survey also reveals the most common forms of professional dissatisfaction among higher education museum and collection professionals. While problems such as the lack of available resources are springs of dissatisfaction for people working in just about any type of museum, there are some points specific to higher education. Many reported being dissatisfied with the opportunity for professional advancement, this materialises a well-known and long suspected source of anxiety because of the lack of any well mapped out career pathway in higher education for museum and collection professionals. Another significant source of dissatisfaction was lack of recognition by the university hierarchy, in comparison with recognition from colleagues. This indicates that many university leadership groups still don't see the relevance of material collections to the business of their institutions. This problem is exacerbated by the revolving door of corporate-style leaders of higher education where the short-term visions of executives can't embrace the long-term perspectives of museums and collections. In many ways this is a modern reiteration of the problem identified in our UMAC Origins series. It shows that there is still a lot of advocacy work to be done as we educate the increasing number of people who queue up for the revolving door of university leadership. One of the main reasons for establishing UMAC back in the last millennium is still pertinent to the ongoing aspirations of the organisation.

2021. There was a call earlier in the year for chapters to be part of this book project. We were surprised by the large number of high quality submissions that were made in response to this call. While not all of them were strictly fixed to the theme of the P-Mus project, namely training professionals for work with university museums and collections, many of them did reveal a deep and highly varied scenario of pedagogic applications. University museums and collections are used in highly specialised training and also a diverse range of generalised educational applications. It was decided to formalise this collection of into the one work that will become a thematic issue (volume 13, no. 1) of University Museums and Collections Journal in 2021 under the title “A hub of pedagogies”. It will cover case studies from Europe, North and South America and Australasia. Because of the focus on pedagogy, this special edition will be guest edited by Alistair Kwan.

The papers in this volume are, as with the first issue of the year, a combination of ideas presented for the cancelled 2020 UMAC conference in Sydney, material previously presented in Kyoto and Tokyo and material submitted directly. Next year will see the dual innovations of thematic issues and review articles for our journal. We are also continuing to seek recognition for the journal with a range of journal indexing services.

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# Digging up the remains of King Oedipus: Performance memories at University of New South Wales

Paul Bentley and Jonathan Bollen

## Abstract

*The Sydney Opera House developed the Dennis Wolanski Library and Archives of the Performing Arts between 1973 to 1997 before dispersing it to 17 other institutions throughout Australia. In 2016, the University of NSW Library became the caretaker of 1600 boxes of research files and programs from the Dennis Wolanski Library. In collaboration with UNSW Theatre and Performance Studies, Wolanski Foundation and AusStage (the national database for Australian performance), the university established the Performance Memories Project to develop access to the collection and facilitate related research initiatives.*

*The project has created over 180,000 records for items in the collection and is considering other digital strategies. It has enabled us to zoom in on the work of individual companies and people – such as Sir Tyrone Guthrie’s production of King Oedipus, which premiered at the University of New South Wales in 1970 and has brought to the surface questions about the management of cultural heritage and research productivity.*

*This year’s research initiative, the longitudinal study, Performing Sydney, 1920–2020: Theatre Repertoire and Cultural Change, uses data analysis and visualisation to gain fresh perspectives on the prevailing historical narrative. It draws on Jonathan Bollen’s experience in data visualisation and mapping. An accompanying exhibition will open at the UNSW Library in November 2020.*

## A project forged in long-standing relationships

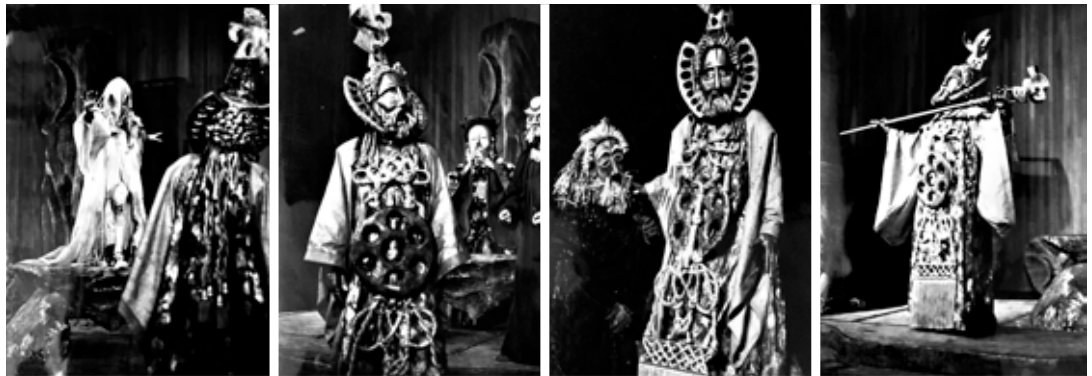


Figure 1 : King Oedipus production photos, courtesy UNSW Archives. Photographer unknown

The Performance Memories Project emerged from past cultural endeavours and long-standing relationships.

The University of New South Wales Sydney (UNSW Sydney), which traces its origins to the Sydney Mechanics' Institute of 1843, was established as an Australian public research and teaching university in 1949 (UNSW 2020). Under Professor Robert Quentin, the School of Drama at UNSW was part of a cultural hub that spawned the National Institute for Dramatic Arts, the first state theatre company, the Old Tote Theatre Company, and other initiatives (PARSONS 1995, 619–21). In 1970, the Old Tote Theatre Company opened the Sir John Clancy Auditorium at the University with a production of *King Oedipus*, directed by the eminent British director Sir Tyrone Guthrie.

The Sydney Opera House established the Dennis Wolanski Library and Archives of the Performing Arts in 1973. In the 1980s, Paul Bentley led moves to develop the library as part of a hi-tech museum at the House. In 1995, following an election, the new state government was instrumental in closing the museum project and dispersing the library collection to 17 other institutions, including the State Library of New South Wales, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Arts Centre Melbourne, and UNSW Sydney. In addition to its dispersed cultural heritage legacy, the library's endeavours drove plans for significant changes to the Sydney Opera House architecture.<sup>1</sup>

In 2016, the UNSW library<sup>2</sup>, led by Martin Borchert, became caretaker of (one of the main Dennis Wolanski Library collections - 1600 boxes of research files and programs, with related card indexes. AusStage<sup>3</sup>, the national performing arts gateway, through its lead investigator Professor Julian Meyrick, then at Flinders University, and Dr Jonathan Bollen in Theatre and Performance Studies at the UNSW School of the Arts and Media<sup>4</sup>, were important advocates for the transfer from the Seaborn Broughton and

1 Further information: the Wolanski Foundation Project [www.twf.org.au](http://www.twf.org.au)

2 UNSW Library Sydney <https://www.library.unsw.edu.au/> and <https://www.library.unsw.edu.au/about-unsw-library/exhibitions-program>

3 AusStage: The Australian Live Performance Database, Bottom of Form. <https://www.ausstage.edu.au>

4 Theatre and Performance Studies, School of the Arts and Media, UNSW Sydney, <https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/sam/our-research/research-areas/theatre-performance>

Walford Foundation, where it was being held in precarious circumstances.

The Wolanski Foundation, connected to the collection during the past five decades, became a partner in developing plans to improve access to the collection and make it available for research.

This digital humanities project has involved work on micro and macro aspects of Australian cultural history. We have mined a single production and its legacy while laying the ground for wider research through data management, digitisation, and exhibitions. Our focus on *King Oedipus* indicates the cultural significance of the collection to UNSW's contribution to the arts.

### **Sir Tyrone Guthrie and the *King Oedipus* production**

The production of *King Oedipus* at UNSW in 1970 was a milestone production with connections to all the partners.

Sir Tyrone Guthrie had gained his reputation as a director on British, Canadian and American stages. He had a strong connection to many universities. His campaign for the development of repertory theatre in the United States led to the establishment of the Guthrie Theatre at University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, where he served as artistic director from 1963 to 1966.

He had worked previously in Australia. In 1949, the Australian prime minister, Ben Chifley, had commissioned him to report on the readiness of Australia for a national theatre (PARSONS 1995, 255–6). In 1965, he was asked by the University of Western Australia to advise on the construction of its Octagon Theatre. His relations with Professor Robert Quentin at University of New South Wales and John Sumner at Melbourne Theatre Company were indicators of his influence on universities as catalysts for professional theatre companies (FORSYTH 1976).

In 1969, the University of New South Wales Drama Foundation, with financial support from the Australia Council, arranged for Guthrie to direct a production of *King Oedipus* for the Old Tote Theatre Company.

Sophocles' play *Oedipus* had been a Guthrie obsession. He regarded it as the best constructed play ever written, a universal drama combined all the arts.<sup>5</sup> Set in Thebes at the time of a plague, it offers philosophical puzzles about identity, fate and social taboos. John Lewin, who wrote the version of the play for Australia, was convinced that his fourth production was to be, for Guthrie, 'a deeply personal and valedictory statement – if spared' (FORSYTH 2017, 312).

The local production, with actors Ron Haddrick (Oedipus), Ruth Cracknell (Jocasta), James Condon (Creon) and Ronald Falk (as the soothsayer Teiresias) in the lead roles, drew mixed reviews in Sydney. HG Kippax was disappointed but urged everyone to see it. It was a conception of “perhaps the greatest work of pessimism ever written, staged with sustained grace and beauty” (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 August 1970). He blamed the acoustics, among other factors, for his disappointment. *The Bulletin’s* provocative Brian Hoad, however, was scathing. He saw it as a “tragedy transmuted into something more like vaudeville comedy” (*The Bulletin*, 29 August 1970). Yoshi Tosa’s settings and costumes were highly praised by many who saw the production.<sup>6</sup>

Acclaim for the production, some of it tempered, grew when it travelled to Canberra, Melbourne, Perth and Adelaide. Leonard Radic, reviewing a performance at the Princess Theatre, Melbourne, described it as a “bleak, sombre, ritualistic production, which, from its smoky start to its quite solemn finish, is utterly compelling... Those who appreciate good theatre, as distinct from easy entertainment, should see it”. On the other hand, Gerald Mayhead, in *Tragedy Without Tears*, wrote “Tyrone Guthrie’s production of theatre’s most perfect tragedy touches the intellect without ever touching the heart, and so leaves its audience wiser if unmoved.”<sup>7</sup> For one reviewer, the production sang in a theatre which Guthrie helped design, the Octagon Theatre at the University of Western Australia (quoted in FORSYTH 1976, 323).

The reaction to the production tells a story about Australian critics, Australian audiences and their evolving tastes, important elements to be explored in the 80,000 research files of the Dennis Wolanski Library collection (BENTLEY 2019-2020).

Professor Roger Covell (1931-2019) composed the music for the production. Covell established music as a discipline at UNSW in 1966, formed the UNSW Opera in 1968, and co-founded the Australia Ensemble, the resident UNSW chamber group. After publishing his landmark book, *Australia’s Music: Themes of a New Society* (COVELL 1967), Covell recommended in his 1970 report, *Music in Australia: Needs and Prospects* (COVELL et al. 1970) that libraries of the performing arts be established at the Sydney Opera House and other Australian performing arts centres under construction or planned. The Dennis Wolanski Library and Archives of the Performing Arts was established three years later, in May 1973.

During the opening season of the Sydney Opera House in September 1973,

6 Clippings in Dennis Wolanski Library Old Tote Theatre Company Research File at UNSW Library.

7 Clippings in Old Tote Theatre Company records at National Institute of Dramatic Art, with source and date not indicated.

UNSW played an important role in presenting the first exhibition at the House, *All the World's a Stage*. Sir Phillip Baxter, UNSW vice chancellor (1953-1969), had led the final stages of construction and the launch of the Sydney Opera House as its chairman from 1969 to 1975. Professor Robert Quentin from the UNSW School of Drama served on the exhibition organising committee. Dr Margaret Williams undertook much of the research for the Australian content. The exhibition included selected masks and costumes from the *King Oedipus* production, later donated to the Dennis Wolanski Library.

Archival records, costumes, and other material were preserved after the final performance of *Oedipus* in 1971, but they are now scattered in the National Institute of Dramatic Arts, UNSW Archives, Dennis Wolanski Library, Australian Broadcasting Corporation and Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, among other institutions. Tracking them down has helped us gain a better understanding of what happened.

The process has emphasised the important work of libraries, archives, museums, theatre companies, cultural centres and scholars in preserving and making accessible the history. But it has also brought to the surface cultural heritage anomalies. Institutional collection policies change over time and are sometimes open to idiosyncratic personal interpretation. Mistakes are made and can be perpetuated in cataloguing systems. Despite powerful discovery platforms such as Trove and AusStage, there have been challenges in finding material and pulling the threads of a story together. The whereabouts of the iconic Teiresias mask and costume is a mystery that remains to be solved.

### **Project plans and progress 2017-2020**

During the past few years, we have focussed on the collection, which has an international coverage with a strength on the performing arts in Australia. In assessing its significance, Professor Julian Meyrick, now at Griffith University in the School of Humanities, Languages and Social Science, has described it as a comprehensive, ordered and accessible body of information not readily available elsewhere. Without access to the collection research on performing arts in Australia would be significantly more expensive.

We have converted the card index to digital form and have nearly completed basic entries for research files and programs that had not been previously listed or indexed. We now have 180,000 records, which we plan to migrate to discovery platforms, including a new digital repository at the UNSW Library, Trove and AusStage. Digitisation plans are on the drawing board, beginning with the JC Williamson Magazine collection.



We have begun the research project *Performing Sydney, 1920–2020: Theatre Repertoire and Cultural Change*, a longitudinal study which draws on Bollen's experience in visualising theatre data (BOLLEN 2016). We will draw items from the Dennis Wolanski Library collection and data from the AusStage national database with the aim of gaining fresh perspectives on the prevailing historical narratives about Australian theatre. In creating time-maps of Sydney's theatres and data visualisations of changing patterns in repertoire and production, we hope to address persistent questions about theatre production and cultural policy: How has the development of venue infrastructure and theatre companies shaped the course of artistic innovation? How has it influenced the creation of new work? To what extent have performances been shaped by the imported productions and international developments? What has been the impact of government investment on the repertoire of performance over time? How have successive governments shaped Australian repertoire during a global flow of people, performances, technologies and ideas?

This research builds on the work of other UNSW scholars. Dr Philip Parsons (1926-1993), who joined the university's drama department in 1966, and his wife, the theatre critic and publisher Katharine Brisbane, established Currency Press, which produced the monumental collaborative publications *Entertaining Australia* (Brisbane, 1991), *Companion to Theatre in Australia* (PARSONS & CHANCE 1995), *Music and Dance in Australia* (WHITEOAK & SCOTT-MAXWELL 2003), among other reference works, histories and plays. Brisbane later formed the non-profit association Currency House, which continues to bring ideas to the surface and challenge cultural policy and practice through its quarterly publication *Platform Papers*.

Dr Bollen will present initial findings to the Performing Arts Heritage Network of the Australian Museums and Galleries Association in November 2020. Jackson Mann, Curator, Special Collections and Exhibitions at UNSW Library, will assist us in presenting the story in the UNSW library exhibition space. The exhibition will open in conjunction with the 2020 conference of the Australasian Association for Theatre, Drama and Performance, hosted by the School of the Arts and Media at UNSW.

### **The future**

The project has given us the opportunity to produce fresh ideas about Sydney performances during the past century, to support research productivity by taking steps to improve access to the collection, and address anomalies in cultural heritage and records.

Like the plague in Thebes that confronted Oedipus, the Covid-19 pandemic



has had its impact. Australian universities, including UNSW, are facing financial pressures in an uncertain environment. Some project tasks have been deferred until a review at the end of the year.

UNSW has a proud record as a driver of cultural production in Australia. Looking backwards has drawn attention to the foundations laid by many UNSW scholars and administrators. A new vision will emerge from fresh engagement with an industry in which UNSW has been a leading player.

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### Keywords

Digital humanities, Performing arts, University of New South Wales

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<sup>8</sup> Part 3, describing costumes, masks, records and other information sources in various institutions, is being prepared as a finding aid.

# Stealing Culture: Digital Repatriation (A Case Study)

Nicole M. Crawford and Darrell D. Jackson

## Abstract

*Across the globe, an intense debate has formed around repatriation of cultural artifacts from essentially Western museums and collectors. At the extremes, the dialogue surrounds whether these artifacts should be returned to their locations of origin or retained by those that currently possess the artifacts. Between the extremes is a discussion about whether artifacts could and should be digitally copied, placing one version of the artifact within the possession of the originating location and another version outside. This case study uses cultural artifacts to analyse the relationship between an American university museum and the peoples of Rapa Nui.*

## Introduction

Repatriating cultural objects exists within a spectrum that can turn into a legal and political nightmare. At one end of the repatriation spectrum is an immediate return of a cultural object from a museum to the indigenous community. At the other end is the complete rejection by a museum of all requests from the indigenous community. The 'Stealing Culture Project' looks at what could exist between the extremes.

As a case study for consideration, the University of Wyoming Art Museum (USA) holds a large collection of objects from Rapa Nui (colonially known as Easter Island) and is working collaboratively with the Father Sebastian Englert Anthropological Museum and other island stakeholders on a digital repatriation project. Questions rising from the project include: What are the legal and political issues that complicate sharing objects across borders? What are the obstacles and advantages of involving individuals who are non-indigenous by birth but are welcomed by the community? Who owns the data of digitized cultural objects?

## History of Rapa Nui

Rapa Nui is an island in the South Pacific Ocean. It sits approximately 3,700 kilometres (2,300 miles) west of the Chilean coast. The island is about 24.6 kilometres (15 ¼ miles) long by 12.3 kilometres (7 ¾ miles) at its widest point. According to Hunt (2006, 419), "The first settlers arrived from other Polynesian islands around 1200 A.D."

Rapa Nui was 'rediscovered' by Westerners in 1772 by Jacob Roggeveen of the Dutch West India Company. He named the island Paasch Eylandt, after the day of his landing, Easter Sunday (DELSING 2015). Thereafter, the island became known as Easter Island. However, the indigenous population refers to the land as Rapa Nui.

When Roggeveen landed, between 2,000 and 3,000 people formed the island's estimated population. However, Peruvian slave raiding expeditions and the introduction of European diseases in the 1860s reduced the population to 900. By the 1870s, the numbers were reduced to less than 200 and traditional rituals and cults had been replaced by Catholic ones.

Rapa Nui was annexed by Chile in 1888 as Chile, who gained independence from Spain in 1818, was attempting to increase its territory. In 1966, the Rapa Nui Indigenous population were made Chilean citizens. However, the Indigenous peoples prefer to remain Rapa Nui, Indigenous Pacific Islander, rather than an ethnic minority integrated into the Chilean nation state. The 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries have been wrought with controversy regarding

identity, recognition of land ownership, tourism, environmental sustainability, and indigenous rights.

### History of Objects at the University of Wyoming



Fig. 1: Installation view of various Rapa Nui sculptures from the University of Wyoming Art Museum collection, image courtesy of the University of Wyoming Art Museum



Fig. 2: Installation view of small Moai sculptures from the University of Wyoming Art Museum Collection, image courtesy of the University of Wyoming Art Museum

The highly unique collection of objects from Rapa Nui helped forge an exclusive interdisciplinary relationship between the University of Wyoming and the Rapa Nui. The collection of over 180 objects includes small sculptures carved from volcanic rock, stone, and wood. Most were created as honorary pieces for ancestors and were used for personal protection or in conjunction with cultural and religious practices. As far as the accession records suggest, most of the objects are not defined as ‘archaeology,’ but ethnographic items purchased from locals. Although almost all of the objects were created in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, they reflect traditional methods passed down from generation to generation as a way of preserving a culture that no longer exists as it did when the large Moai (monolithic human figures carved from compressed volcanic ash that could stand as high as 10 meters and weigh as much as 86 tonnes) were created over seven hundred years ago.

The objects were collected by William Mulloy, Jr (1917-1978), a former anthropologist at the university, and were gifted to the museum after his death. Through meetings with his grandson, we know that Mulloy’s restoration projects on the island earned him the respect of the Rapa Nui (P.A. Kelly, interview with authors, October 3, 2018). Mulloy was named Illustrious Citizen of Easter Island and the Chilean government bestowed upon him their highest civilian honour. Mulloy is the only non-Rapa Nui whose remains are interred on the island, in view of the Tahai Ceremonial Complex, one of his most important restoration projects.

### Digitization Project

The Art Museum is working with the Rapa Nui on a project to share objects and knowledge between the museum on the island and the museum at the university. Because the legally correct parties and procedures between the two countries are still being identified, repatriating these objects is ongoing. Recognizing that repatriation has been defined in the international community as an Indigenous right (United Nations 2007), both entities are working together on a sustainable situation which will set the precedence for future repatriation opportunities.

As a multi-faceted project, components involve: 3-D scanning collections in both museums (University of Wyoming Art Museum (USA) and Father Sebastian Englert Anthropological Museum (Rapa Nui)); 3-D printing objects to scale; a blind elder handling 3-D printed objects to tell their history;



Fig. 3: Student Collections Assistant, Isabel Leininger, assists in capturing a 3D image of a small sculpture from Rapa Nui, image courtesy of the University of Wyoming Art Museum

and an exhibition between the two locations of the same objects at the same time. Objects from the university museum will be digitized, allowing them to be 3-D printed on location in Rapa Nui, and vice versa. Essentially the same exhibition will occur in both locations, at separate ends of the world. The goal of exhibiting 3-D printed objects next to actual objects will demonstrate to the public that these collections are not whole and cultural collections have been dispersed across the world.

The project's involvement goes beyond the two museums and becomes an interdisciplinary, interdepartmental endeavour. At a minimum, this work involves using the resources of the University of Wyoming Digital Libraries to photograph, scan, and store the data (each 3-D scan is approximately 2GB); collaboration with the University of Wyoming Anthropology Department to access original research files and records; consultation with the university Office of Research to retain compliance to university policies; and, working with Mulloy's grandson, Phineas Kelly, (non-Rapa Nui indigenous) who is serving as the intermediary between the University of Wyoming Art Museum and various contacts on Rapa Nui (including tribal elders and museum professionals).

### Legal Issues

At the heart of the 'Stealing Culture Project' is the question of ownership. The authors critically dialogue about what it means to own or possess an object, especially when that object has cultural significance to the originator and, even more so, if that object was obtained under less than a bilateral or multilateral relationship. We consider and contrast the term ownership against the term possession. These two terms should not be considered synonymous because, under a criminal law analysis, possession is a lesser right than ownership, absent some level of consent between the party from whence the object came and the party that has gained possession.

Actions that have been historically referenced as 'archaeological explorations' or 'spoils of war' often provide fertile ground for considering the differences between ownership and possession. This critique becomes even more nuanced when the item is not simply a tangible object, but data, a replication of an original (The Bridgeman Art Library 1999). A possibility includes considering data to be an open sourced outcome and, therefore, owned by none or by all. Another possibility includes considering data as a next level iteration and, therefore, possessed and owned by whoever extracted and, ultimately, interpreted the data. However, the same critiques can be levelled against data extraction that traditionally have been levelled against tangible item removal. In other words, yet another possibility is that

the originating people or place must still have some or complete control of the data that originated from them and through them. Again, considering concerns regarding relationships and coercion, this last possibility more fully deconstructs ownership to consider a wider range of possibilities (THOMPSON 2017).

Furthermore, in considering ownership and repatriation, various cross-border considerations add to the analytical framework. Unlike the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) (1990), which provides an American legal structure to parts of Native American populations' culture found within United States' borders, this project involves the Rapa Nui's cultural artifacts, as they are possessed in tangible form or digitally inside of America's boundaries. Moreover, Rapa Nui is currently a territory of Chile and advocating for its own sovereignty. As an example, this creates a, potentially, four level cross-border conflict as an American state, perhaps Wyoming, where an object (in tangible or digital form exists) provides the first border. The second border occurs as United States Acts, laws, and regulations, provide their own mandates. At the third level, accessibility to Rapa Nui would likely run through Chile. And, at the fourth level, obviously, the island of Rapa Nui itself.

As referenced above, Rapa Nui is a Chilean territory. As such, the Law of Chile will necessarily be relevant to our analysis and engagement. Chilean law is grounded in the Continental Law tradition, a civil law-based society. This is notable because the originating country, America, is a common law-based society. Both systems are grounded in European tradition, however, the American system is grounded in the laws of England while the Chilean system is grounded in the laws of continental Europe, as the name implies.

Moreover, as a territory to Chile, Rapa Nui has its own laws and regulations. Similar to any organization or entity, these laws are organized to protect the interests of the Rapa Nui. As noted by Arthur (2018, 18), "considering the absence of mechanisms that regulate or facilitate processes of repatriation in Chile, added to a patrimonial legislation that does not know the patrimonial rights of indigenous peoples..." the Rapa Nui Repatriation Program must engage in a way that produces the most positive outcomes. This form of regulation and the administration behind this program are all legal issues we must integrate into our analysis and activities.

### **Digital Colonialism**

In the last decade museums have increasingly made their collections available online for access, especially university collections that serve as part of a public institution. When dealing with traditional artworks, such as paintings

and sculptures, and known artists, the digitization process falls under clearer copyright guidelines. However, the question remains who owns the data of the digitized objects? At the University of Wyoming, another 3D modelling project of an exhibition with contemporary artists has divided ownership. First, copyright of the artworks remains with the artists and they have granted a limited license for this use. Second, the exhibition layout remains with the Art Museum since the curatorial work was performed by the staff. Lastly, the raw data is owned by the 3D Visualization Center who captured and hosts the data. Since the Art Museum and 3D Visualization Center are part of the university, the project is essentially a partnership between the artists and the University of Wyoming.



Fig. 4: Aringa Ora (Moai), 1955, Emilio Paoa, wood, 15-1/2 x 6-1/4 x 4 inches, gift in memory of Dr. William T. Mulloy, University of Wyoming Art Museum Collection, 1978.247.93;

However, the question of who owns the digital data of cultural objects remains key. Or, more simplified, who has the right to make the choice to digitize cultural objects? For example, the British Museum made their 3D scans of Hoa Hakananai'a, the large well-known Moai sculpture in their collection, free to download for the public. Keir Winesmith and Suse Anderson (2020, 98) note, “[D]ocumenting cultural practice or cultural heritage and making that data open is not a neutral act and may not always be a good thing.” Furthermore, in response to the 2018 Restitution of African Cultural Heritage: Toward a New Relational Ethics report, Mathilde Pavis and Andrea Wallace (2019, para. 5) write that “the management of intellectual property is a cultural and curatorial prerogative, as the initial decision about whether to and what materials to digitize. These prerogatives should belong to the communities of origin.” The fear is that digitization of cultural collections becomes a new form of colonialism.

### Conclusion

In the last decade, the population on Rapa Nui has increased by 54 percent. Yet less than 50 percent of the inhabitants are of Rapa Nui descent. The influx of Chilean mainlanders and an increase in tourism has had a huge effect on the indigenous Rapa Nui culture, which speaks to the importance of this project. Through sharing resources that can be currently and easily accessed, across 7,699 kilometres (4,734 miles), both institutions are learning and educating each other. Leading to a path of future repatriation opportunities.

### Acknowledgements

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Fig 5: Capturing the digital 3D image of a moai sculpture from Rapa Nui at the University of Wyoming



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### Keywords

University museums, law, repatriation, digital, Indigenous



# How Does a Museum Achieve Basic Functions without Architecture: Case and Thinking of the Shanghai University Museum

Ji Guo

## Abstract

*Notwithstanding that the definition of museum does not specify if any permanent display needs to be included, most visitors have an impression that museum collection displays and education activities happen primarily, and only, in the exhibition hall, thus the basic function of a museum is to have its permanent display space. What if collection institutions with rich collections, but little warehouse and office space, can reasonably utilize social resources such as other venues as premises for display, research, and educational activities.*

*Shanghai University Museum (SHUM) uses the form of “lecture-study, tour-internship” to demonstrate museum’s education function and builds museum’s academic research system through the “journal-conference-consultation” model. SHUM’s series of activities, including display, research and education during the period of museum construction has provided us with another way of developing museum space while realizing the museum’s basic core functions. Furthermore, they advance the museum in its social exploration.*

*It is worth thinking how to guarantee the continual development of a museum’s basic functions and further promote the museum’s influence with resources available on and off campus, even on-line under some circumstance. SHUM may also serve as an example of the development of small-scaled museums. These overwhelmingly account for the majority of museums.*

## Introduction

Public museums come along with their modern features. There is a consensus that museums are an architecture with permanent exhibition space, notwithstanding the definition of museum given by ICOM and used in many countries. ‘A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public’, it does not specify if any permanent display needs to be included<sup>1</sup>. This is probably due to the fact that most visitors have an impression that museum collection display and education activities happen primarily, and only, in the exhibition hall, which is also the main part open to the public; thus the basic function of a museum is to have its permanent display space. The question is, can collecting institutions with rich collections, but little warehouse and office space, be considered as a museum? What if they can reasonably utilize social resources such as other venues as premises for exhibition, research, and education activities?



Fig. 1 The building for SHU Museum put into service in 2018. Image: Ji GUO

The new building of Shanghai University Museum was officially opened in 2018 (Fig. 1). In the previous 10 years, however, the museum had no space available for use (it only had one storage room for the collection and several offices), let alone a permanent exhibition hall. Like the vast majority of university museums, SHUM was facing serious staff shortage and fund inadequacy.

During the construction phase, there were no more than 5 staff for a very long period; the annual funding was only ¥120,000 (about \$20,000US), all covering daily operations, collection maintenance and exhibition production etc. As a result, the primary goal of work at the time was to strive for more social resources, achieve the basic essential functions of the museum (exhibition, education and research), establish its brand, and expand social influence as soon as possible. SHUM was able to implement these three functions by completing the following tasks: SHUM conducted a series of temporary and touring exhibitions by collaborating with our school library, other universities, museums, and even commercial sites; SHUM planned and organized museology research activities; SHUM founded and edited periodicals, interviewed and translated museum domain correlation papers, conducted topical research, and compiled related books etc. Although SHUM did not have a fixed architectural building for a long time, it was able to carry out its essential functions. Meanwhile, all these works

<sup>1</sup> For example, the ICOM's definition of a museum in 2007 is "A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public" (What is ICOM's definition of a museum?, <https://icom.museum/en/faq/what-is-icom-definition-of-a-museum/>), and China's Museum Regulations (2015) defines a museum as "Non-profit organizations registered by the registration authority" and it needs to have "fixed museum sites and exhibition rooms and collection storage places that meet national regulations" (Museum Regulations, promulgated on February 9, 2015, [http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/content/2015-03/02/content\\_9508.htm](http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/content/2015-03/02/content_9508.htm)). The above definitions all point to the museum being a permanent, non-profit institution or organization.<sup>2</sup>

have laid the foundation for SHUM in its brand building and government sponsor.

Shanghai University Museum's series of activities during the period of museum construction has provided us with another way of developing museum space while realizing the museum's basic core functions. This may be a good model for many university museums with limited space on campus and museums under construction or at the renovation stage. It is worth thinking how to guarantee the continual development of a museum's basic functions and further promote the museum's influence with resources available on and off campus, even on-line under some certain circumstance. SHUM may also be an example for small-scaled museums in their development as they overwhelmingly account for the majority in the museum business scope.

### **Theme and Collections of Shanghai University Museum**

In 2008, Shanghai University decided to build a museum with Shanghai-style culture as its theme, thus the museum has two names, Shanghai University Museum and Museum of Shanghai-style Culture. Shanghai-style culture is a type of culture named after the city of Shanghai; it is the earliest culture formed with its own modern characteristics in China, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The original intention of constructing the museum was to accumulate a few collections worthy of being handed down and related to the culture of Shanghai City where the university is located and, at the same time, to live up to its name. Another important function of the Shanghai-style Culture theme is surely to benefit some departments and majors in our university: literature, fine arts, drama, film, and music etc.

The collection work of SHUM started almost from scratch. In fact, besides very few collections allocated from some departments, most were successively collected in the first 3- or 4-years during construction. The target of collection acquisition has been placed on cultural items that were produced in the mid-19th century and oriented to the masses instead of as personalised works. It is because Shanghai-style Culture is a popular culture of modern cities (GUO 2020, 1) and it is considered as a type of culture that emerged during the transformation of modern Chinese society and culture. These collections, which used to be massively produced in batches a hundred years ago have become very scarce nowadays, especially after destruction from the political movement in the second half of the 20th century. Major sources of our collections are in the field of literature, fine arts, drama, film and music, etc., which correspond to the majors in our university mentioned above. Our collections include about 500 playbills of

plays and movies, more than 500 tabloids, more than 200 movie posters, hundreds of plays and music records, and a few representative modern literary works. All these collections were born in modern Shanghai. SHUM also collects objects related to daily life in Shanghai.

The theme of the SHUM obviously is more popular than some other highly specialized university museums; to a certain extent SHUM bears some sort of identity of “Culture Museum of Shanghai”. SHUM attaches great importance to the dissemination of urban culture and communication of local communities. “The University Museum is an important platform for university academic and cultural exchanges.” “It is no longer confined to ivory towers. It has gradually strengthened the cooperation and exchanges among countries, colleges, and localities. It will become the disseminators of community culture, urban culture, regional culture and national culture” (MA & WANG 2015, 209), the bottom-up rural perspective advocated by New Museology, as well as the multiple ways of educational communication and compromise have all been reflected in the various activities curated by SHUM.

Although SHUM has a very short history, Shanghai University is actually one of the first universities offering museology courses in contemporary China from 1978; therefore, SHUM pays much attention to academic research in the field of museology and strives to provide consulting services for the museum industry in China in terms of setting mission and position.

### **Implementation of Exhibition Function**

For a long time, SHUM did not have a fixed exhibition space, let alone a permanent display. Therefore, it needed to cooperate with various institutions inside and outside the school. Some examples were using the library for exhibition, and cooperating with other universities and social institutions etc.

In 2012, SHUM planned a picture exhibition, “The Muses are Coming - Exhibition of World’s Prestigious University Museums”. At the time, some world-renowned university museums were contacted and given the opportunity to provide us with their pictures representing exhibitions and exhibition halls, as well as introduction and mission of SHUM. Finally, Harvard Art Museums, The Art Institute of Chicago, The University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, UBC Museum of Anthropology, Victoria Gallery and Museum at University of Liverpool and several other university museums in China ended up offering us with generous resources and information. This picture exhibition not only allowed the faculty and students at Shanghai University understand the mission and significance



Fig. 2 Exhibition of World's Prestigious University Museums, a touring exhibition cooperated with Shanghai Jiaotong University. Image: Ji GUO

of our university museum, but also attracted the attention of other university museums in Shanghai. SHUM further expanded its influence of by holding touring exhibition at Shanghai Normal University Museum and C.Y. Tung Maritime Museum, Shanghai Jiao Tong University (Fig. 2). This started the exhibition exchanges among university museums in Shanghai.

More exhibition cooperation was about SHUM's collections and theme. In 2014, SHUM worked with our School of Fine Arts and the Polish Consulate in Shanghai and jointly hosted "Jewel on the Crown - Polish Poster Art Exhibition". With the support from Professor Yaochang Pan of Shanghai University, SHUM has collected 100 poster works that represent Polish urban culture. This batch of collections was exhibited at the Fudan University Museum in 2017, re-curated with the theme "Five Faces of Modernity" by the curators of Fudan University. This is a good example of collection exchange between university museums. Another example demonstrating exhibition function is another Shanghai-style culture theme-based exhibition "Boundless as the Sea and the Sky - Shanghai-style Culture in Modern China" from 2018 to 2019. This touring exhibition was held at Prince of Songkhla University in Thailand and Bosnia University in Turkey through the perspectives of "Changes in Form", "Technological Innovations", "Artistic Conception", and "Fashion". The exhibition expressed the transformation process of Chinese culture from traditional to modern, which was represented by Shanghai-style culture (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3 Shanghai-Style Culture in Modern China, a touring exhibition held in Thailand. Source: SHU Museum

In addition to the exhibition cooperation with universities at home and abroad, our local exhibitions have attracted the attention of citizens and media. In 2017, SHUM created and held a special 3-month exhibition "Shanghai Newspaper Collection" at Da Ning Music Plaza located in a downtown shopping center in Shanghai; all expenses were borne by the mall. Such exhibitions and cultural dissemination activities open to the public have attracted tens of thousands of visitors every year. For example, SHUM also worked with the Museum of FENG Zikai's Former Residence and Former Residence of BA Jin, curated exhibitions themed "FENG Zikai's Comics" and "BA Jin's Works". The overseas touring exhibition, "Boundless as the Sea and the Sky - Shanghai-style Culture in Modern China" also won the "Shanghai Museum Exhibition Promotion Excellence Award" (2019).

Exhibitions themed Shanghai City culture has won support from the society and government sectors. SHUM has received an average funding of more than ¥800,000 (about \$120,000) from Shanghai's Department of Culture and Tourism, Department of Education etc. compared to merely ¥40,000

(about \$6,000) funding for curation per year before the museum had its own physical building. Thanks to the social subsidies, they have largely made up for the shortage of museum funds, provided the museum staff with great support to continue to hold exhibitions and make possible opening exhibitions to the public. They have provided us with opportunities exploring a way of holding exhibitions with the help of social power.

### Implementation of Research Function

Like most museums, SHUM has carried out a series of research projects on museum themes and collections, this includes but is not limited to organizing tabloids, posters, cheongsams and other collections, and publishing graphic books such as *Modern Shanghai Tabloids* (GUO & HUANG 2018) and *With the Wind Dances the Gentle Cheongsam* (LI & XU 2020). Thanks to the Department of Museology, in the process of establishing and perfecting the collection system, SHUM further extended the scope of their research to digital museum, striving to provide consulting services to the museum industry in China.



Fig. 4 Museums and New Technology. Source: SHU Museum

In the process of building the physical premises, SHUM also hopes to provide conceptual and technical support for the construction of a new museum by investigating the latest developments in the museum field. The obtained information is as equally important to the domestic museum community as to our school's research of museology. SHUM curated the creation of the Journal, *Museums and New Technology* in 2013 (Fig. 4). In the six years since its establishment, the journal had published 24 issues, including "Trend Research", "Innovative Applications", "Education and New Technology", "Expert New Horizons", "Museology Information Memorabilia" and "Research Paper Index" etc. Emerging technologies applied in museum fields such as "virtual technology", "digital humanities", "artificial intelligence", "digitalization of collections", "MOOC and online education", "Internet of Things technology" and "blockchain technology", as well as domestic and foreign cases in the fields of "museum branding", "museum innovative thinking" and "museum narrative" were selectively introduced. The journal is set as "a multi-dimensional, multi-perspective communication platform", "domestic and foreign, cultural and technological, visitors and museums, museums and service providers"<sup>2</sup>, and has published more than 200 research articles from the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, the Netherlands, Canada, Japan, China and other countries and regions. With the help of the periodical's platform, we have got to know many experts in the field of museum science and technology. UMAC, Museums and



the web (MW) signed a license agreement separately with our journal to work together on columns like “Education and New Technology”, “Experts’ New Horizons” and so on, introducing relevant museum institutions, experts and innovations overseas. In addition, by taking advantage of new-media WeChat, the journal editorial department also opened a public account, called “Museums and New Tech”, through which information on domestic and international cutting-edge ideas and technologies, industry achievements and related news have been widespread. Our achievement caught the attention of the *China Museum Journal*, who later collaborated with us and created a column named after our journal, “Museums and New Technology”, providing more information to the industry.

ISSUE	TOPIC	ISSUE	TOPIC
Vol. 1 2016	Game Application in the Museum	Vol. 1 2018	Museum Education Study Case
Vol. 2 2016	Crowd sourcing and Crowd funding	Vol. 2 2018	Solutions of Three-dimensional Collection
Vol. 3 2016	Individualized Learning and Experience	Vol. 3 & 4 2018	Special 5-year Anniversary Issue
Vol. 4 2016	Museum Winning Cases	Vol. 1 2019	Museum Renovation
Vol. 1 2017	Virtual Technology	Vol. 2 2019	Mooc and Online Education
Vol. 2 2017	Museum Branding	Vol. 3 2019	Museum Winning Cases
Vol. 3 2017	Digital Humanities Technology	Vol. 4 2019	Internet of Things
Vol. 4 2017	Artificial Intelligence Technology		

**Table 1. Previous Topics in Journal “Museums and New Technology”**



Fig. 5 International Museum and New Technology Forum held in 2016. Image: Ji GUO

Take the periodical as a platform, the editorial department of “Museums and New Technology” of Shanghai University Museum has hosted the “International Museum and New Technology Forum” (Fig. 5) and the seminars “From the physical to the virtual: Museum and New Technology”. More than 100 museum experts and practitioners were invited to attend each session. This series of conferences and seminars has further promoted exchanges and cooperation in the field of new technology in international and domestic museums and has enabled the “young” Shanghai University Museum to participate in academic discussions in the museum industry.

Because of the above-mentioned periodicals and conferences, SHUM has had a certain voice in the relevant fields of museum research, and more importantly, it has established more dialogue and communication possibilities with industry peers. Based on this platform, the editorial department of our journal cooperated with the research teams of the Department of Museology

and the Department of Library and Information of Shanghai University, collaborated on a number of research projects of the National Cultural Relics Bureau and Shanghai Cultural Relics Bureau, compiled *Annual Report on Technology Innovation and Application of Cultural Relics* (the research part on the application of technology innovation in the field of museums)<sup>3</sup>, “*Museums of Shanghai Annual Report*” (2017) “*Investigation Report on the Establishment of the Museum Association in the City of Shanghai*” (2019), “*Analysis Report on Museum Information Research*” (2018), “*Cases of Digital Construction of Higher Education Museums in Shanghai*” (GUO & LI 2019) and others. These publications sorted out the current development situation of the domestic cultural relics and archaeology industry, predicted future development trends, and provided professional consultation. For example, it is hoped that “*Cases of Digital Construction of Higher Education Museums in Shanghai*”, a collection of 20 cases on information technology in university museums, would provide some reference and inspiration for university museums that have not yet started the information construction, as well as those small and medium-sized museums with limited funding.

Shanghai University Museum also hopes to serve the university museum community in China in other ways. In 2016, SHUM was granted the right to translate the Chinese edition of the UMAC Journal of the International Council of Museums. The Chinese editions of UMAC’s academic journals attracted the attention of many university museum staff from China. It has made it easier for domestic university museum industry to understand the development of university museums in the world and has made it possible for museums to communicate with each other, this was our original intention in developing this work.

A lot of university museums’ research relies on the support of the related departments and colleges. SHUM, however, has attempted autonomy by taking advantage of the help of social power and even has helped the university’s museology studies and has provided professional support to the wider museum industry. Because of the significance of the above-mentioned research work in the development of China’s museum industry, it has been successfully funded by government sectors, institutions and enterprises; there was no need to have funding from the Shanghai University Museum. The above research work was carried out in the process of museum construction, which means that the research work of museums may be possible through the “journal-conference-consultation” research model regardless of the limitations of museum space. This idea provides university museums with new ideas to expand their respective fields of research.



## Implementation of Education Function

It is essential for museums to have their space when it comes to holding theme-based exhibitions, doing research, and carrying out education activities. It is kind of difficult for SHUM to systematically plan and organize education activities without long-term permanent collection exhibition premises and educational venues. Thus, like how SHUM does research work, it focused on the characteristics of the school's museum disciplines and planned education activities around the museology major. In this way, SHUM was able to provide students with opportunities to learn about museum operations and cultural heritage protection. These education activities have demonstrated the museum's role as a cultural exchange platform through which museum culture is disseminated and popularized, especially to museum enthusiasts and future museum industry professionals.

Two Japanese experts in museology from Kokugakuin University, Professor Yutaka Aoki and Professor Tomoko Ochiai have visited Shanghai University many times ever since 2013 by a lucky coincidence. Their lectures about museums have attracted a lot of teachers and students. Their lecture had to be relocated three times on one occasion as it was unexpectedly overcrowded. We realized that educational and cultural exchange can be achieved without museum buildings even though SHUM was under construction at the time.

In the following three years, Professor Yutaka Aoki and Professor Tomoko Ochiai (currently working at Nagasaki International University), held lectures at Shanghai University each year, and invited SHUM staff to Japan for a study exchange and to introduce China's news and development to the Japanese museum industry. The visits and lectures between China and Japan had laid a foundation for future research events. In 2016, Shanghai University



Fig. 6 The museology study program between China and Japan.

Image: Ji GUO

Museum signed an agreement with the faculty of Human and Social Studies of Nagasaki International University in Japan to collaborate on an overseas internship program. From 2016 to 2019, the museum had organized a total of four groups of approximately 80 students to go to Nagasaki International University in Japan to participate in a short-term museology study program (Fig. 6). Those students came from different colleges and majors in our school: science, engineering, humanities and arts. The program lasted three weeks, it

contained two weeks of lectures and one week of Japanese museum visits and study. From 2017 to 2019, Nagasaki International University organized more than 40 teachers and students to come to Shanghai for a one-week advanced study and training, which included courses on Chinese history and culture, basic Chinese language, and museum visits in Shanghai etc.

	MORNING		AFTERNOON	
Week One	Opening Ceremony	Japanese Culture ①	Japanese Culture②	Tea Party
	Museum Collection①	Museum Collection②	Museum Collection③	Internship of Cultural Heritage Conservation
	Preservation of Museum Collection①	Preservation of Museum Collection②	Preservation of Museum Collection③	Internship of Cultural Heritage Conservation
	Running Museum①	Museum Display②	Museum Display③	Internship of Cultural Heritage Conservation
	Practical Experience	Japanese china	Practical Experience	Practical Experience
	<i>Day Off (Museum Visit)</i>			
Week Two	Introduction to Museums①	Introduction to Museums②	Introduction to Museums③	Internship of Cultural Heritage Conservation
	Museum Display①	Museum Display②	Museum Display③	Internship of Cultural Heritage Conservation
	National Museum①	National Museum②	National Museum③	Internship of Cultural Heritage Conservation
	Cultural Heritage①	Cultural Heritage②	Cultural Heritage③	Internship of Cultural Heritage Conservation
	Tea Ceremony Experience	Tea Ceremony Experience	Tea Ceremony Experience	Graduation Ceremony
	<i>Day Off</i>			
Week Three	Internship at museum; visit museums, art galleries and cultural relics			

**Table 2. Lesson Plans of Museology Study Project**

The museology study program between Shanghai University and Nagasaki International University has allowed students to learn more about museum history and culture of countries other than their own and has enhanced research cooperation between China and Japan. This program also allowed professions to communicate with museum staff in other countries. According to the feedback from the Chinese students who participated in the program, quite a few students chose to study in Japan after completing their university studies. Because this project combines the content of professional education and social practice, it was recognized and supported by the International Department of Shanghai University and was granted as the international exchange program of Shanghai University. Each student in the program received about 1/3 of the travel subsidy. This program also won the annual second prize at the University Museum and Collection Committee (UMAC). It is considered as “A well-structured, diverse and rich training program that touches both local cultures and a more global culture resonating with all of us”<sup>4</sup>.

The study tour and training activities between the two universities in China and Japan have accumulated experience for Shanghai University Museum to open more professional teaching courses. The practice base of the cultural relics and museum disciplines of Shanghai University, SHUM plans and provides practicum courses for postgraduates in the museology major. The practicum course includes exhibition planning and implementation, collection management and protection, open education, planning and implementation of publicity programs, information projects, inspections

of museums and various seminars and forums. In a three-month semester, students can fully participate in the complete process of an exhibition project from planning, implementation, operation to evaluation, and coordination with the exhibition's publicity and education activities. SHUM also provides positions such as collection management so students can take turns to participate in the practicum. This practical experience can help students quickly get into the museum industry after graduation. Now the first practicum has been successfully completed in 2020; we will conduct a follow-up study tour in the future.

	Course Name	Credit Hours	Teaching Format	Course Name
1	Exhibition Process Explanation	1	Lecture	The complete procedure including topic design, content design, project management, structure design, execution, project inspection, generative design, exhibit operation, supporting activity, and assessment
2	Excellent Curatorial Case Study	2	Lecture	Exhibition curation experience shared by industry experts
3	Content Design & Project Management	2	Lecture & Practicum	Exhibit research, resource collection, content design editing and planning, and project management etc.
4	Structure Design and Execution	2	Lecture & Practicum	Design copyrighting, design trend, case study, and construction graph approval etc.
5	Construction Exhibition and Observation	2	Practicum	Observation of construction of base structure, execution of base and foundation, construction of finish, equipment testing etc.
6	Curriculum Practice	1	Discussion	Participation in content design and planning, exhibition record and summarization of assessment report and other documents

**Table 3. Course of “Curation and Implementation of Museum Exhibition”**

In addition, Shanghai University Museum has participated in the curation of the Open Courses of “Chinese Museum” which has been held once a week since June, 2020; so far there are more than 20 sessions. The open class is aimed at a wider visitor group through a combination of offline lectures and online videos, spreading and popularizing museum-related knowledge on a larger scale.

Due to the restrictions on personnel and funding of university museums, perhaps there may be few exhibitions that go beyond the theme of the museum itself, or activities related to the popularization of culture and international cultural exchanges. Such activities are more commonly seen in large-scale museums. However, Shanghai University Museum used the “lecture-study-internship” method and successfully attracted students’ attention and participation to its educational activities around the subject of museums before it owned its building and exhibition hall. This has accumulated experience in opening museology practicum courses and various education activities for the future. This kind of study and practicum courses based on the professional design of museology will also continue to be carried out in the future work of Shanghai University Museum.

## Conclusion

Since the emergence of public museums in the modern era, the forms of museum, the means of exhibition, and the way of communication with the public have always been changing with the times. It is hard to define what kind of forms or working methods as the operational standard, thus the definition of museum is constantly being revised.

The integration of museums with the cultural institutions of the entire society has gradually deepened, while the boundaries with other institutions have become increasingly blurred. As carriers of social public culture, Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums (GLAM) have begun to share resources. Take Shanghai University as an example, a certain cooperation mechanism in exhibition and research has been formed among its university museum, libraries, and archives. Together they are building a Digital Humanities Research Center. The Academy of Fine Arts and its affiliated exhibition halls in Shanghai University has also cooperated with the museum in exhibitions and other fields. As we can see, storage and display of collections, education and cultural activities can be executed by the museum, sharing space with other cultural institutions; it is also worth thinking whether GLAM and wider social institutions and organizations will merge into one social public cultural institution in the future when they have the same functional convergence. This means that reflection about museum development should not be constrained by itself, but considered within the larger trend of social and cultural development.

On the other hand, the development of technology in the information age has also brought uncertainty to the changes in the shape of future museums. Today's digital museums are mostly virtual presentations of physical museums; it is foreseeable that the future digital museums will construct a completely brand-new format in tune with the "digital natives" and how they visit and read, that is different from physical museums. But here is the question: must the visitor go through a physical exhibition hall to understand the museum's collection and display content? Can museums on the internet achieve the same basic functions as physical museums do? Without the constraints of physical space, university museums seem to be more likely to take advantage of their "soft power". Compared to other museums in society, university museums have unique advantages. For example, they have abundant resources and strong support from academic research; they have college students on campuses as their main body of museum visitors in the future, who also contribute to promoting the innovation of concept (GUO, CAO & FENG 2016). It is self-evident that university museums whose visitors are "millennials" have a lot of opportunities and challenges in the

information era.

Professor Chien Wei-zang, a famous scientist who once served as the president of Shanghai University, proposed the educational concept of reaching out beyond four “walls”. The first wall is the “wall” (CHIEN 2013) between the school and the society. From this perspective, it is equally necessary to demolish the “wall” between the museum and the campus, and between the museum and society. We find that over the years the success stories of the university museum community are often related to the degree of socialization. “The public museum does not discuss cutting-edge issues in academic or production fields; it is aimed at universal education. Therefore, strictly speaking, the public museum is created to serve ordinary people rather than experts in related fields” (YAN 2009). In other words, the deeper the degree of socialization of a university museum is, the more funds and resources it can obtain, the more visitors it can attract, and the more it can be valued by the competent authority of museums, namely universities. University museums were affiliated institutions exclusively for universities for a very long period. It was not until the middle of the 20th century that university museums started developing towards engagement with the public (MORRIS 2014) under the impetus of various forces, and then began to show a social education function, exhibition function, and communication function. Therefore, it is very necessary for university museums to develop socialization and popularization because in doing so, other functions may be explored.

In the beginning of the 21st century, the gross enrollment rate of Chinese higher education has exceeded 15%. While higher education becomes more and more popularized, university museums correspondingly need to open to the public and society. It was also at this time that the call started to appear in the media that university museums should “walk out of the ivory tower”. After 20 years of development, the gross enrollment rate of China’s higher education is likely to exceed the key node of 50% by 2019, making the historical “transition”<sup>5</sup> of the popularization of higher education come true. There is no doubt that university museums, like Chinese college education, will welcome their new changes and social demand. “The scope of public services of university museums is mainly reflected in social intellectual education and public cultural services, that is to say, how to effectively use their own rich collection of resources, talents, intelligence and other advantages, and give full play to the popularization of museums’ leading roles in scientific spirit, education on humane accomplishment, and multi-cultural exchange and communication” (CAI 2014). Shanghai University Museum

<sup>5</sup> Ruizhe Xu, “Expansion of 20 years, this year is expected to achieve universalization of higher education! Does the net enrollment rate more than half mean half of the school-age population are all going to college?”, [www.Shangguan.com](http://www.Shangguan.com), March 1, 2019, <https://www.shobserver.com/news/detail?id=135763>. Accessed 25 July 2019.



Fig. 7 Shanghai-style Cheongsam and the prominent families in Jiangnan, one of the permanent exhibition in the Shanghai University Museum. Image: Ji GUO

uses the form of “lecture-study-internship” to demonstrate the museum’s education function and builds museum’s academic research system through the “journal-conference-consultation” model. Although these activities do not rely on museum’s own architectural space, they link the museum with campus, community, and society, and expand museum’s functions: serving its university, serving its city, serving the museum industry, and serving the society. Furthermore, they advance the museum in social exploration.

Today, Shanghai University Museum has completed its new museum construction. The museum has nearly 10,000 collection items and more than 7,000 square meters of space, of which about 3,500 square meters are used as indoor exhibition halls open to the public (Fig. 7). Meanwhile, SHUM has also created brands and projects such as “Shanghai Style Culture Museum”, “Museums and New Technology”, “Sino-Japanese Museum Studies”; these intangible assets are equally important to Shanghai University Museum. In fact, museums in each era

have their own different shapes and characteristics. The achievements and activities of Shanghai University Museum during the construction of its new museum have made us think about whether the implementation of the museum’s basic functions must rely on a fixed premise or certain physical space. If university museums and small-scale museums go beyond their “walls” and take effective use of social and online resources to face broader visitor, it will bring along much greater and more flexible development space.

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### Keywords

University Museums, Basic Function, Social Exploration

# Learning in university museums: for what? (examples of institutions of higher education in Ukraine)

Svitlana Muravska

## Abstract

*Learning, as one of the main functions of the university museum, has been significantly transformed over the past decades. Although the changes were readily apparent, there is still a myth about university museums as mainly “learning” museums due to the lack of generalizing research in the post-Soviet scientific space in general and Ukrainian scientific space in particular. The author’s findings during the last ten years testify that only one-third of museums in the Ukrainian higher education sector regard learning process support as their general mission. However, new conditions of information technology development encourage these departments to search for new ways to remain relevant to the process of teaching students professional skills. As practice shows, such museums are also a valuable base for future museum staff to gain professional experience.*



## Introduction

Learning has always been one of the main functions of all museums. Most researchers of the post-Soviet countries have only studied this mission of the museums of institutions of higher education<sup>1</sup>. Authors have primarily been concerned with the activities of specific museums. In the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, one of the few generalized research papers on this topic was Ivan Bulanyj and Ivan Yevtushenko's research, where such museums were considered as community museums<sup>2</sup> (BULANYJ & YEVTUSHENKO 1979). According to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics legislation, their activity was provided on a voluntary basis. The main task of the university museums was the creation of conditions for implementing learning processes and research activities by teachers and students. The education of Soviet citizens in the "right" direction, based on the political pressure in the social environment was an additional function of university museums.

As generally in Europe, in the USSR the number of publications on university museums increased in the 1980s. However, the complex analysis of the modern activity of museums in the institutes of higher education (IHE) has not been the subject of scientific papers even in independent Ukraine after 1991. It is due to a number of reasons. Firstly, museum affairs in the IHE environment have never been included in the list of priority issues proposed for research at the level of the Ukrainian Academy of Science or universities, which trained museum staff. In its turn, it is connected with the reflection of the Soviet tradition, that presented the university museums as additional ones in comparison with museums based on public funding. The main reason is the volunteer basis of their activities. Secondly, museology belongs to the block of historical disciplines in Ukraine. There has been an unwritten rule among historians in the post-Soviet space not to study phenomena until 30 years have passed after its inception. The primary reason is to avoid personal attitudes towards research objectives. Therefore, the preparation of thesis and dissertations with an emphasis on the current situation is not encouraged. However, there is a small positive dynamic of studying university museums as a specific group in the museum environment as a continuation of a global trend in research.

## Objectives

This study is a small link in research on the activities of university museums.

1 Due to the specifics of the higher education system in Ukraine, it means not only museums of universities, but also academies, institutes (including higher technical institutes), colleges - all institutions mentioned in the Law of Ukraine (On Higher Education). "University museums" is used as a synonym to the phrase "museums of institutions of higher education", "museums of IHEs" in this academic paper.

2 Created with some organizations and without the state financial support.

In this article I theoretically and pragmatically explore, whether university museums in Ukraine should be considered predominantly as learning focussed, as Soviet researchers claimed and also according to modern conceptions? How do museums organize their activity depending on their profile? What is the role of university museums in the process of training museum staff? Do they use their location to get closer to students and explain the basics of museum work, and how successful are they in this activity?

I assume that the learning function of IHE museums in Ukraine has changed during the last 30 years, as part of a global trend. Ukrainian university museums have certain peculiarities of their genesis, but the crisis in higher education concerns them no less, and in some cases, even more than in Western Europe and the whole world (MURAVSKA 2018). Many researchers proved the fact that such museums belong to two worlds – higher education and the museum sphere itself. It makes special sense in using such museums in the process of museum staff training. Ukrainian universities are gradually learning to use this resource.

The study uses data collected on research visits to the museums of the IHEs in seven regions of Ukraine (mainly in its western part). Most of the research visits took place between September 2013 and May 2018. The author has visited 40 IHEs and has received information about 91 museums and collections. In 2018 – 2019 the empirical material was supplemented with data about university museums in the Kyiv and Kharkiv regions.

### **University museum and learning: how it works in Ukraine**

In the XXI century, when museum education as a discipline and field of scientific knowledge develops, more and more attention is paid to the mission of museums to organize lifelong learning. If this task is perceived in a very broad, even potential sense in the case of public and private museums, it is often defined more specifically for the museums that exist on volunteer principles. As everywhere, we mean the processes of teaching and learning provided by research and pedagogical personnel; classrooms equipped with a stationary exhibition for display; collections stored in premises equipped for storage or in adapted boxes; curricula based on the use of collections. Providing a subject-oriented learning process is a mission traditionally associated with museums, and this statement is often declared as an obligatory rule.

The data show that in the XXI century only a third of the IHEs museums and collections in Ukraine determine the learning task as their main one. This sentiment mainly concerns museums of natural science. The educational

value of the exhibits in such museums is enhanced by their rarity in the natural world. Some collections have the status of objects of national importance in Ukraine. Due to the variety of museum exhibits, not only students of a specific university, but also students of other higher schools use resources of natural museums as a training base. This is mainly for future physicians who study biology and zoology in their first year of study. The collections of natural history, palaeontology collections of Ivan Franko Lviv National University and Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, the Museum of human diseases of Danylo Halytskyi Lviv National Medical University are of interest to secondary and high school pupils also in the context of Biology and Ecology as school subjects. Museums of natural history are the most commonly used within museum pedagogy projects. This is the reason why pupils are the largest category of visitors after the students of a particular high school.

University art museums are the places where students can get acquainted with artistic trends, popular during different years. Also, students have an opportunity to get acquainted with the works performed in different artistic techniques. It makes it possible to assess the level of their professional skills and encourages them to set high standards. After the mission of preserving student work, this task is a priority of almost all art museums and university galleries in the western regions of Ukraine (Museum of the Kosiv State Institute of Applied and Decorative Arts, Museum of Fine and Decorative Arts of Vasyl Stefanyk Prykarpethian National University and eight others).

Many museums of history display themselves as showcases for the presentation of university achievements. They are rarely used in the learning process. A good example of involving the university museum in this process is the practice of studying the course 'History of the Ostroh Academy' in the National University of Ostroh Academy. According to the university authorities' opinion, the course is a part of university activity to create the 'OA alumni' brand. Lectures and practical classes are held in one of the museum expositions. In this case, the museum room is transformed into a classroom, where students discuss the material, or tourists listen to the guide during a traditional excursion. Work of students during the course contain elements of research activity. Students prepare different projects using museum materials.

Lectures in university museums of history can also be an addition to the course of humanitarian disciplines (history of Ukraine, history of Ukrainian culture, history of science and technology etc.). Such practice exists in many university museums. It depends on teachers' personal desire to diversify the educational process by linking it to the museum collections. A lecture may go

beyond the boundaries of a museum's exposition, expanding or explaining, interpreting them with other phenomena and events. Studying the history of the university by students is a good practice, as it helps to instil respect for the future profession, to lay the ethical foundations of professional activity, for them to feel like they are a part of the university community.

Two directions of work with the student audience were marked in the activity of university museums. The most traditional way is directly implemented by training in museums aimed to help young people to master their professional skills. Museum internship is also a popular form of museum education for students. Recently, at times when a museum wants to be of interest to children, the task of museum training for the students – future teachers – has become particularly important. Now educational institutions, united with museums, make special efforts to improve the museum culture of the future teacher.

Back in 2005, Yurii Pavlenko conducted a pedagogical experiment in a study of the state of museum-pedagogical activity in high schools and strengthening the influence of museums of pedagogical profile in the professional training process. The results showed that the students were best acquainted with the museums of their IHEs. At the same time, by the concept of 'museum-pedagogical activity in the universities' teachers meant the activity connected with studying the heritage of famous teachers (24.72%); excursion practices (17.98%); organization of search expeditions, and also carrying out scientific researches by students on museum materials (15.73%); using museum premises for educational activities (13.48%); different learning work in the museum (10.11%); using museum exhibits for visualization (4.49%); and creation of museums at the university (2.25%). Data has shown that the most common forms of the learning process at museums are excursions and different cultural activities on the museum premises. The results also revealed some problematic aspects. In particular, it has shown that 27% of teachers do not introduce the museum component into their professional activities. Almost 67% of teachers admit that they organize such work unsystematically and do not fully realize the potential of museums. In particular, it is because of low interest due to under estimation of the museum impact effectiveness; insufficient methodological support of museum teaching activities, lack of teacher time or excessive workload (PAVLENKO, 2007). My research visits in 2013–2018 have displayed the same problems in the involvement of museums in the learning process, although a direct study of these aspects was not carried out.

### **University museum as the base for museum staff training**

The tradition of museum staff training in Ukraine dates back to 1944, when the Department of Archaeology was established at Shevchenko Kyiv State University. Among other things, it had been focusing on museology disciplines, and the speciality History (specialization - archaeology and museology) was noted in the graduates' diplomas. Currently there are six universities in Ukraine, which provide training to museum staff: Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts, Lviv Polytechnic National University, Rivne State Humanitarian University, Eastern European National University (Lutsk), Kharkiv Academy of Culture and Arts.

Although university museums are a good base for such training due to their location, their resources are not fully used. For example, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv has six museums with ancient history (part of the collections from the late 18th century) and diversity collections. However, students visit the Archeological Museum during the museum internship, because it is a department museum and methodological issues related to its organization are easy to solve at the level of personal contacts. The Museum of Anthropology in Volyn and Polissya (Eastern-European National University, Lutsk) and the Museum of the History of Culture (Kyiv National University of Culture and Arts) are also an example of using the museum base for educational purposes. These collections allow students to realize different learning projects within the framework of the normative training course Introduction to Museum Studies.

Therefore, museological education implies also certain types of internships. According to the rules of the Ukrainian system of higher education, internships last 2-4 weeks for students of a humanitarian profile of 1-3 years (studying history, cultural anthropology). In most cases, it is an internship in the museum. The aim of such activity is the formation of value orientations, humanistic attitude to the surrounding world, an emotive-values approach to the learning process; upbringing respect to historical and cultural monuments, acquaintance with museum exposition and stock collections of museums of different types and profiles. Besides Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, the basis for such internship is the Museum of Anthropology in Volyn and Polissya (Eastern-European National University) and Museum of the National University of Ostroh Academy.

At the stage of a total re-exposition of the Museum of History in Lviv Polytechnic National University, the authorities proposed to involve students in its activities. In the future, it will be the subject of a separate

project to explore how such re-exposition has allowed students to improve their skills and abilities, while studying professional disciplines. At the same time, at the initial stage, the importance of personal involvement becomes obvious, when some teachers initiate miscellaneous projects on the basis of the university museum and involve students in them. Working on the new concept of the university museum, I suggest that the students offer their ideas for organising the museum space by carrying out projects in the course Museum exposition, researching museum exhibits during the course History and Basis of Museum Affairs etc. The scale of effectiveness of this activity is still in question, but the significant effect on improving student professional skills is visible.

### **Conclusions**

The idea that education is no longer the main function of university museums is new enough for researchers in the post-Soviet space. In the XXI century, this museum function has changed. Empirical studies on the scale of Western Ukraine clearly show that only a third of museums position themselves as learning museums, although this label concerned all university museums in these territories some 30 years ago. However, this fact does not indicate the secondary role of the learning function. In the conditions of active use of information technologies in the XXI century, museums continue to be a place where students can see samples and processes previously learned from books. First of all, it primarily concerns museums of natural history. Like 150 years ago, they continue to be a clear illustration of theoretical knowledge.

Museums are important resources for learning activities, where the future museum staff can test their developing professional skills by realizing specific projects on the museum base. In its turn, the internship in the IHE museum is a good way to form value orientations for future historians, cultural anthropologists, managers of cultural activities. It also plays a specific role in the process of attainment of professional skills by teachers. Therefore such an internship, as a part of museum education, enhances the museum potential for learning school subjects.

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Institute of higher education, university, museum, collection, learning, training.



# Using different learning methodologies and tools to exploit the educational impact of a University Art Collection: a pilot phase at Roma Tre University (IT)

Antonella Poce, Maria Rosaria Re, Francesca Amenduni, Carlo De Medio and Mara Valente

## Abstract

*The Centre for Museum Studies based at University Roma Tre (IT) has designed and implemented a museum educational programme aimed at promoting the “Tito Rossini” contemporary art collection donated by the artist in 2017 to the Department of Education. The educational programme foresees the use of innovative and digital education methodologies and tools (e.g. Digital Storytelling, Augmented Reality and Gamification) and is addressed to university and external users. A pilot study with university students was carried out in order to verify the achievement of some objectives of the programme designed for the exhibition. This experience addresses the need for personalised educational museum paths in view of promoting social inclusion and transverse skills, focusing on critical thinking in particular.*

## Introduction

Roma Tre University was founded in 1992 and is one of the youngest universities in Rome. The Departments, located in different areas of the city, have few university museum collections: for this reason, in 2014 the University promoted the *Roma Tre Contemporary Art Collection*, to support the use and knowledge of Italian contemporary art among students, teachers and the local community. Italian and foreign artists have donated artworks to various departments that have set up specific exhibitions in the university spaces, open to the university and external users. The *Roma Tre Contemporary Art Collection* cannot be considered a traditional university museum, given the genesis and characteristics of the artworks, but in some contexts it is used for educational purposes. The Collection of the Department of Education, in particular, consists of 38 artworks by the Italian contemporary artist Tito Rossini, who donated the paintings in 2017. The Centre for Museum Studies (CDM), based at the Department of Education, created different mediation tools to develop the knowledge of the collection within the university and for external users and to support social inclusion: these aims are carried out through the use of active teaching methodologies (e.g. Digital Storytelling, Visual Thinking) and transverse skills promotion in a Lifelong Learning perspective (POCE & RE 2019). Specifically, over the years the CDM has carried out two initiatives in such a framework: 1- the study on the non-visitors of the collection and the ways of publicizing the collection itself, 2- the creation of personalized educational paths within the exhibition, involving university students and in-training museum educators in a design meant to promote transverse skills (POCE & RE 2019). Starting from the studies and activities previously carried out, the CDM implemented the museum educational paths of the “Tito Rossini” collection with digital teaching tools and methodology (e.g. Augmented Reality and Gamification) addressed to two macro-categories of users: university students and external visitors.

Different research documents in the field of university museum education highlighted the role of digital and emergent technologies to make museum collections more accessible through digital media to a wider audience. Museums and cultural institutions use mobile applications to provide personalized learning paths, enhance user experience, attract new visitors and fulfill special educational needs (GAETA et al. 2009). QR codes, smartphone apps and Augmented Reality (DING 2017) can enhance users’ experience and promote the interaction with real-world objects and artworks included in museum collections, thus supporting transverse skills

and social inclusion (SANDELL 2002; NARDI 2014; POCE 2020).

The museum program conceived for the Tito Rossini Collection and addressed to university students and in-training educators has different purposes: by participating in the path designed in the framework of cultural and social inclusion (POCE 2020), reflecting on mediation and didactic tools, carrying out personalised education activities within the collection, students are encouraged to develop both professional (e.g. educational design, evaluation) and transversal skills (critical thinking, metacognition). This way, the *Rome Tre Contemporary Art Collection* is integrated in students' educational curriculum and plays a didactic role within the Department.

This contribution presents the results of the pilot phase of the the "Tito Rossini" collection education programme involving 29 students from the Department of Education, University Roma Tre.

### **Building personalised and inclusive paths for university art collections: the context of the research**

The use of active teaching methods is defined as extremely effective in pedagogical terms for the promotion of transverse competences (HOOPER-GREENHILL 1994; HEIN 1998; MARSTINE 2006; MATEUS-BERR 2015). The use of digital tools can further support the promotion of the so-called 4C skills (creativity, communication, collaboration and critical thinking, TRILLING & FADEL 2009) if it stimulates the most transverse skills and attitudes, such as the critical use of technologies (POCE 2012), and supports the definition of personalised learning paths according to users' educational needs. Many experiences and projects in the field have underlined how the technology-museum-skills link is effective from an educational point of view in all categories of users, starting from children (PARRY 2010; ADAMS et al. 2007; POCE 2018). Among the most effective educational methodologies, Digital Storytelling and Visual Thinking, given their characteristics, are suitable for the promotion of critical thinking in museum contexts (HUBARD 2011; LIGUORI & RAPPOPORT 2018).

Moreover, also in museum contexts, the realization of personalised learning path is closely connected to social inclusion and educational effectiveness: responding to the educational needs of visitors, through the creation of pedagogically consistent paths, is essential for deep and lifelong learning and promotes cultural inclusion of socially disadvantaged categories, such as users with Special Educational Needs (POCE 2020).

It is from these considerations that the CDM has designed the Tito Rossini collection education programme for university students. The main aims of the initiative were: to create interactive tools for the fruition of Rossini's

collection exhibited at the University of Roma Tre; to increase visitors' knowledge about Rossini and his exhibition; to promote students' 4C skills. In order to create an engaging user's experience, Rossini's exhibition was equipped with different mediation tools.

### **The Tito Rossini collection education programme**

In the first stage of the project, QR Codes linked to audio descriptions, short stories and music tracks developed by Roma Tre university students were implemented. The QR codes allow access to content created through the Visual Thinking and Digital Storytelling approach, promoting users' and students' creativity in a co-design perspective. Indeed, the initiative was co-designed by involving not only the team of experts from CDM, but also master degree and post-graduate students who contributed to the transformation of their learning space, developing a sense of ownership toward the university museum collection (AAMG 2017; POCE & RE 2019).

In a second stage of the project, researchers developed an Augmented Reality gamified learning path: users and students were immersed in an augmented reality experience where, moving from one painting to another, they were asked to interact answering questions, whose contents are adapted according to the subject framed. Positive advancement in the game generated a final question that made the students reflect critically on the entire exhibition path.

At different stages, the project has combined non-conventional pedagogical practices (Visual Thinking, Digital Storytelling, Personalization), technologies (QR codes, Augmented Reality, Web Application) and 4C skills promotion (creativity, communication, collaboration, critical thinking) (TRILLING & FADEL 2009).

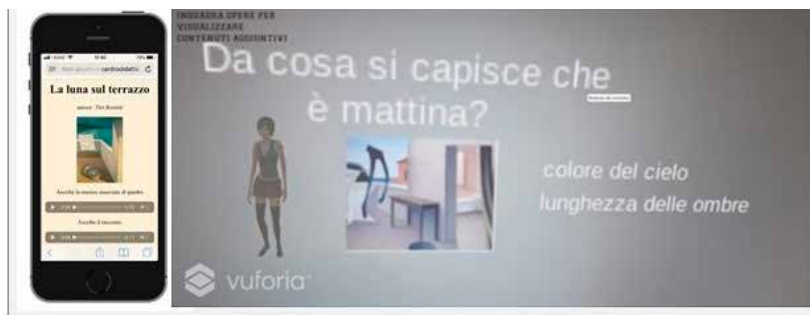
The design of the learning programme is the following:

1. At the beginning of the visit, users are required to fill in a questionnaire aimed at investigating personal information (gender, age, personality, artistic preference, interests). According to the answers provided, the web-app suggests a personalized learning path.
2. An Avatar asks questions to users, through a gamified concept of the web-app.
3. At the end of the visit, participants are invited to assess their experience. This way, it was possible to test the hypothesis according to which the personalized learning path was correctly matched with the users' needs.

### **Methodology**

Two experimental activities were held at the Department of Education-Roma Tre University, based on a multimodal use of the contemporary art

Fig. 1 Visualizations of the web-app presented in the first experimentation (mobile phone, on the left) and in the second experimentation (Augmented Reality Avatar, on the right)



permanent exhibition *Tito Rossini*, involving 29 students in total (Female = 25; Male = 2; Gender not specified = 2; Average age: 30,5; SD = 5,1). on both the occasions, the time devoted to the experience was two hours in total. In the initial phase, a brief introduction on the artist 's biographical notes and a focus on the themes developed within his works were presented.

At the beginning of the first event, participants (N = 15; Female = 13; Male = 2; Average age= 36 SD = 6,7) were required to fill in a questionnaire through a mobile app created on purpose identify personal details and preferences. After that, they had the opportunity to visit the Tito Rossini permanent exhibition for approximately 60 minutes. Participants were invited to use a QR code to access the paintings' written and audio descriptions, related short stories and music tracks. After the visit, participants filled in a second questionnaires in which they were invited to express their preference on paintings and mediation tools. Participants' answers were automatically recorded by the web-app and converted in an excel-sheet.

In the second experimentation, at the end of the visit, students (N = 14; Average age = 25; SD = 3,5; Female = 12; Gender not specified = 2) were asked to fill in a questionnaire created through Google modules. The questionnaire was filled in anonymously in order to protect participants' privacy and allowing them to feel free of providing negative feedback regarding the exhibition.

On both the events, the questionnaires were designed ad-hoc by the researchers and they included the following sections:

1. Personal information such as gender, age and occupation (closed questions).
2. Students' previous knowledge about the Tito Rossini exhibition. For example, participants were asked to indicate if they knew the exhibition and the artist before the visit (closed questions).
3. Evaluation of students' learning experience, and suggestions for improving the learning path. Students were asked to assess different features, such as QR codes, soundtracks, AR animations (both open-ended and closed questions). Closed questions in this section are expressed on a Likert scale from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree).

4. Only in the second experimentation students' critical reflection skills were assessed through a short open-ended answer. The question used to stimulate and assess their Critical Thinking level was 'From your point of view, what is the role of university museums in the wider city museum system? What function do they have for the territory and what for the University? What role can technology play in university museums?'

### **Data analysis**

Different kinds of analysis were carried out on the data collected. Descriptive statistics were calculated on quantitative data collected through closed-ended questions (sections 1, 2 and 3). A thematic analysis was applied to the open-ended-questions in sections 3. Thematic analysis is related to the classification of the patterns presented from qualitative data into themes. Through this technique, it is possible to bring together components or fragments of ideas or experiences, which often are meaningless when taken alone (ARONSON 1995). The aim of the thematic analysis was recognized if participants spontaneously mentioned themes related to Critical Thinking.

Finally, the last open-ended question was treated with content analysis to assess critical thinking (POCE 2017) levels. The critical thinking assessment model adopted is based on six macro-indicators: use of language, argumentation, relevance, importance, critical evaluation and novelty. Each macro-indicator can be assessed with a minimum score of 1 to a maximum score of 5. Thus, the maximum score possible is 30.

### **Results and discussion**

From the total of 29 participants, 20 students had never heard about the artist Tito Rossini, 8 knew something about him and only one declared to know the artist very well. In addition, 13 students had noticed the exhibition in the University building before the visit, whilst 16 had never noticed the exhibition before. These preliminary results show that the exhibition is not sufficiently exploited and promoted at the Departmental Level.

In the first experimentation, participants reported a general interest for the exhibition. Multimodality and the Digital Storytelling approach were generally appreciated. On the other hand, short stories and music tracks received an average lower score than the median score (less than 2,5 out of 5). After the visit, most of the participants reported curiosity towards the painting collection (53%). In contrast, 20% of the participants were bored during the exhibition and some of them felt restless. 53,3% would suggest visiting the exhibition to other people, whilst the rest would not. Further research will be necessary to understand the reasons for this contrasting view toward the exhibition. However, from our preliminary analysis we

assumed that participants' personal characteristics and their level of digital skills could affect their evaluations (POCE & RE 2019). Moreover, from a Focus Group carried out a few weeks after the experimentation, we were able to better explore the reasons for the dissatisfaction of the participants toward the soundtrack and the narratives. Below is an excerpt in which three participants co-construct their critical reflections on the narratives and audio tracks.

3M: "I think storytelling can be improved".

1F: "Do you mean storytelling contents?"

3M: "Yes, yes".

3M: "Contents and also the reading ...".

Participant 1F: "Let's say that the acting was not very engaging".

Participant 4F: "I had the feeling that the narrator definitely wasn't the person who wrote the story, I don't know why, I immediately felt it...".

In the second experimentation, participants expressed generally positive comments toward the visit. "Multi-modality" was strongly appreciated (Average = 4,14) as well as the "Overall learning path" (Average = 3,9). The following figure shows a comparison of the participants assessment toward the (1) overall learning programme (2) multimodality (3) and the different kinds of technologies and mediation tools employed in the two experiments. Whilst in the first experimentation mediation tools received an average score lower than 3, in the second experimentation the mediation tools received an average score higher than 3.5.

From the theme analysis carried out in the second experimentation, the following topics emerged (Figure 1): *inquisitiveness* (25,93%) and *synthesis* (7,41%), topics that are both connected to Critical Thinking skills and dispositions. Some topics related with Visual Thinking also emerged such as *Art* (14,81%), *visualization* (16,679) and *innovation* (1,85%). Other topics, which emerged from participants' answers, are *technology* (18,52%), *collaboration* (5,56%), *travel* (5,56%), and *struggling* (3,7%). The topic of

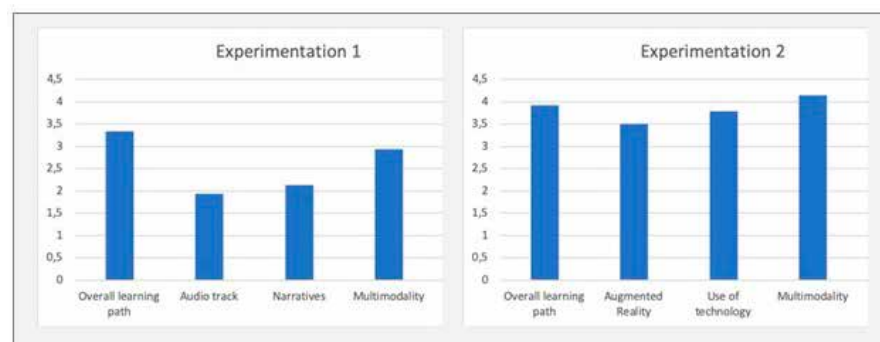


Fig. 2 Evaluation of the programme and tools in the first and second experimentations



*travel* was associated with the topic of *art* through a meaningful metaphor used by one of the participants: “*The exhibition was a journey through painted windows*”.

The most appreciated features of the exhibition in the second experimentation were the opportunity to identify a *Fil Rouge* among the paintings and to be stimulated by questions designed to support critical reflection. Participants would also like to have the time to focus on the other paintings and they did not always appreciate the arrangement of the paintings in the building.

At the end, 10 out 14 students answered the last question which asked them

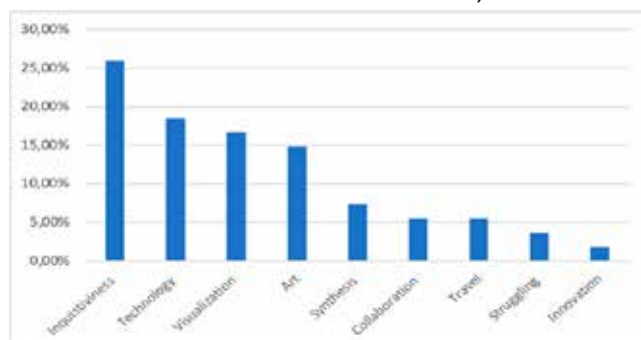


Fig. 3 Emergent topics in participants' open-ended answers

to reflect upon the role of university museums. All the students obtained a score higher than 18/30 which indicates satisfactory level of Critical Thinking<sup>1</sup>. Only three students obtained scores higher than 25/30 which indicates a high level of Critical Thinking. One of the students wrote the following contribution in the last question:

*“Universities offer numerous works of art that are often not valued. It would be an opportunity to bring the students' attention to them, perhaps even by making “alternative” lessons, not necessarily for museum didactics: to get out of the face-to-face didactics in university rooms and instead have classes among the works that surround us. I believe that if developed to the fullest, technology can be an excellent stimulus to encourage visitors to better observe the works and reflect on them.”*

### Conclusion and future developments

To sum up, university museums provide unique opportunities to actively fulfill critical mission statements of higher education institutions. Thus, it is necessary to think about efficient strategies to exploit University cultural heritage resources. Research has highlighted the role of digital technologies and active learning methodologies to improve users' experience through university art collections. Students that took part in different pilot activities, through specific learning methodologies (Digital Storytelling, Visual Thinking, Gamification) and tools (Augmented Reality), expressed an overall positive evaluation and seemed to activate their transverse skills, Critical Thinking in particular, and Critical Knowledge about the role that University museums and art collections paid for a personal and community development. The use of co-design activities for the innovative and personalised tools and paths provide a broad educational experience which involve participants and the

<sup>1</sup> In the Italian system, 18 corresponds to the minimum score to pass a University exam [http://attiministeriali.miur.it/media/240734/allegato\\_5.pdf](http://attiministeriali.miur.it/media/240734/allegato_5.pdf)

community, supporting collaborative opportunities and emphasizing cross-cultural understanding and social inclusion (AAMG 2017).

A further pilot phase of the project is necessary with the participation of external users and different types of visitors, in order to collect different data that should verify the efficacy and the appreciation of the learning path. Furthermore, the use of other digital tools could be envisaged for the realisation of active learning methodologies and transverse skills promotion; moreover, an analysis of the relationship between technologies and personalised learning pathways in Tito Rossini exhibition should be developed.

### **Authors contribution**

The contribution was edited in the following order: A. Poce (*Introductions; Building personalised and inclusive paths for university art collections: the context of the research; Conclusion and future developments*), M. R. Re (*Methodology*), F. Amenduni (*Results and discussion*), C. De Medio (*Data analysis*) and M. Valente (*The Tito Rossini collection education programme*).

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**Keywords:** Augmented Reality; Personalization; transverse skills, University Art Collection

# Attracting the General Public: the Kokugakuin University Museum's experience

Rira Sasaki

## Abstract

*We are a university museum in Tokyo, Japan that specializes in the research of Japanese culture. Between 2014 and 2018, we successfully tripled the number of visitors to the museum. In this paper, I will explain why such changes have occurred in the context of changes in staffing and the acquisition of external funds. While introducing programs from various aspects, the 'key' to this achievement will be considered. A return of the importance of 'research' in universities, the necessity for evaluation of research achievements by planners, and the meaning of having 'common recognition' and 'eyes of the public' will be covered.*

## Introduction

I will introduce the changes that have taken place in our museum, while clarifying the factors contributing to the cause of this, I would like to consider



Fig. 1 Number of visitors to Kokugakuin university museum

the problems facing Japanese university museums now and in the future. In 2018, the number of visitors to the museum was 79,326. Four years earlier in 2014, there were 26,417 people. Fig.1 shows that the number of visitors has tripled in the last four years. The changes we have experienced and as to why such changes have occurred will be introduced. Most of the increased number of visitors are the general public.

## The essence of Kokugakuin University Museum

Kokugakuin University is located at Shibuya Tokyo. It was founded in 1882 to pursue the study of '*Kokugaku*'. '*Kokugaku*' means the study of the Japanese nation. The University has a history of nearly 140 years. Our university traditionally specializes in the study of Japanese culture. There are only two universities in Japan where students can get the qualification of Shinto priesthood. Our University is one of them.

The Kokugakuin University museum was opened in 1928. We celebrated our 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2018. This Museum was founded with the goals of gathering and preserving cultural artifacts necessary for the study of Japanese culture, conducting and publicising research, and engaging in collaborative educational and research activities within and beyond the context of Kokugakuin University's goals. The museum also plays a role as a window for the university, open to society through special exhibitions which are research presentations alternative to the thesis format, educational dissemination projects, and museum collaboration projects.

The essence of the permanent exhibition consists of three themes. Archaeology of Japan, Shinto and the History of the University. We have special exhibitions six to seven times a year. The museum is on one floor only and occupies a floor space of 1,600 square meters. Admission is free to the public and it is open on Saturdays, Sundays, National holidays and even when the university is closed. We possess one hundred thousand artifacts. These are exhibited by the faculty members and curators in charge of the museum. We also exhibit very rare documents which are preserved in our university library archives. Sometimes we borrow artifacts from external sources. We even exhibit national treasures from time to time.

## Two influential episodes

The origin of the museum goes back to two earlier institutions. An archaeological museum founded in 1928 and a Shinto museum founded in 1963. These were later integrated and developed into the Kokugakuin University Museum in 2013. Then, in 2015, a new staffing arrangement was established. This is the background to its current form. It can be said that two major events took place in this process which changed our museum significantly.

The first is that the two facilities that were previously separate, the Archaeological Museum and Shinto Museum have now become one museum. Along with this, new provisions have been established and the organizational structure has been renewed. In this organizational structure, what should be noted is 'Professors and staff are united as one staff classification'. The museum has its own administrative organization. The two deputy directors of the museum are selected one each from the faculty staff and the university administrative staff. In addition, three new curators have been hired. As a result, the members of the museum now are: six professors in charge of the museum (two people from each of the three permanent exhibition research fields), seven museum administrative staff consisting of, two full-time staff, three full-time curators and two clerical staff. Regarding curators, who used to be members of the faculty department, they are now members of the office administration department. This is one of the big changes. It can be said that the curators now work in an environment where they can focus on the management of the museum, seen as the system to 'output' the research results and thus, the potential role of the faculty members has increased.

Another important event that occurred was the adoption of the museum as a project of the Agency for Cultural Affairs in Japan. In 2014 The Kokugakuin University Museum was selected by the Agency for Cultural Affairs for one of their projects, the Project for 'the Cooperation of Museums to promote Japanese Culture from Shibuya, Tokyo'. This was in conjunction with the Project to 'Support Creative Activities at Art Museums and History Museums with the Local Community'. Against this backdrop our museum began its initiative to promote Japanese culture, with cooperation from cultural organizations from different fields. We received almost sixty-million-yen of government subsidy in total over the last 4 years. This acquisition of external funds has become the engine that drives the museum significantly. Our inclusion in this project was also enabled by the new system of the museum, which allows staff to get more deeply involved with the operation of the museum. In addition, this project required



cooperation with external institutions. It was a paradigm shift for us. It was decided to carry out projects outside the university taking into consideration the research fields and activities of external cultural institutions. Then, as a collaborative team with various external organizations, we held a large number of social events, made multilingual efforts, and devised themes for special exhibitions. Based on these two backgrounds, what has happened since 2015 is discussed.

### **Our challenges from 2015**

The curator's position in our museum is covered first because it is an important point in this article. In many other university museums, faculty members and researchers are often curators. Our museum used to be the same, but not anymore. Currently, the three curators, including myself, are engaged only in museum operations as university staff, and we have an environment in which we can concentrate on museum maintenance, exhibition planning, public relations activities, and visitor support. In other words, research is conducted mainly by faculty staff. Curators and clerical staff assist in the dissemination of their research results. In this case, there could be a problem of the possible curtailment of the curator's research activities, however curators can also proceed with their own activities. The operational benefits of this system are discussed below.

Under this system, curators are both a bridge between research and society, and deeply involved in faculty planning. Curators always have a 'public eye' and focus on the exhibition with an awareness as when viewed from the outside world. At this time, all other occupational experiences gained by the curators in the past has been of immense value. By taking an objective position by the curator, lively discussions have been possible as compared to if the museum staff consisted only of people from its own university. It may not be possible to have useful and productive discussions due to the influence of the original hierarchical relationship within the research staff. As a result, a personalised and somewhat boring exhibitions will be the end results. Furthermore, when a curator handles various exhibitions across several fields (religion, history, archeology, literature, etc.) as is done in this museum, all fields are evenly represented without being biased towards one specialty. It is very important when organizing exhibitions. It was an important 'key' to activate the museum that the curator now had a 'public eye', 'outside eye' without being biased towards research, becoming a bridge between research and public, and entered into planning and public relations. This is an important 'key' to the success of the museum.

## 1. Public relations

On public relations I emphasize those before exhibition planning as they are very closely related to those after. We have been very focused on public relations since 2015. However, we have no budget for advertisement expenses. It is natural that if you spend money on advertising, it will have a certain result. But when in thinking about the essence of a university museum, we decided not to follow that path. Therefore, all publications on TV and newspapers are only those requested by the media. We have increased our fans by making the most of social media, such as twitter and Facebook. Launched in 2015, there are 6,417 twitter followers, and we make many announcements here.

Besides this we send press releases to the media directly ourselves. In addition, faculty members and curators participate voluntarily in media exchange meetings hosted by the university and interact with media personnel. Also, the curator has a direct connection with the media.

Faculty staff are also actively involved in these promotions. We needed to create content that will appeal to young people and those who are not familiar with museums, while ‘maintaining academic quality’. This is a challenge to the professors’ comprehension and the curators’ skill. The curators are required to cooperate with the researching professors in making proposals as a conduit between public and researcher. Such the challenge could not be undertaken by faculty members or on by just staff members. However, in order to carry out such public relations activities, it is important that the ‘brand management (branding)’ should be clear, and that vision is what all team member share. ‘We want to make this kind of museum’. This vision is equally shared by all staff. It is also important that the image should be shared ‘visually’. This means sharing designs, photos, etc. as ‘impressions’ rather than written words, we find this the most intuitive way to share information and ideas. The museum aims to be a ‘higher-grade university museum’. Our keywords are ‘Japanese culture’, ‘academic’, ‘elegance’, and ‘sophistication’. (Fig. 2)



Fig.2 Our new leaflet

This image is the ‘axis’ of our museum. We publicized it in leaflet and homepage design. Furthermore, like marketing for general companies, we clarified the target of ‘what kind of people we want to visit’ each exhibition, and we use different public relations activities to suit targeted visitors. We also believe that having an independent homepage separate from the university homepage was an important step in lowering the threshold for public access. The contents of the homepage were constructed, based on the shared brand image, and was designed to be easy to navigate.

## 2. Innovative exhibitions

Here, our efforts at holding ‘special exhibitions at the university museum is to actively disseminate and return academic achievements back to the general public is introduced.<sup>1</sup> In addition to presentations of research results and utilization of university assets, we planned exhibitions with awareness of the needs of society and the present era.

It was a considerable challenge to rearrange the complicated results of research into innovative exhibitions to attract the interest of the general public. We also did the opposite. That is, incorporate topics which were generally popular, into research achievements. Since 2015, we have been highly commended for the fact that we have planned exhibitions that widely appeal to the public.<sup>2</sup> For example, we held special exhibitions on *The Genealogy of Japanese Idols*, *Commemoration of World heritage registration, Daijōsai*<sup>3</sup> and others. The special exhibitions were planned, based on the balance of ‘academic achievement’ and ‘Japanese culture’. To put it simply, we are seeking something that not only makes the research results public, but that everyone will also find ‘interesting’. Using different angles leads to new visitors by connecting ‘research’ and ‘public’. For that purpose, it is necessary for the curator to become a part of the research team and guide and create exhibitions through ‘public eyes’. One needs to be careful though, if we approach the media too aggressively, we would then have a responsibility to continue on to make something worthy of our boasts. Faculty cooperation and understanding are absolutely essential for such an approach. This approach is possible because of progress with interdisciplinary collaboration among faculty and staff from different research fields, and a desire for teamwork.

University museums can be unpopular, they can be boring and seems difficult for the visitor to understand. This happens when exhibitions are one-way, self-indulgent, and non-interactive presentations of research results. The ideal image is that the exhibition at the university museum is ‘not evaluated by the number of visitors’ but ‘the achievement itself is meaningful’. We think ‘it doesn’t make sense if people don’t see it’, moreover, it should be seen by a wide audience. It makes sense to disseminate ‘widely’, not just for the exhibition to be seen by people in the usual research fields. Everyone on the museum’s ‘team’ agrees with this idea whole heartedly. This common shared view has enabled our new approach to produce positive results. It is also important to note that we have a relationship based on mutual trust

1 This is based on what was emphasized in “About the establishment of a university museum” announced at the academic council of the MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology-Japan) in 1996: [https://www.mext.go.jp/b\\_menu/shingi/chousa/shougai/014/shiryo/06101611/004.htm](https://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/shingi/chousa/shougai/014/shiryo/06101611/004.htm)

2 Evaluation is based on the number taken up by the media (= public). In 2019, the Kokugakuin University Museum was introduced 15 times in newspapers, 9 times in magazines, and 16 times on TV.

3 Daijōsai is the Japanese Enthronement Ceremony. In Japan, the emperor was replaced in 2019.

which prevents making mistakes. The value of this relationship promotes and maintains a high academic standard.

However, there is a problem with this concept. Until now, the majority of people who came to university museums were, to some extent, 'academic-conscious' people. Furthermore, the exhibitions at university museums are full of specialized, rare materials and objects. Promotion to a 'wide audience' means that those who attend come from different backgrounds. We have to accommodate a wide range of visitors. Difficult phrases and terms are not suitable there. Simple and easy to understand explanations are required, if you overdo it, it will lose its value as a 'university museum'. It is also essential to provide advanced contents that can be used as study material because it is a university museum. Indeed, this is a dilemma. Excessive commentary also risks dividing the visitor's concentration to reading the commentary rather than observing the material itself. It is difficult to maintain this delicate balance and create an 'exhibition' that will satisfy the maximum number of people. To that end, not only faculty members and researchers, but also curators have to develop a 'public eye' and hold innumerable meetings and discussions, it is vital to maintain the shared 'axis' mentioned earlier.

Additionally, in order for visitors to easily understand the explanations and items that are unique to university museums without feeling 'it's over my head', it is essential to make use the space with thought and original display designs. Our special exhibition room is very small, about 110m<sup>2</sup>, but we set the amount of characters that people can concentrate on reading, organize the explanations, and expand the panel so that the necessary knowledge reaches the people exactly as they need it. We make maximum productive use of the limited space, though we undertake trial and errors frequently. Nowadays, with the use of videos and QR codes our job has become much easier.

### **3. Regional cooperation and more...**

Another aspect emphasized is 'regional cooperation'. Though the museum is located in the center of Tokyo, in Shibuya, which is a very popular destination with many visitors, the area around our university museum is quite deserted as it is far from the train station. However, there are several cultural and historical sites around the museum, such as shrines and other museums. It is difficult to incite people to visit just one place of interest, but by promoting the destination to be a 'large area of interest' instead of just one place of interest, a synergistic effect is created and the impact of advertising multiplied. As an example, playing a promotional video about another museum at the entrance of our museum for our visitors, means

they can continue on to the next one. We also promoted our museum with a private exhibition in a nearby museum. This cooperation between museums has now expanded considerably. We collaborate to hold exhibitions and events, offer services such as discounts at mutual museums, and conduct tours. As the region as a whole gained popularity, a stable flow of visitors was initiated, maintaining it is a continuing challenge.

Of the various initiatives surprisingly, the simplest and most effective was a display at the museum entrance. Making the display at the entrance with easy-to-enter guides and maps, was more effective than anticipated. This is a display device that drastically changes the image of a 'university museum' to the Japanese people, and answers the question, 'Can the general public go too?'. The entrance is brightly lit, it is clear that it is free of charge, and notation for foreigners is thorough. As a result, the number of respondents who said that the reason for visiting our museum, 'was just passing by', has overwhelmingly increased.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to this, in terms of social contribution, we have held a large number of events. Workshops for foreigners and workshops for cross-cultural understanding of different cultures have successfully attracted a wide range of visitors.

### **Results and their factors**

As a result of these efforts, many of our popular exhibitions have been featured in web media, magazines, newspapers, television, etc., and the number of visitors has tripled from four years ago. The number of social media followers is continually increasing. New initiatives, such as cooperation with the ward's tourist information center has also begun, and even after the Agency for Cultural Affairs' arrangements were established, the university now gives the museum its due credit and importance and continues to provide sufficient support.

It is unclear if just one factor was the reason for the changes. Each factor has contributed to the change, and the accumulation of these efforts has brought about the big change in tripling visitor numbers. The expansion of the museum management system mentioned above was essential for these changes. In other words, we were able to establish a dedicated administrative organization, increase the number of staff and allocate sufficient full-time staff and curators to operate the museum in collaboration with faculty staff. This increase of staff will continue to make a leap forward in museum activities. Of course, the staff increase will also energize and activate regular

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<sup>4</sup> Based on the results of a questionnaire conducted in the museum. The method of the questionnaire is to ask the visitors to cooperate voluntarily and ask about their age, purpose of the visit, and impressions. The average recovery rate is about 4% of the number of visitors per day.

activities of university museums, such as the management of artifacts and research activities, which tended to be sluggish due to labor shortages. It is now possible to open the museum on Saturdays and Sundays, when it is more convenient for general visitors.

In addition, special exhibitions have been held many times. The fact that the special exhibitions are held many times and they were actively advertised, led to encouraging visitors to make repeat visits in large numbers. Another reason for so many repeat visits may be related to branding, as noted above, by consistently keeping a formula that attracts many supporters. In other words, it instills in the visitors the conviction that 'If you go to this museum, you can enjoy a certain world view that you like', and as a result the visitor becomes a supporter, repeatedly uses the museum, and even becomes an advocate, attracting those with similar tastes to become new visitors. We continue to send out invitations to special exhibitions and information, just as one would to increase followers on Instagram being focused on our supporters.

As a result of the expansion of the museum's operating system we were able to obtain a subsidy from the Agency for Cultural Affairs, that is, external funding. Obtaining external funds has been of great significance. Many universities are devoted to managing the university and supporting students. Under such circumstances, it is not always easy to keep contributing large sums of money to research and museums. In fact, many university museums have financial problems. Consequently, we need to offer valid reasons for why the university would want to fund the museum. You have to make an effort to make the university think 'it is necessary' and 'we should pay attention'. To do so, we need to show 'visible results' that appeal to university management. First of all, raising funds from external sources, then implementing changes. Then, we have achieved results in a visible form that everyone appreciated, specifically, the increased number of visitors. Now, the university recognizes the importance of the museum and considers the museum to be an important part of the university's business. Of course, we would like this to go on forever. Success has motivated the team. It's overwhelming and warms the heart to have everyone voluntarily cooperating on running the museum activities with the same vision. In many other university museums, it is difficult to be motivated to increase the number of visitors because it has 'free admission'. However, it was a very effective way to solve this problem, by sharing the experience of the cycle, that positive efforts makes positive results and that leads to positive evaluation.

## Future of university museums in Japan

Since the 1870s, Japanese university museums have opened and developed in line with the museums attached to universities in Europe and the United States, and now there are more than 132<sup>5</sup> university museums in Japan. Many of the museums have problems with aging facilities and staff shortages. According to a 2004-2005 survey,<sup>6</sup> the average number of ‘full-time’ staff at university museums was 3.7, with university museums of three or less accounting for the majority (MORISHIGE 2007). According to a 1999-2000 survey,<sup>7</sup> the average number of curators at university museums was 2.6 per museum, with two or less accounting for 70% of the total (MORISHIGE 2007). With such a small number of people, develop and plan exhibition work. We were shorthanded. Naturally, this makes it difficult to improve the quality of public relations activities and exhibitions. As a result, the quality of the output of the university museum declines, the evaluation declines, the voice of emphasizing the importance of the museum in the university decreases, and the vicious cycle of ‘no personnel increase’ continues.

In addition, a shortage of personnel directly affects the number of days the museum can be open to the public. Also, as Morishige (2009, 212) points out, “The current situation where the number of museums open on holidays is small, is a major problem that Japanese university museums have”. The shortage of staff means it cannot be opened on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays when visitors can easily visit the museum. In fact, the number of general visitors to the museum is highest on Saturdays and Sundays. In order to open on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays when it is easy for general visitors to visit, it is necessary for staff to work in shifts. It is very difficult to do this with only a small number of people. This is because general museums can close down on weekdays, but it is difficult for university museums to close down on weekdays, when classes are held. In short, the university museum has no ‘closed’ days. We are serving multiple audiences.

The ability to solve this problem of staff shortage depends on how important the museum is to the university as it is related to financial expenditure. Currently Japanese society is experiencing a rapidly declining birthrate, and the future of university management is uncertain. About 600 private universities in Japan have entered the competitive environment of higher education. Universities have to put a lot of effort into the competing

5 According to the survey of Japan Association of Museums. 2019. Number of museums in 2017. In: *Museum Studies* vol. 54 no.4: 13-16. Actually the response rate to this survey is low, and it is estimated that there are more than 200. The number of university museums in Japan differs depending on the researcher as to where to set the target range of university museums, the number differs depending on each survey, and the current situation is that the exact number cannot be stated.

6 Questionnaire survey conducted by Ogata Izumi (Museum of Kyushu Sangyo University). I referenced the “Japan University Museum Overview” 2007, which was conducted twice in 2004 and 2005, sent questionnaires to 204 museums (161 universities) and recorded data for 104 museums that responded.

7 Questionnaire survey conducted by The Institute of Exhibition Art and Technology (ed.) from 1999 to 2000. I referenced the “University Museums in Japan” 2001, which sent questionnaires to about 250 museums and recorded data for 115 museums that responded.



priorities of management and research. It can be said that the importance of 'research' in universities is declining. But we must consider the essence of the university. A university is an educational institution that forms the core of higher education. As the center of scholarship, it aims to provide a wide range of knowledge and to teach and study deeply specialized subjects. As Sugiyama (2012,1) stated, "Universities are about to provide higher education, and research is always needed to maintain that level of education". I would like people involved in university management to remind themselves of the essential meaning of the university. As the reality of Japanese universities is far removed from research and museums, it is not uncommon for university staff to face low awareness of research. Not many university administrative staff can tell you what kind of research the university focuses on. That shows dissociation between the management and the research arms of the university. All university staff, including museum administrators need to remember that it is 'a university with research'.

It is a great blessing for faculty members and researchers to have an environment in which their research results can be disclosed to society via 'exhibitions'. The university museum is not a limited output for research papers and conference presentations, but a valuable place where you can 'directly' disseminate and show your achievements to the general public. However, the big problem here is that 'exhibition planning' and 'curation' are not yet fully evaluated as research achievements. The faculty members who plan the exhibition at the museum rearrange the research results into an exhibition form. This requires grasping the information of all relevant materials, planning the whole concept, writing a large amount of commentary on how to develop, show, and draw conclusions, it takes considerable effort. 'Exhibiting research results in a museum' is an achievement that is sufficiently comparable to research papers and conference presentations. However, in the 'research map'<sup>8</sup>, which is the most representative database that collects information on Japanese researchers, there are only 'thesis', 'publishing', and 'announcement' as research achievements. There is no mention of 'curation' or 'exhibition planning'. Many of the researchers in charge of the exhibition cannot record the exhibition activities conducted at the university museum as research achievements and have to include them in 'social contribution activities'. Some faculty members list exhibition catalogs as 'publishing', but they do not always publish exhibition catalogs at university museum exhibitions. This situation is the same as 'free work' for professors. In other words, the problem here is that research presentations in the form of exhibitions are not generally recognized. If it

is generally appreciated, then more faculty members will be interested in planning exhibitions at university museums, and the quality of university museums will continue to improve. Many good faculty members and young researchers will flock to university museums, where good exhibits are highly evaluated and well publicized, and if it can be socially recognized as a good research institute. The value as a university will increase.

For Japanese universities in a competitive higher education environment, it is now time to focus on research. The fact that faculty members are directly involved in the exhibition means that the latest research results are constantly presented to society making the museum exhibition always fresh and lively. This is ideal for a university museum. In order to achieve this, it is important to revive the importance of 'research' at the university and evaluate it as a research achievement. The next thing that is needed after the gathering of excellent faculty members is the existence of staff that will serve as a bridge between 'research' and the 'public'. The existence of clerical staff who create an environment where faculty members can concentrate on their research, and curators who connect clerical staff and faculty members is crucial.

### **Conclusion**

The successful efforts of our university museum to increase the number of visitors over four years and examine the reasons why have been discussed here. This was followed by some thoughts on various problems facing Japanese university museums, such as universities and research, faculty members and exhibitions and their relationships. The problem is not that the university doesn't spend enough money on the university museum, but that the university museum staff do not make enough effort to appeal to the university to spend more money on the museum.

It is necessary to have a high level of awareness to take some action in order to make the university recognize the value of the museum. As already mentioned, the Kokugakuin University Museum does not spend any money on public relations activities. There are many things university museums can achieve without money. In this era when university management is extremely difficult, just waiting does not initiate anything. Before complaining to the university, take action, make some achievements, and appeal to the university. Such as getting approval from the university and get funding from outside if necessary. That is the start. University museums need to be aggressive to survive.

The operating capital of our museum is covered by university profits and national taxes (ordinary expenses subsidies), it is an important policy that

not only our students but also the general public can use the museum free of charge. We chose to launch a museum shop in 2016 to earn some income while promoting education. It is a method of keeping the admission free and incorporating shop sales as university profits.

It is essential to keep evolving our museum and its programs or it will lose attention, making it difficult to keep sufficient staff. Though we have a large number of general visitors, we have the problem of low student use. There is still a lot of work to be done on the important task of getting young people to be interested in the university and research. In the future, we plan to explore more collaboration with students aiming at the study of museology. In museology classes, it is important that the staff who are currently involved in the 'actual' museums become the professors who teach students. Which will help students understand museology more vividly than can be achieved by theory. This will surely contribute and connect to the future of university museums.

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### Keywords

Unity of professors and staff, Regional cooperation, Publicity, External funding

# Archaeology Museums at the University of Sydney and MSU Baroda, a cross-cultural comparison

Sareeta Zaid

## Abstract

*University museums and the study of archaeology across the Asia-Pacific have their origins in the British colonial project, which is exemplified in the University of Sydney's Nicholson Museum for antiquities. The removal and display of cultural material served to strengthen the reach of colonial powers in Australia and India. The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda in Vadodara, Gujarat, provides an opportunity for students within the university's archaeology department to take ownership over their own cultural heritage; comparably, reclamation and exhibition of Indigenous Australian heritage by First Nations people is at the forefront of the new Chau Chak Wing Museum at the University of Sydney, which combines the existing Nicholson Collection with the university's other cultural collections.*

University museums in Australia are as old as the entity of the university itself in this country, starting with the founding of the University of Sydney in the 1850s. The development of the University of Sydney throughout its early years and into the 19<sup>th</sup> century was closely tied to the Nicholson Museum as a cultural institution and the museum's role, although changing over time, has remained a core component of university business. This context shares similarities, as well as obvious differences, with the establishment and function of university museums in India. In particular, the archaeology museum maintained by the Department of Archaeology and Ancient History at the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda in Vadodara, Gujarat, provides a unique opportunity for comparison between these two university cultural institutions. Both universities and museums have origins in the colonial project within the Asia-Pacific region and, over time, have adjusted and engaged variably with this narrative, which they continue to do into the 21<sup>st</sup> century to today.

The University of Sydney was founded in 1850 through the actions of William Charles Wentworth and Charles Nicholson, two prominent and influential leaders in colonial Sydney (The University of Sydney 2019). The purpose of the university was to emulate the prestigious institutions of Oxford and Cambridge in England within the colony, but with greater access to entry for aspiring students (albeit, given the time period, initially restricted to Caucasian males) (National Museum of Australia). As an avid traveller and collector, being of the era that was a legacy of the historical Grand Tour, Nicholson's pivotal role in the establishment of the university was one deeply intertwined with his personal and academic interests (The University of Sydney 2019). Despite being a physician, Nicholson was keenly interested in history and had travelled throughout Asia and North Africa, acquiring antiquities for personal display (The University of Sydney [A]). In 1857 the university received its Royal Charter from Queen Victoria, granting it the same status as the universities of the British homeland. This was also the same year that the antiquities museum at the University of Sydney was established. The significance of the legitimisation of the university from British royalty and, the subsequent recognition of its status by those of the upper class, served as a mechanism for reinforcing the power of the British in Australia, which was viewed as a far-reaching arm of the British Empire.

The entanglement of the museum of antiquities within this early period of the establishment of the University of Sydney served to further reinforce the power of the colonial project. From the beginnings of the British Empire in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the acquisition of land at the expense of

Indigenous peoples across the world, in Africa, South Asia, Australia, and the Middle East, was combined with a predisposition for acquiring antiquities from these regions. It was argued that these antiquities were better preserved in the hands of the British rather than in their places of origin. However, the removal of cultural artefacts that were crucial to the history and origin stories of the local peoples in regions around the world ultimately served as another means of subjugation (SMITH 2004). As with the classic case of the British Museum and the Elgin Marbles, repatriation of such artefacts in the current day remains a contentious issue (CUNO 2009, 2011). Additionally, the means through which antiquities and “treasures”, as they were viewed, were acquired resulted in the loss of contextual information that would aid archaeologists today in understanding more about these artefacts and their role in the historical development of the cultures from which they originate (HAUSER-SCHÄUBLIN & PROTT 2016).

Admittedly, the artefacts that were acquired in the few hundred years of the British Empire may have been better protected than if they were left in their countries of origin due to the prevalence of looting artefacts and lack of recognition of the significance of these materials (CUNO 2009, 2011). In fact, many of these looted artefacts were those that were sold to British travellers such as Nicholson. Further, colonial interest in antiquities did lead to the establishment of organisations within occupied countries which have led to greater recognition of cultural heritage over time. Following the relinquishment of colonial influence in certain regions, new nation states were able to take ownership over their own history (CHAKRABARTI 2003).

In India, the British Raj ruled the subcontinent for almost a century from the mid-1800s to the establishment of the Indian nation-state as separate from Pakistan in the 1947 partition (OGDEN 2019). Soon after the commencement of the Raj, in 1861, the British established the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), which marked the formalisation of antiquarian activities in South Asia. The nature of this institution is conflicting; it led to the adoption of an increasingly systematic approach in archaeological and record keeping practices, but also contributed to British ownership of Indian cultural heritage and the resultant extraction of artefacts from their original contexts and shipment to Britain, rather than storage and study within the subcontinent (Archaeological Survey of India). Artefacts from the early excavation of Harappan sites in the northwest of India led to Harappan artefacts being distributed around the world, with some even finding their way into the Nicholson Museum collection in Sydney, an emblem of colonial connections in the Asia-Pacific (The University of Sydney [B]).

Following partition, the regularisation of archaeology as a discipline in



India was introduced in some universities, including the establishment of separate archaeology departments. The establishment of universities in the subcontinent by the British Raj in 1857 in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras was another aspect of colonial rule, serving as a means of cultural colonisation where European culture, language and ways of thinking were espoused and promulgated (CHITNIS 2000). This provided an alternative means of education to the traditional systems of knowledge in local learning institutions that are thought to have existed for millennia prior, with the British system enabling locals to succeed professionally within the structures of British rule (CHAKRABARTI 2003).

Despite this, the normalisation of archaeology as a discipline in Indian universities from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century onwards has been extremely beneficial to the people of the subcontinent. By being afforded an opportunity to study the history and cultural heritage of their ancestors, such archaeology departments enable Indian students of archaeology to reclaim their heritage from the colonial grasp and rewrite the narratives about their own people and the development of their culture (CHAKRABARTI 2003). The Maharaja Sayajirao University (MSU) of Baroda, in Vadodara, Gujarat, provides one example of the formalisation of the study of archaeology within the subcontinent. The university in its current form was established in 1949, following partition, and developed from the earlier Baroda College formed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda).

The Department of Archaeology and Ancient History at MSU houses its own archaeological museum divided into two galleries, one dedicated to the history of Buddhism in Gujarat and the other to the Indus Valley civilisation. Although smaller in both collection size and space than the University of Sydney's Nicholson Museum, this university museum displays a rich array of cultural material, including artefacts, replicas, models and diagrams that vividly illustrate Gujarat's colourful past. Many of the artefacts at the museum, as well as the replicas and models, have been discovered or crafted by students at this institution. A life-size model of a craftsperson's bead workshop is found here, along with a scale replica of a Buddhist stupa, and cultural material from both the Harappan and Buddhist periods, ranging from beads, tools and stamp seals, to figurines and ornaments. Prospective students travel from across India to study archaeology at MSU (The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda). The reclamation of this cultural heritage, which for so long was controlled as a facet of the colonial empire, serves to rewrite the narrative of cultural heritage in this country and enables upcoming generations to continue to claim ownership over and connection with their past (CHAKRABARTI 2003).

Looking back at the Nicholson Museum of the University of Sydney, the intriguing artefacts this museum houses from across the globe, from Africa, South Asia and the Middle East, have provided students with a myriad of cultures to study throughout world history and serve as essential teaching tools for students studying at the university. However, the cultures of the local peoples of Sydney, and Australia and the Pacific more broadly, have historically been omitted from this antiquities museum and relegated to the separate university institution the Macleay Museum, which was viewed as predominantly a natural history museum (The University of Sydney [C]). With the establishment of the new Chau Chak Wing Museum (CCWM) at the University of Sydney, which combines the Nicholson and Macleay museum collections, the MSU example will be mirrored, with Indigenous peoples of Australia and the Pacific being included in this world history museum and being able to, in some ways, reclaim ownership over their own cultural heritage and be active agents in its display. The curation of galleries pertaining to Indigenous Australians throughout the CCWM by First Nations people, which are positioned throughout the museum on all four levels, combined with a major showcase from Arnhem Land as one of the opening exhibitions, gives this opportunity for the University of Sydney to formally recognise the deep significance of Indigenous culture and history to Australia and its higher education space. Considering both the CCWM and MSU museum together, they continue to be important teaching institutions for students enrolled at these universities and as a means for these universities to engage with and educate the public.

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### Keywords

South Asia, India, Gujarat, Sydneyplace text

# University Museums from Home: observations on responses to the impact of Covid-19

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## Abstract

*This paper presents data about the impact of the covid-19 pandemic on university museums and collections through the stories and reflection of individual university staff from Europe, North and South America, Africa and Asia. It is shown that one common impact was the requirement for university museums and collections to transfer much of their programming to digital platforms. While there is obviously much uncertainty as to the shape of the global university sector after the pandemic, some university museum and collection staff felt that challenges could be turned into opportunities through creatively reimagining the work of the university museum.*

## Introduction

Much has already been written about the impact of the covid-19 pandemic on higher education. Some examples include the impact on national sectors (THATCHER et al. 2020), the impact on pedagogy (ANDERSON 2020), the impact on student experience (AUCEJO et al. 2020; BURNS et al. 2020; ISLAM et al. 2020) and the impact on academic processes and activity (SAHU 2020). Similarly, there has been much written about the impact of the pandemic on museums (CROOKE 2020; SAMAROUDI et al. 2020), but there is little documentation as yet regarding the impact on university museums and collections, apart from speculative editorial notes (SIMPSON & LOURENÇO 2020).

The paper attempts to fill the gap as a snapshot of responses to the global pandemic during the calendar year of 2020 from university museums and collections around the world; from across various disciplines and different types of universities. It is a collation of data and intuitive reflection that commenced from an original call for content, in late March 2020, by the University Museums and Collections International Committee of ICOM (UMAC) for a webpage on responses to the pandemic.

As universities across the globe switch to remote learning and university museums and collections' professionals were largely working from home as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. The call requested input on the challenges of remote work, specifically UMAC sought information on how university museums, university botanic gardens or university collections were coping with remote work? What impact did it have on daily work practices? How were university museums and collections addressing museum issues that require some degree of physical staff presence (e.g. conservation, security, others)?

It was noted that during the pandemic many museums were taking digital to a whole new level and reinventing themselves online. Responses about the challenges of maintaining engagement were also sought. What strategies were employed for keeping audiences engaged? What activities were being postponed, transferred online, or cancelled altogether? Were there any audiences that were being left behind because of a lack of access or resources?

It was also noted in the call that university museums were also directly contributing to minimize the suffering in affected countries and communities, from promoting solidarity campaigns and mobilizing medical equipment to university hospitals and health centres to donating their stocks of masks and alcohol to help national campaigns and joining expert groups that

unpack and communicate relevant scientific information to the public. The call for responses requested information about any such special initiatives undertaken by university museums and collections.

The call initially attracted eighteen individual responses from university museums around the world. For these reasons, the annotated and summarised information presented below should not be considered a random sample. Participants were self-selected by responding to the call.

Of those that responded and provided data for the website there was follow up communication in October 2020 seeking reflections on three specific questions, namely: -

1. Would you add to, or change, anything that you have already written for #UniversityMuseumsFromHome?
2. We often consider university museums as supporting a) teaching b) research c) community engagement. Do you think this balance has changed for your museum during the pandemic?
3. What was the most surprising thing your museum learnt as a result of the pandemic?

Some of the initial authors responded by answering these reflective questions and agreeing to contribute to the development of this paper. The compilation of stories of impacts and later reflections about the impact of the pandemic comprises the body of this paper below. Despite the fact that it does not represent a systematic response to the question of how university museums and collections have been impacted globally by the pandemic, it does provide some insights into similarities and differences in the responses of university museums and collections globally.

### **Initial impacts**

By the end of March 2020, museums and the botanical garden at the University of Florence were closed to the public. Only a limited number of gardeners were allowed to physically work in the garden, despite the fact that the spring season is usually a time of heightened activity in this area. Similarly, environmental controls needed for the collection of anatomical waxes and the herbarium could only be monitored by one employee at a time as required by the University because of the pandemic. This was enforced by guards who also collected contact details, ensured there were protective practices in place and monitored entrance to the museums.

The museums at the University of Florence provided games for children on their websites because of their confinement at home. However, it was noted that many primary schools had adopted digital platforms for their teaching in the early stages of the pandemic so there was competition for

student time that was mainly around school lessons on digital platforms and direct connections between students and teachers through these. Italy was suffering a high death rate from the pandemic at the time, particularly in the northern regions.

Around the same time at the ULB Museums Network in Brussels (Universite libre de Bruxelles) time was also put towards creating some simple games for children who were similarly confined by the pandemic. The games refer to a program called “objects of the month” published on both their website and FaceBook page over the previous ten years.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, in the United Kingdom in early April the Museums of the University of St Andrews were working on how to reimagine their University Museums through curiosity and conversation, and to be a cultural and social hub during lockdown. Even though the University buildings, including museums, were closed, the university museum service aimed to bring people together online, to stay connected to St Andrews, and to inspire their online audience with research stories from their university.

This was done through three online sessions each week. They hosted the Wardlaw Workshops for children on Monday, giving children a mission for the week ahead and advice from a University of St Andrews expert to help them undertake it. Projects ranged from creating secret messages, like the ancient Incas, to building flying machines. Examples of what people had made at home during the previous week were shown in the following week’s video.

On Wednesdays, the St Andrews museum team ran Wellbeing Wednesday for adult audiences. It consisted of the team to telling anecdotal stories about their collections, in particular stories not usually in use during other interpretive programs. On Fridays St Andrews ran a Wee Wardlaws digital session for children under the age of five 5 consisting of rhymes, stories, activities and crafts inspired by our collections, and programs encouraging children to create their own museum.

More widely, St Andrews University’s cultural partners: the Byre Theatre, Laidlaw Music Centre, the Library and Museums of the University were working closely together to bring audiences *Culture At Home*: a regular dose of performance, music, images, objects, films, poetry, literature or podcasts, from the University of St Andrews or recommended by the university.<sup>2</sup>

In Spain at the University of Cantabria in early April, the museum service created a new web site where each day a new piece of the university

1 Universite libre de Bruxelles <https://musees.ulb.be/fr/le-reseau-des-musees>

2 St Andrews University social media – <http://www.facebook.com/MuseumsUniStA/> <http://www.instagram.com/MuseumsUniStA/> <http://www.twitter.com/MuseumsUniStA> <https://museumevents.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/>



Heritage (from the collections, exhibitions, teaching material, publications, etc.) was featured. Despite the confinement of the population audiences could visit university buildings through a digital portal and learn to know the most important pieces through interviews posted on Youtube.<sup>3</sup>

In April 2020, the situation was different in some Asian countries. For example, in Taiwan all schools were still open and operating normally. University Museum staff from the National Taiwan University still attended the museum office each day. There were strong rules in place, however, for activities including the number of participants and social distancing requirements. All people entering any university building were required to wear a mask, answer a questionnaire about their health, have their temperature measured and recorded, and use a 75% alcohol hand wash. Only ten visitors with masks were permitted at a time in the Museum of Zoology because of the relatively small exhibition spaces. While staff and students could attend the university, members of the public were not allowed thus narrowing options for direct public engagement. Maintaining public interest under these restrictions became an issue for museum staff. As a result various social media channels were employed.<sup>4</sup>

In April 2020 the Zoology Museum were planning online tours. With tours for the public cancelled online courses for the general public were also under consideration. The museum also considered it advantageous time to cover a backlog of work with the collections including conservation and cataloguing.

During April 2020 in South Africa there were lockdowns and a switch to working from home. The University of Pretoria Museums in South Africa did not feel they were well resourced or equipped to work remotely from home due to technical challenges, high data costs and not have enough resources for webinars, zoom workshops or virtual reality or 3-D online exhibitions. University museum staff felt the pandemic had set them a great challenge that made them reflect on how curators can “work from home” away from collections. Initiatives included updating their website, bringing weekly objects and artworks from exhibitions that were closed to the public onto online platforms. Roles have flipped as they discovered that the museums were technologically challenged- something we did not envisage would impact so greatly on our work.

Striking a work life balance under lockdown conditions is always challenging. For some collections managers it was the ideal time to fine tune and upload the backlog of accessioned items onto the database, while the conservator

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3 Project Website “Your Cultural Campus in house”: <https://web.unican.es/campuscultural/Paginas/Tu-Campus-Cultural-desde-casa.aspx> University of Cantabria Social Networks: <https://www.facebook.com/exposicionesUC/> <https://www.instagram.com/areadeexposiciones/> and University Heritage Web: <https://web.unican.es/utiles/patrimonio>

4 National University of Taiwan, Museum of Zoology <https://www.facebook.com/museumzoology/videos/1882144525396235/>

could continue art conservation work in the home studio. It also provided an ideal time to work on proposals and articles. Staff of the University of Pretoria also envisaged that discussions about post-covid world of university museums and collections should be underway during the height of the pandemic. The University of Pretoria's work with different communities had to continue. In all sectors and nationally at that time all museums were closed, the economic and social impact of the pandemic was recognised as a far greater concern for universities. But it was strongly felt that discussions about the heritage impact and museological impact on local and global scales needed to commence.

On the other side of the Atlantic in North America at the Lowe Art Museum staff felt well provided with strong infrastructure for working remotely embracing the use of Office 365 and its remote tools such as Teams, SharePoint and One Drive. Teams was used for a combination of project management, teleconferencing and document sharing. SharePoint was set up as an internal website for staff to aggregate many of the COVID-19 resources being circulated around the sector. One Drive was embraced to remotely access files and also share and collaborate. Staff felt the transition was been relatively smooth.

On the interpretive side of things during April 2020, the Lowe Art Museum were also strategizing on how they could make more educational material available to their communities. One example of this was through "Lowe on the Go", a daily dose of art from the collection with descriptive information. This was mostly a marketing engagement campaign. From this they were working on the development of a virtual tour of all of the objects highlighted through a Guide that visitors could access online with their mobile devices. Staff were also combing through educational lesson plans looking for opportunities to post these resources on their website for lessons that can be done at home. They were also looking at a host of virtual online options. To do this in a way that is strategic, intentional, cohesive and achievable, they created a Remote Engagement Task Force that began meeting virtually on a weekly basis to outline new initiatives focussed on digital engagement across all departments: advancement, marketing, membership, exhibitions, education and visitor services.

Elsewhere in North America at the same time there were similar programs to expand online engagement. Middlebury College in Vermont launched an initiative to help families, students, educators, and the public enjoy Vermont's museums and galleries from the comfort and safety of their own homes. Vermont Art Online offers virtual 360-degree tours of participating cultural sites as well as ideas for and links to videos, classes, and online arts

activities that people can do at home.<sup>5</sup>

In South America lockdown and quarantine produced similar challenges. The La Plata Physics Museum, Argentina attempted to keep in touch with their communities through social networks, posting videos with simple experiences that could be organised at home. But the care of heritage was seen as problematic because of the closure of university buildings and no access to collections. because the Faculty is completely closed. Staff utilised Zoom and WhatsApp for communication. In April 2020 the museum commenced an online training course for their mediators and educators with the *Mundo Nuevo* science popularization program.

Lockdown was also enforced in Columbia at the same time. At the Universidad del Rosario in Bogota, Colombia, tools for working remotely such as OneDrive and Zoom online classrooms for lectures and team meetings or conferences were utilised. WhatsApp groups were used for different museum management processes (one with educators and students, one for communications, one with conservation staff). While much documentation was available remotely, some such as the collection management software was not.

The Universidad del Rosario also reported the major role of social media since the outbreak of the pandemic. The museum has been promoting its online tools and resources through its social media accounts. There was also an alignment in the communication efforts between the university museum and the historical archive, both part of the Cultural and Historical Heritage Unit of the University. The university museum projected three phases of work during the pandemic.

Firstly, there was re-use and re-editing of contents previously available online, initially through promoting the use of previously created and disseminated online resources that were dispersed through different platforms and outlets. For example, this included a collection of podcasts that relate to heritage topics and artworks from the museum available via the university radio station website. There were also blog articles that shared previously, a selection of these were disseminated via social media.<sup>6</sup> Videos previously produced in collaboration with other institutions and available in external websites were collected in a central platform for resources. The museum had also been using the open-access platform *Roundme* for virtual tours, this obviously became increasingly important as an engagement link when the museum buildings were not physically accessible.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Vermont Art Online, <http://www.vermontartonline.org>

<sup>6</sup> Examples of Universidad del Rosario social media Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MuseoUrosario/> Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/museo\\_ur/](https://www.instagram.com/museo_ur/) Twitter: [https://twitter.com/museo\\_ur?lang=en](https://twitter.com/museo_ur?lang=en)

<sup>7</sup> Some Universidad del Rosario virtual tours, the Portrait Gallery at the "Aula Máxima" <https://roundme.com/tour/24534/view/117015/> . Take a tour of the Gallery of Independence Heroes <https://roundme.com/tour/24535/view/59464> . Discover the altarpiece of the Chapel La Bordadita <https://roundme.com/tour/24535/view/117174> .

In the second phase online tours and other educational activities were launched using Zoom and Roundme. As activity with on-site tours has been affected and this was seen as a vital role for new students and other visitors, it was important to re-think this activity within the limits and possibilities of online tools. With screen-sharing options to help enable live excursions using the virtual tour online, museum staff intended to develop a dialogic experience for visitors to the digital platforms. Extending social media capabilities was also seen as strategically important new development. This involved the design of Instagram ‘filters’ using artworks of the collection and GIFs with particular themes. Staff were also publishing games and challenges via social media, these were especially intended for the university community.

A third phase involved webpage renovation and the use of new tools to show online exhibits. Due to the urgency of promoting online museum resources, there was a need for renovating the webpage into a more visually attractive suite of pages and, in particular, consolidating in one section all the previously dispersed online resources. Furthermore, sharing collections online through platforms such as Google Arts and Culture became another of the museum’s priorities.

The Universidad del Rosario also reported that conservation activities faced major challenges in the COVID-19 scenario. This was because it was not possible to access their restoration workshop, contracted conservation staff were therefore forced to work remotely on research and documentation activities, temporarily leaving aside on-site conservation work. The museum did not intend to affect or cancel these contracts, as part of the university’s policy of approaching the difficult situation with resilience and solidarity.

### **Initial reflections**

The initial impacts outlined above all capture a sense of unpreparedness of workplaces when it became apparent that working patterns and behaviour would be severely disrupted by the pandemic. It is also fair to say this was similar to the initial impacts felt at many workplaces globally. This resulted from lockdown requirements and the need for workplaces to reconceptualise how tasks could be done without physically attending the university museum or gallery. From the global responses provided above most university museums were closed, at least in the early stages of the pandemic. There were some attempts at reopening after the first wave had passed in some places, this was followed by closures when second and third waves impacted. In other places universities and their museums remained closed for most of the year.

The challenge of working from home to keep museum and collections viable as central parts of university business was variable. Those universities with well-structured governance arrangements for their museums and collections and with centralised museum services within the university that already successfully advocated for resources within the institution were probably better placed to negotiate and survive the workplace transition than those that did not.

From the reflective questions asked in November 2020 some nine months after the original closures of physical museum spaces, it was apparent that most places thought they had been on a massive learning curve during the year, with many saying there was a lot more to add to their initial responses during the earliest stages of the pandemic.

Another issue that many university museums had to confront that was not necessarily apparent during the initial phase of the pandemic was the impact of budget cuts by their host universities who were suffering financially as a result of the pandemic and the cancellation of classes and reduction of revenue from foreign students. For example, the Botanical Garden and Palaeontological Museum of the University of Florence were reopened late in May 2020 and their Anthropological Museum in early June. They were open just on the weekend because of university budget cuts, however they recorded good numbers of visitors, similar to levels recorded prior to the pandemic. By early November there was, once more, a total closure of museums in Italy. All museums, including university museums in Italy received some form of government support as a result of the pandemic. This underscores the fact that national agendas and priorities were variable and both the university sector and the cultural sector could be impacted in different ways by decisions taken by national jurisdictions during the pandemic.

While many museums, including university museums maintained audiences with a mixture of online content, when it was possible to physically reopen, a different clientele was available. Many of those university museums that benefitted from global tourism because of their setting and unique content, discovered that this audience had essentially disappeared with the onset of the pandemic. However, this also presented the opportunity to build stronger relations with a local audience, keen to engage with cultural provision in their local areas because of an inability to travel far from home. This can be described as ‘proximity tourism’ where local communities become more aware of cultural heritage of their local regions. For university museums and collections that were already cultural providers for local communities, there was an opportunity to strengthen these connections, for those that weren’t

a cultural provider in this sense there was a new audience to discover.

For those university museums that did reopen during the pandemic, like those that were still open in some parts of the world early in the year (see notes on Asia above), these were under strictly controlled circumstances and had to meet the requirements of host universities and regional and national health jurisdictions. The imposition of requirements around physical distances, mask wearing, hand sanitising and data gathering obviously varied from place to place. The nature of public health requirements and their enforcement could also vary depending on levels of testing and what stage of pandemic development was being experienced. Many different experiences were voiced on this issue during the UMAC post-lockdown webinar series.<sup>8</sup>

While some university museums initially believed the opportunities provided by the lockdown would centre on digital or physical engagement with external communities, some found themselves reorienting work programs after a while. As the months went on, and with the beginning of the new academic year, the University of St Andrews museum's efforts became refocused – largely to support and enhance student experience and wellbeing. They initially began thinking along the lines of developing a specific wellbeing programme – of which our Museum Storytime was at the centre. However, as their thoughts developed, it became clear that developing the entire programme around the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing'<sup>9</sup> was the most appropriate way to develop their wellbeing agenda. Subsequently every one of their events was carefully designed to contribute to the Five Ways to Wellbeing.

As with many other university museum services, St Andrews also took the opportunity to re-evaluate their online programming in consultation with their student community. They discovered that the artistic community in St Andrews lacked an artistic hub – therefore, they worked with a student society to develop an online workshop series focused on identity, with an online home on Microsoft Teams.

St Andrews also used the lockdown period to work towards a decolonisation strategy, strongly supported by the student community. This involved a *Critical Conversations* series, discussing the issues at the heart of museum practice. All their other public engagement programs adopted a form of digital delivery.

In terms of providing services to internal audiences and supported by the

<sup>8</sup> UMAC webinar 'Reopening to the Public Part 1' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDEZr6KT1Ss&list=PLLFNQIYJV3y-r6F2ZlzlD76-Fd-4o6cp&index=2&t=26s> UMAC webinar 'Reopening to the Public Part 2' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0-30h-bTqo&list=PLLFNQIYJV3y-r6F2ZlzlD76-Fd-4o6cp&index=1&t=1271s>

<sup>9</sup> Five ways to Well-being (UK), <https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-yourself/five-ways-to-wellbeing/>

Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund and developed by Mnemoscene, a project was initiated during the Covid-19 pandemic to meet the needs of The University of St. Andrews in the development of its “dual delivery” online and on-campus teaching. Exhibit was developed in response to the challenge of providing an engaging and interactive experience using the museums and special collections. It addresses the sensory and tactile encounters students would have with this original material.

As a result, the university museum believes it has dramatically scaled up their digital engagement. The pandemic has brought forward much of the digital engagement offers they had aspired to develop – and, in consultation with their audiences, had encouraged them to ‘think outside the box’. As a result, this university museum group believe the focus of their responsibilities had shifted towards their internal audiences, particularly through ‘dual delivery’ teaching. They were surprised and encouraged by the embrace of the digital at St Andrews.

A similar story unfolded in South Africa with the University of Pretoria Museums. In terms of the balance of teaching, research and engagement changing during the pandemic, this university museum service believed that their efforts swung heavily towards both the inward university community engagement and public engagement to enhance understanding that the University of Pretoria Museums continued to function despite lockdown. They believe this demonstrated both the success of working from home strategies and resilience. They believed their impact was greater online than they could have ever anticipated at the start of the pandemic. They also believed the challenges had positively stimulated staff creativity.

In South America, the museums of the National University of La Plata have remained closed since March 14, 2020 and, at the time of writing, it is still unclear as to what date in 2021 they will be able to reopen. As noted above, their main objective was to maintain relationships with various audiences during this period. They also sense that the challenges of the new working conditions can also provoke creative responses and hope this will improve their museum practices in the longer term.

Similar to other regions, La Plata has tried to keep the balance between their work on teaching, research and engagement while developing digital content. But they note there have been challenges here with a decline in external school visitation and supporting the needs of internal audiences. In summary La Plata notes that the pandemic presented them with new possibilities and the opportunity to offer new experiences in communication of heritage. This has made them utilise professional museum networks and made them attentive to the issues faced by other museums, globally. They



believe that many of their new museum practices developed during the pandemic will continue to be utilised after it has passed because of the extra value it brings in deepening connections with various audiences.

In the United States at the University of Miami they also recognised the investment of time in developing digital content, but believed there was impetus during the pandemic towards community engagement because it was becoming more important as they sought greater relevance and community impact. They also believed that staff resilience in the face of challenges posed by the pandemic was a defining feature of the university museum's response.

In Asia at the National University of Taiwan they also identified a change in the balance between teaching research and community engagement. There was a perception of a greater focus on research activities and support and time to work with collections and think about forward exhibition planning post-pandemic. This is interesting given that there was still some physical access to collections and exhibition spaces as noted above. They also recognised that with the university museum being open during the pandemic there was a much greater workload for individual staff members, particularly around health control regulation responsibilities for visitors.

From the above responses we can initially surmise that the impact of the pandemic has been uneven on different parts of the global university museum sector. It has varied because of the severity of the pandemic and the timing of different waves of the pandemic and different national and institutional responses. One universal outcome seems to have been the challenge to develop greater digital engagement with all audiences, be they the specialised internal audiences of teaching and learning or the more generalised community audiences. The future of university museums and collections throughout the world after the pandemic will obviously depend to a significant degree on changes to the university sector itself. However, there is certainly a sense of optimism at least among some colleagues that the challenges of a changing operating environment can be met with creative new museum work that will still position some university museums and collections as central to the core business of their host institutions.

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We hope that this paper will stimulate further discussion and analysis of the impact of covid-19 on the museums and collections of the higher education sector.

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