

MUSEUMS AND CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

# ICOM MEMORIAL LECTURES 2016

## READER

**ICOM** international  
council  
of museums

2016 ICOM MILANO  
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"إن الشاهد الأكثر مصداقية على نهضة مدينة تدمر وروعة وعظمة ماضيها هو آثارها المهيبة الرائعة التي لم يستطع الزمن ولا وحشية البرابرة الجاهلة طمسها بالكامل. إن غضبهم الجامح على كل شيء أجنبي هو سبب عدم شهرة هذه الحضارة لدينا و عدم علمنا بأرقى آثار و بقايا قديمة يمكن مشاهدتها في مكان واحد بالعالم"،

"The most uncontradicted witness of Palmyra's resurrection and old splendour is testified by the glory of its magnificent ruins; which neither time nor the ignorant cruelty of the barbarians could obliterate completely. Their unrestraint rage against all things foreign is the cause for the lack of fame reaching us, of the noblest remnants of antiquities, to be seen at this singular place in the world."







ICOM International, ICOM Austria, ICOM Milano 2016,  
CECA, ICEE, ICTOP and INTERCOM  
invited to the

## ICOM MEMORIAL LECTURES 2016

ON THE OCCASION OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH  
GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MUSEUMS  
MILAN, ITALY

**In Respectful Memory Of Syrian Museum Colleagues  
Who Suffered Violent Deaths While On Duty  
Qassem Abdallh Yehya (1978–2015)  
Khaled al Asaad (1934–2015)**

We were honoured to host the ICOM Memorial Lectures 2016 dedicated to our Syrian museum colleagues who were killed defending cultural heritage which they loved and tried to protect. Museums, cultural heritage and professionals have become deliberate targets in armed conflicts. What can we do to confront nationalism, xenophobia, extremism and to promote diversity? ICOM Milano 2016 gathered 3500 museum peers and experts from all over the world. It offered unique occasions to build up new professional and personal relations, explore innovative intercultural projects, and develop sound approaches to global changes, and with this, to further the development of peaceful and inclusive museum landscapes.

***Dr Alberto Garlandini, President, ICOM Milano 2016***  
***Prof Daniele Jalla, President, ICOM Italy***



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## FOREWORD

### Danielle Spera, President, ICOM Austria

ICOM Austria is proud to have taken patronage of the 4th Memorial Lectures at the 24th ICOM General Conference in Milan 2016. We are grateful that our partners – the International Committees of CECA, ICEE, ICTOP and INTERCOM stood with us to support this important interdisciplinary exchange and cooperation of museum professionals from different fields within ICOM.

I especially want to thank Prof Dr Hans-Martin Hinz, the President of ICOM (2010–2016) and Prof Dr Anne-Catherine Robert-Hauglustaine, our Director General for their generous support; not to forget President Dr Alberto Garlandini, the brilliant organiser of this wonderful General Conference in Milano who did not hesitate to include the ICOM Memorial Lectures 2016 in the conference-programme. I would also like to thank Otto Hochreiter, ICOM Austria's treasurer and director of the Austrian GrazMuseum, who permitted reproduction of Johann B. Fischer von Erlach's engraving "Die Ruinen der Statt Palmyra" (1721) for the visuals. Last – but not least – my special thanks go out to our colleague Dr Hadwig Kraeutler, who again volunteered to take on the responsibility for the overall preparations and running of the Memorial Lectures 2016 and also to ICOM Austria's Managing Director Mag Elke Kellner. Thank you all for your invaluable support!

In 2016 the theme of 'Museums and Cultural Landscapes' has been the central topic of ICOM, culminating at the General Conference in Milan, especially focusing on the dialogue between nature and history, between natural and cultural heritage. Museums all over the world play a crucial role promoting sustainability and safeguarding our cultural heritage. Among ICOM's largest committees, ICOM Austria contributes know-how and expertise for museums in this field. Starting last year, we had the pleasure of initiating a series of talks

and lectures – the "ICOM Palmyra Talks" – focussing on "Culture under Attack and Saving our Global Cultural Heritage," welcoming renowned guests like UNESCO's Director General Irina Bokova and the Syrian Director of Antiquities, Prof Dr Maamoun Abdulkarim.

In September 2015, when we started the series with a lecture by Prof Dr Schmid-Colinet, the highly respected archaeologist who had led excavations in Palmyra for about 30 years, the famous temples of Baal Shamin and Bel had just been destroyed and our ICOM colleague Khaled Asaad had been appallingly murdered by IS-terrorists. Dr Asaad was a renowned archaeologist and scholar; he was head of antiquities at the ancient UNESCO World Heritage Site of Palmyra for more than a half-century. He gave his life to working for the preservation of the historical site of Palmyra, so important to the culture and history of humankind. We also remember our museum colleague Qassem Abdallh Yehya, who was killed by terrorist mortars in August 2015, as he was working at the Damascus citadel – leading emergency evacuations and documenting the museum artefacts.

The extremist brutality in countries like Iraq, Syria and Libya has led to the loss of countless lives and to destruction and plundering of hundreds of ancient sites. But we will not tolerate the annihilation of our collective history and identity! We stand united to fight the destruction of our common heritage and the illicit trading of cultural goods. In the context of ongoing violence and unrest we have to enforce and unite our efforts and I am very thankful that this year's ICOM Memorial Lectures reminded us of what we are capable to do if we are all working together.

### Hans-Martin Hinz, President, ICOM

Dear ICOM colleagues,  
ladies and gentlemen,

As President of ICOM it is a great pleasure for me to welcome all in Milan for a very special event within the programme of the General Conference 2016: the ICOM Memorial Lectures 2016, which include the 70 Years' Jubilee Lecture, the 4th Alma S. Wittlin Memorial Lecture, and the 11th Stephen E. Weil Memorial Lecture.

I thank ICOM's National Committee of Austria, its Chair, Dr Danielle Spera and especially Dr Hadwig Kraeutler, and the four ICOM International Committees: those for Education and Cultural Action (CECA), for the Training of Personnel (ICTOP), for Exhibition and Exchange (ICEE) and for Management (INTERCOM), for offering such a forum for an interdisciplinary discourse. This series was launched for the first time during the ICOM General Conference in Vienna in 2007 and continues until today. Thank you as well to ICOM Italy and the Milan organisers for helping to prepare this event.

The lectures we will hear today will deal with theoretical and practical issues related to current discussions about ethics and social functions of museums and museum work and about future developments in our profession. In this sense, the event will offer key input and interdisciplinary reflection.

It is my pleasure to welcome the three speakers: Ms Bernice Murphy from Australia, former Vice President of ICOM and former Chair of ICOM's Ethics Committee, René Rivard, Fellow, Canadian Museums Association and former Director of Interpretation Services at Parks Canada as well as M. Cristina Vannini, former Secretary General of INSULA-UNESCO, of ICOM Italy.

Before we start with the programme I want to invite you for a moment of silence in order to honour two museum colleagues who were murdered at the hands of terrorists in Syria:

Qassem Abdallh Yehya was killed on 12th August 2015 at his workplace in the Damascus Citadel and Khaled Mohamad al Asaad, former Director of Palmyra's Antiquities Department, was killed on 18th August 2015 (minute of silence).

Let us now proceed with the ICOM Memorial Lectures 2016.





### Anne-Catherine Robert-Hauglustaine, Director General, ICOM

It was with great professional pride and respect and at the same time profound sadness that I called attention to and introduced the ICOM Memorial Lectures 2016.

Pride and respect were nourished by the tremendous work and impact which ICOM-individuals and the ICOM-community have evidently been issuing in the past 70 years and are continuing to deliver day after day. The sadness was caused by knowingly acknowledging that museums, cultural and natural heritage, museum workers are part and parcel of mental and cultural landscapes, and are often also subject to threat and violation.

Similar to the terror responsible for many museum peoples' distress, and for the deaths of our be-mour-ned Syrian colleagues, it was terror which caused Alma Wittlin's flight from the German speaking into the Anglophone mental and professional landscapes, where she eventually became quite influential. In 1948, almost 70 years ago, Alma Wittlin took part as a delegate of the British Ministry of Education in the first General Conference of ICOM, held in Paris. It had been the ICOM-founders' hope then, that cultural work can and would foster non-violent and democratic procedures and developments for all of humankind. Such most probably had also been the basic drive for Alma Wittlin's and Stephen Weil's untiring museum enthusiasm and creative inspiration. To honour their work in this sense with the fourth edition of ICOM Memorial Lectures, and to reflect on the 2016 Conference theme, 'Museums and Cultural Landscapes', considering their achievements, clear thinking, optimistic and visionary approaches, was a sensible thing to do.

These notions were taken up in the three lectures, held by experienced museum professionals whom it was my honour to introduce. First to speak to us was highly esteemed ICOM colleague, Bernice Murphy, who presented the ICOM 70 Years' Jubilee Lecture 'ICOM 70 YEARS ON: An ethical vision of nature, culture, heritage, and museums continuing social mission'.

Bernice Murphy, former National Director Museums Australia, not only is a long standing ICOM supporter, specialist, expert and manager of cultural enterprises. She has indeed been decisive in shaping ICOM in theory and practice. Bernice Murphy was Chair of ICOM's Ethics Committee (from 2004 to 2011), and served on ICOM's Executive Council (1995–2004) for nine years, six as Vice-President. She also chaired the ICOM Reform Task Force which conducted a comprehensive review of ICOM to re-purpose it for the twenty-first century, issuing reform-guidelines adopted in 2001.

We are also deeply grateful and indebted to Bernice Murphy as she acted as General Editor of the milestone publication marking ICOM's 70th anniversary, *Museums, Ethics and Cultural Heritage* (Routledge, 2016) which was launched at the 24th General Conference of ICOM.

The 4th Alma S. Wittlin Memorial Lecture, 'MUSEUMS, ETHICS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE' was given by highly esteemed colleague, René Rivard, Fellow of the Canadian Museums Association, specialist, scholar and long-term champion of ICOM. ▶



### Anne-Catherine Robert-Hauglustaine, Director General, ICOM

René Rivard, nominated by ICTOP, is a senior museologist and consultant, museum planner and heritage programmer, and has 45 years of experience in museums, heritage and related sites. His expertise and specialisation in heritage interpretation, presentation, and enhancement, and in cultural development, lead him to do various consulting works for UNESCO in many African countries. René Rivard, the Chief Executive Officer of CULTURA BUREAU D'ÉTUDES (OUTRE-MONT, CN), to date, helped to create or renovate some 200 museums and produced over 40 major exhibitions.

The 11th Stephen E. Weil Memorial Lecture, 'REVISITING WEIL's CABINET OF CURIOSITY. Looking inside the "Cabinet" twenty-one years after' was given by our Italian ICOM colleague, M. Cristina Vannini, nominated by INTERCOM.

Ms. Vannini had started out as an archaeologist before founding soluzionimuseali-ims, an Italian consultant agency in 2004. Her curriculum is transversal to several interests, which she has followed with strong engagement and passion. Ms. Vannini also worked in the marketing field and in a stock exchange company where she was in charge of the archives. She was Secretary General of INSULA-UNESCO, Board member of ICOM Italy, Secretary General of ICOM Italy (2012–2014), and ran for the Presidency there. At present, Ms. Vannini is Trustee of the Board of the European Museum Forum where she has been involved since 2006, and member of the Board of ICOFOM. She lectures in Italian Universities, and is consultant of the EU Commission DG Education and Culture.

Taking the lead from the theme of ICOM's 24th General Conference, 'Museums and Cultural Landscapes' organized in Milan, Italy, the three lectures treated fundamental theoretical and practical museum issues, relating to ethics, current practice, and to the social functions of museums, their tasks and relevancy for social developments.

I would like to thank the three speakers for so beautifully sharing their erudite and scholarly knowledge with us in Milan, and for generously allowing us to further connect with the ICOM Community worldwide by making their lectures available for publication on the internet.

Other than to all the ICOM Committees involved, foremost those of Austria and Italy, my thanks for the careful preparation and running of the Memorial Lectures event, and of its documentation in the form of this reader, go to our colleague Hadwig Kraeutler, who has continually supported and advocated the ICOM Memorial Lectures, and without whose dedication this important interchange and collaboration would not have happened.

#### ICOM 70 YEARS' JUBILEE LECTURE

Bernice L. Murphy  
– ICOM 70 years on: An ethical vision of nature, culture, heritage and museums' continuing social mission

#### 4<sup>TH</sup> ALMA S. WITTLIN MEMORIAL LECTURE

René Rivard  
– Museums and Changing Cultural Landscapes

#### 11<sup>TH</sup> STEPHEN E. WEIL MEMORIAL LECTURE

M. Cristina Vannini  
– Looking inside the "Cabinet" twenty-one years after



Bernice L. Murphy

### ICOM 70 years on: An ethical vision of nature, culture, heritage and museums' continuing social mission

In August 2015, a shocked world learned that ISIS had executed Khaled al-Asaad, the Syrian archaeologist who had devoted his life to the study of Palmyra [1]. The reflections aroused by this tragedy are deep and harsh.

There have been so many photographs published in international media of the archaeological sites at Palmyra, but there have also been disturbing aspects to this coverage. There is a certain typical image I want to question, which has few if any people present, and projects a certain 'trope' about archaeology. [Fig. 1]

In this case, it is of the recapture of an idealised view of the ancient Egyptian, Semitic and Graeco-Roman world of antiquity. This idealised projection, in its elimination of signs of connection with living communities today, removes awareness that Palmyra's heritage has been close to continuing and culturally diverse communities through much of two thousand years.

In fact there was a community still living in mud-walled huts within the ancient Palmyra site right through to the early 20th century [2], when it was relocated – to make way for French archaeological excavation around



Fig. 1 • The ruins of Palmyra in 2010  
[<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palmyra>; Accessed: June 2016].

the Temple of Bel in the early 1930s. The archaeological area of Palmyra, if it is to be strongly valued, interpreted and protected, must continue to be cared for by Syrian people and living, local communities. Archaeological sites cannot be protected by archaeologists!

There is a need for the museums and heritage community to engage critically with this tendency to picture historic sites of antiquity without living social communities. This point summons up a broader issue of concern in this address: I refer here to museums' much-needed *co-responsive engagement with our rapidly changing and diverse social communities* today in our continuing care for heritage.

### ICOM's beginnings: Rebuilding a scarred world (1946)

The concept of humanity's shared inheritance transmitted in the forms, places, buildings, sites and interpretive activities through which museums carry out their work, was a notion animating the founding of ICOM after World War II.

As the ICOM community again experiences an important anniversary in Milan, during this 70th year of the organisation's existence, there are sadly disturbing reminders of the context of ICOM's first gathering, in 1946. The atmosphere was marked by a scarred world consciousness and a moral anxiety as to how to rebuild better relations between nations. A key statement from 1946 is found in the preamble to UNESCO's constitution, noting that: '[S]ince wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed'. [3] As we know, ICOM's creation was quite closely tied to UNESCO's founding, to achieve a partner NGO body to UNESCO's work on behalf of culture, education and heritage in the IGO sphere.

I consider that historical situation further by turning briefly to a powerful image within the symbolic structures of art that expresses the complex character – and important ambiguity – of that post-World War II context. Among the various artworks UNESCO commissioned for its new building, when constructed in the 1950s in Paris, was a large mural work by Pablo Picasso, *The Descent of Icarus* (1958) – recording the classical mythological figure whose wings melted through flying too close to the sun [Fig. 2]. ▶



Bernice L. Murphy

This painting is located in the UNESCO Conferences Hall and I have viewed the work many times when attending annual gatherings of ICOM. However I now pay tribute to a fine article on Picasso's work, published recently by Timothy Clark (2016), which illuminates this complex painting in new ways.



Fig. 2 • Pablo Picasso, *The Descent of Icarus/La chute d'Icare* (1958), UNESCO Conferences Hall, Paris. Acrylic on 40 wooden panels, 910 x 1060 cm. (Succession Picasso 2012; Photo: UNESCO/J-C Bernath) [<http://www.unesco.org/artcollection/NavigationAction.do?idOeuvre=2929&nouvelleLangue=en>; Accessed: 11 September 2016].

*The Descent of Icarus* is a work strangely suggestive of the post-WW II atmosphere of a near-ruined world, with an old order having collapsed. Life resumes (the isolated images of bathers during summer's beach activities – a favourite theme of Picasso) but the strange trapezoid shape of the whole picture, with no unified horizon, is dominated by an archaic, almost prehistoric skeleton of a creature crashing into the sea. *The Descent of Icarus* presents a hauntingly dislocated composition. Icarus, often understood as a symbol of *hubris*, defying nature, is presented by Picasso in a 'post-heroic image', from a world that has experienced the collapse of old ideals and ruinous disorder – strangely resonant again today as we contemplate so many dystopic scenes of seemingly insoluble conflict across our contemporary landscape in the 21st century.

## ICOM's vision as an organisation: Looking outward; looking inward

Recently, during my research on the history of the Australian museums sector's involvement in ICOM, I found a fascinating record of the late 1940s – from a report, soon after the founding meeting (in the Louvre) in November 1946.

It expresses a vision of what was hoped for ICOM as a new organisation. The key statement was in correspondence from founding ICOM president, Chauncey J Hamlin (a previous President of the American Association of Museums); yet it does not appear in ICOM's own history of the organisation, published in 1998. [4]

Hamlin's statement reads as follows (the masculine pronouns are of their time; *emphases* by the author):  
Through museums man *may grow to understand all other men in time and place*. There is no more *direct and powerful avenue of sympathetic penetration into other peoples' cultures*. It is with museums, *organised to serve man as powerful and efficient agents of education in a very complete sense*, that the International Council of Museums is concerned. [5]

The momentum of this statement is clearly outwards, expressing the desired impact of museums in the world, and providing a strong vision of museums' social purpose. Notably, Hamlin says nothing about nations – only 'peoples'. And he stresses museums' *agency* in promoting 'growth' through learning, affirming education 'in a very complete sense'.

So what happened to this broad vision of Chauncey Hamlyn? I present a few quotations below, not as a critique of ICOM, but as a way of illustrating a much broader point about how museum people seem unable to prevent a tendency to turn inward, and to forget the need to state a broader purpose that communicates their social role in clear public terms. (Emphases are by the author).

We find the first definition of 'Museums' incorporated into the ICOM Constitution of 1946:

The word 'museums' *includes all collections open to the public, of artistic, technical, scientific, historical or archaeological material ...* [6] ▶



Bernice L. Murphy

It is a straightforward, factual definition (and unusually in the plural). However compare this with the (second) 'Museum' definition of five years later, as contained in ICOM's 1951 Statutes:

The word *museum* ... denotes any permanent establishment, administered in the general interest, for the purpose of preserving, studying, enhancing by various means and, in particular, of exhibiting to the public for its delectation and instruction, groups of objects and specimens of cultural value ... [7]

The above sentence is not only overloaded, and a poor sentence, but startling for its condescending tone towards 'the public'. Now look at ICOM's interpretation of its founding purpose eight years later, as expressed in the revised, 1989 Statutes, adopted at the Hague:

ICOM ... [is] established to advance the interests of museology and other disciplines concerned with museum management and operations. [8]

It is striking through these quotations how much Chauncey Hamlyn's broad vision of ICOM's founding had changed over four decades: from a body focused on 'museums, organised to serve man as powerful and efficient agents of education in a very complete sense', to an organisation 'advancing the interests of museology' and 'concerned with museum management and operations'.

I notice in the latest revised Statutes, adopted in Milan in 2016, that the ideal of a short Mission statement has 'research', 'conservation', and 'continuation' in first positions – but 'interpretation' (which was included

previously as a key value) has been dropped altogether in favour of 'communication'. The current Mission reads:

ICOM is ... *committed to the research, conservation, continuation and communication of the world's diverse cultural heritage*. [9]

I want to draw our attention to this repeated tendency over these seven decades for our organisation to turn inwards, towards the disciplinary procedures of museums, rather than turn outwards towards the world, towards the broad objectives and global social impact as laid out in Chauncey Hamlin's founding vision.

A further reason for highlighting this pattern is that ICOM now has a Working Group reviewing the current ICOM definition of a museum (in the ICOM Statutes). There is now a real chance to consider whether the definition that has been in place since 1974 (with very little change, except for the addition of 'intangible heritage') might be re-cast to be more suitable for the 21st century.

Today, the most significant shifts of recent decades are being manifested in the increased turning of many museums towards direct interaction with *communities*. Museums are pursuing *co-responsive work* with their rapidly changing and ever more diverse social communities – locally, nationally, electronically, and according to special disciplinary interests, distributed globally. Museums are today learning from their communities, and being more responsive to their needs.

## Exhibitions mediating the museum experience

I want to suggest one resonant point in passing: about how clinging to old habits of definition (with collections always in first place) is contradicted by the realities of how the ever-expanding audiences of today actually *experience museums, which is through the innovative functions of exhibitions*. Exhibitions are often the most potent and dynamic form through which *museum resources and knowledge most widely become known*. This has had a telling effect on *collections* in many institutions, which are often re-designed and presented with the latest interpretive technologies deployed since the 1970s through temporary exhibitions.

## An integrated modelling of cultural values: The Cycle of Culture and Heritage

The issue of values underlies and connects all of our work through museums. I have found it important in my own work for museums over many years to have a coherent and inclusive modelling of culture and its processes.

The following, dynamic, and constantly interactive model, which I developed some years ago [Fig. 3] – describing a continuous, and self-renewing *cycle* – underlies all of the work that I do, no matter how specific or diverse, and no matter in what type of cultural activity or which type of museum. ►



Bernice L. Murphy

## The Cycle of Culture & Heritage

(A working model by Bernice L. Murphy)

All parts are dynamic and interacting, individually and collectively: all societies, everywhere, all times.



Fig. 3 • The cycle is non-linear. It expresses how I think of cultural processes evolving across space and time, and is valid for all societies (including indigenous societies), throughout human history.

[Source: Bernice L. Murphy].

At the centre of the cycle's diagram are three overlapping and interconnected circles, conveying fundamental concepts linking all human existence:

- environment
- society
- culture

The four larger circles around this core describe the processes by which *culture* functions dynamically, forming the structure and fabric of *heritage*. There is a simple word concept forming a *keyword* at the centre of each of the larger circles. The words are easily understood as general terms.

- *create*
- *experience*
- *interpret*
- *preserve*
- [and again] *create ... experience ... interpret ... preserve ...*

Finally, the model indicates a series of mediating institutions (our institutions), engaged and assisting these processes.

- **museums**
- **galleries**
- **collections**
- **keeping places**
- **archives**
- **libraries**



Fig. 4 • Ai Weiwei, *Safe Passage*, 15 February 2016, Konzerthaus Berlin  
[<http://berlinrefugees.com/ai-weiwei-refugee-art-installation/>  
Accessed: February 2016].

## Challenges for museums navigating the dilemmas of heritage care in today's world

I end this presentation with one powerful, resonant image of today's turbulent world, by a major artist of our times, and from a continent outside Europe. I refer to Ai Weiwei's installation, *Safe Passage* (2016), realised on the exterior of the Konzerthaus in Berlin (Mitte) in February 2016 [Fig. 4], and focused on fleeing refugees from Syria and northern Africa. ▶

Bernice L. Murphy

Instead of classical columns swathed in festive garlands, Ai Weiwei's work utilises a stark fabric emblem of our troubled times: the inflatable life-jackets employed by thousands of refugees braving a dangerous Mediterranean crossing from the Turkish coast to the Greek island of Lesbos. Thousands have also perished on this desperate bid for freedom.

Through all of its activities and touch-points with partner professional organizations at international, national and regional levels, the extent of ICOM's connections and influence on behalf of museums across some 140 countries is incalculable in numerical terms. ICOM acts globally as a vital 'network of networks'.

The demands are high in these troubled times that we emulate the finest achievements of ICOM's existence. It is imperative that ICOM renew its commitment to turn outwards towards the world that calls upon the most resolute efforts of museums to support and rebuild links across the divisions that divide humankind in the continued care of a shared heritage today.

## Notes

- [1] Daniel Johnson, 'Why Palmyra Should Matter To The West', *Standpoint Magazine*, October 2015 [<http://standpointmag.co.uk/features-october-2015-palmyra-daniel-johnson-should-matter-to-the-west>; Accessed: February 2016].
- [2] Jose Antonio Gonzalez Zarandona, 'Against ISIS' destruction of heritage, and for curators as the cure of souls', *The Conversation*, August 25, 2015 [<http://theconversation.com/against-isis-destruction-of-heritage-and-for-curators-as-the-cure-of-souls-46601>; Accessed: 30 August 2015].
- [3] Fernando Valderrama, *A History of UNESCO*. (Paris: UNESCO, 1995), 24.
- [4] Sid Ahmed Baghli, Patrick Boylan and Yani Herreman, *History of ICOM: 1946-1996* (International Council of Museums, Paris: UNESCO, 1998).
- [5] 'Extracts from Report on the Proceedings of the First Meeting of the International Council of Museums, held at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, November, 16-20, 1946', *AGMANZ News Bulletin* (Bulletin of the Art Galleries and Museums Association of Australia and New Zealand) No. 1 (February 1947), 2.
- [6] Development of the Museum Definition according to ICOM Statutes (2007-1946): ICOM Constitution, 1946, Article II, Section 2 [[http://archives.icom.museum/hist\\_def\\_eng](http://archives.icom.museum/hist_def_eng); Accessed: August 2015].
- [7] Ibid.
- [8] Ibid.
- [9] Revision of ICOM Statutes, adopted by the 2016 General Assembly, Milan (9 July 2016 - Resolutions).



René Rivard

### Museums and changing cultural landscapes

It is with great pleasure that I accepted the invitation to give the Alma Wittlin Memorial Lecture this year, not only because of my deep appreciation of her brilliant work but also because she was definitely instrumental to me when I started to work in the profession some 45 years ago. And I'll tell you why ...

In 1973, I was appointed Chief of Interpretation and Museum Services at the National Historic Sites and National Parks Service for the province of Québec, Canada. My mandate was to organize, train and manage a full team of about 35 heritage site and museum planners, exhibit designers, illustrators, and audio-visual specialists for the development of museums, interpretation centres, and major history exhibitions in more than 30 national sites and institutions. It was a big undertaking, hard to tackle since we did not have in Québec in those years a great deal of know-how and experience in the fields of museology, especially in valorising and presenting heritage sites, archaeology, human history, and the natural environment. So I was looking for every possible tool I could find to make a success of the endeavour I had undertaken with a young, enthusiastic, and creative group. We definitely wanted to stay away from the conventional formulas in use at that time.

A book landed on my desk. It was Alma Wittlin's *Museums: In Search of a Usable Future* [1]. Grouping the words "usable" and "future" struck me like a revelation. The first word meant possibility and common sense, the second pointed towards openness and creativity. Merging them together gave me a sense of achievement and success I could foresee and more so, I could grasp. When I looked inside the book, I found not only a well-researched history of museums, but also what I was exactly looking for. It proposed in Chapter 6: 'A Twelve-Point Program for Museum Renewal' [2]. Many points in this program really influenced my search for a 'usable future' in heritage sites and museums. So, way back in 1974, I decided these principles would be a constant target for me, and a real quest in the museum projects and exhibitions I would eventually work for. And I must say I have kept this pledge ever since. Thank you, Mrs Wittlin!

In this museum renewal program, points 5 and 6 are the most important for me as point 5 proposes to re-centre each museum and its programs within the essentials of its purpose and mission, and within the presentation topics that can be derived from the potential of its collections. Point 6, on the other hand, points to the danger of exhibitions driven solely by curators. Alma Wittlin proposes that every museum planning and exhibition team be composed of at least three people: the curator, the designer, and the interpreter or communicator to whom she gives a specific place to foster balance between scientific content and its effective communication to the visitor.

### Museums, "naming" agents, and the changing landscapes

As we can see, Alma Wittlin is still present today in the museum world through her strong and practical recommendations, which were gradually adopted by museum workers. Many of today's practices are certainly inspired by her writings and I am sure she would agree with the question I am now asking you to look at with me.

Are we ready for the 21st century and its ever-changing and stimulating cultural landscapes? This question is closely related to the theme of our ICOM general conference. I just inserted in it the word "changing" in the title of this Memorial Lecture since, for me, landscapes are not static. They are in constant evolution, be they natural or cultural, material or even intangible landscapes.

This reminds me of a little story. In the early 1980s, I was preparing a national conference on heritage interpretation and I asked Pierre Perrault, a famous Québec moviemaker, to be our keynote speaker and tell us of the best ways of interpreting and presenting the St. Lawrence River, this majestic waterway linking the Great Lakes from the centre of North America to the Atlantic Ocean. He knew the river quite well since he had already done five or six movies on the St. Lawrence River. One of them – *Pour la suite du monde* – became famous for its re-enactment of the traditional beluga hunt in the estuary, at Isle-aux-Coudres. ►

## René Rivard

Perrault readily accepted my invitation. At the conference, though, he said:

My message will be very short. Only a few words:  
The St. Lawrence River cannot be properly interpreted with the words found in European dictionaries because these are too small for such a river, for such landscapes, for such magnitude!  
Coming to America, Europeans should have learned and switched to Native languages. We, their descendants, would be better equipped today to express the diversity and amplitude of the St. Lawrence, rather than calling it by the meaningless name of a third-century Roman martyr.  
The language genius of First People is to have for the St. Lawrence River as many names as needed, depending on where they are, which landscapes they're looking at, which activities they can do ...

For example, the stretch of the St. Lawrence facing Québec City was called "stadaconé" in Iroquoian, meaning "where the river narrows" and this is exactly what it is! Some say the name "Québec" comes from the Innu word "képac" meaning "time to get out of the canoe" and the location is exactly what it is, a resting stop for all travellers on the river!

Such a lesson given by Perrault on the power of words and the power to name, to translate correctly the complexity of landscapes, has questioned me ever since. And it should question museums on their role as "naming" agent to the public for their collected heritage and for many phenomena presented in their exhibitions. "Reading culture" in landscapes always appeared to me as being a task out of the ordinary. It is true that

words are often too small to describe them adequately, as they can only reveal part of what they are. In fact, they are often hidden in a kind of visual assemblage or "visual poetry" that appears now and then in our lives and our environments.

For me, cultural and natural landscapes are fascinating places, always exceeding the phenomena and size we give them and the complexity we perceive in them, as they are filled with more than just specific elements, with more than just simple components. They are a complex array or, one might say, a multi-faceted "composition" made by various degrees of reflected lights, "spot-lighting" on shapes and iridescent textures, whether they stand still or are in movement.

For me, landscapes are fascinating places because they are filled with sounds, smells and movements. Mysteries and intrigues are continuously evolving in them, including life and death. Repositories of multiple sensations and of soft to hard stimulations, landscapes can provide almost infinite possibilities for the mind, for the human experience, for shock, or for delight.

### What about the 21st century museum landscapes?

And now, let us ask: what about current museum landscapes?

When I look at today's museums, I see as many landscapes as there are types of museums, as they are led by either conservative or creative people, as they are collection-driven, or visitor-oriented, or blockbuster

addicted ... They can be described as landscapes of multiple evolving scenes, going from the materiality of objects to the intangibility of ideas and issues. Yet another question comes to mind: are museum institutions working for a better world? You all know that we are living in an age where virtual reality is not only current, but more and more on the front scene. Then, are museums living in that age? When I look at the history of museums, I see three general museological scenes resulting from almost three centuries of development.

Everyone knows the first and primal museum landscape. [3] It is the conventional one that I call in French "muséologie des objets" or "objects museology". Years ago, Hugues de Varine, former Secretary General of ICOM, coined a very short definition for this landscape: museums = building + collections + visitors, to which I later added: + curators and experts, as they are vital for collections, the prime component of conventional museums. [Fig. 1] [Fig. 2] ▶

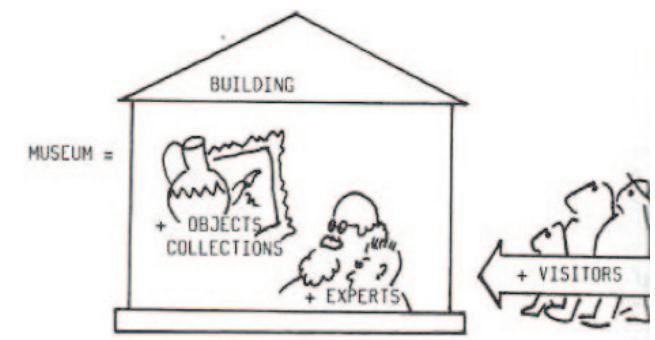


Fig. 1 • René Rivard, *Objects Museology* [museums = building + collections + visitors] (1984), Drawing.



René Rivard



Fig. 2 • First museum landscape: "conventional" museums, e.g.: Musée de la Gaspésie, Gaspé, Canada (Photo: R. Rivard, 2015); Provincial Xi'an Museum, Xi'an, China (Photo: R. Rivard, 2009).

For the past two centuries, this has been the main-stream followed by all museums, be they art museums, science and technology museums, natural history museums, or history and ethnographic museums. This museum landscape favours the quest for knowledge, contemplation and appreciation, accumulating objects and specimens proving the finds of science and the creations of human art. I will not linger on this large landscape since it is well known and is always part of today's museum landscapes.

But another museum landscape emerged a few decades after the Second World War. I call it "muséologie des sujets" or "subjects museology" as it emphasizes the presentation of various themes or subjects, supporting their messages to visitors by objects used as witnesses to the subject presented rather than for themselves. It appeared and developed mostly in the 1980s and 1990s with the development of interpretation centres, site museums, ecomuseums and what I call "open" museums. [4]

In 1979, Hugues de Varine made up another equation for these new museum experiments: ecomuseum = territory + heritage + population. [5] Here, the walls of the building and of the collections are deconstructed so the museum can reach beyond and into landscapes, into built environments, into intangible heritage ... Visitors are replaced by members of the population acting as curators of their heritage and territory, and hosting those who visit these ecomuseums and museums. [Fig. 3] [Fig. 4]

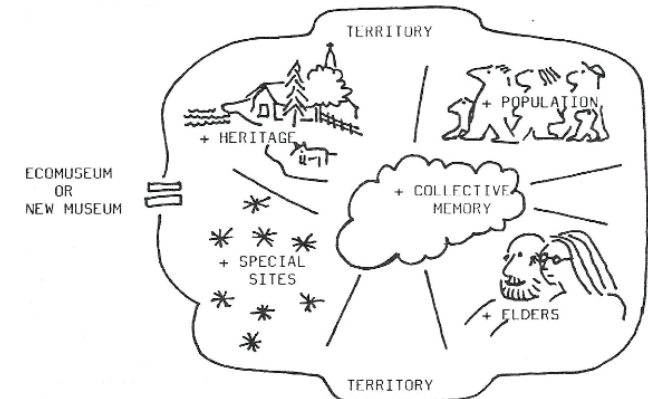


Fig. 3 • René Rivard, *Subjects museology* [Ecomuseum = territory + heritage + population] (1984), Drawing.

In this more recent landscape, we see the emergence and the development of a great number of ecomuseums, interpretation centres set up in heritage sites and parks, of new and old museums who dare to venture more deeply into the age of communication which is really developing in the 1970s and 80s. I have been for many years very much part of that movement. So were Alma Wittlin and my friend Stephen Weil. Like so many others. Like so many of you.

### "Ideas and Issues" and "Citizen museums"

And now, at the beginning of the 21st century, what do I see? Well, I am seeing a new landscape emerging [6]. In 2004, I started to call it "muséologie des idées" or "ideas and issues museology" as it is closely ▶

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Fig. 4 • Second museum landscape: "new" museums: ecomuseums, interpretation centres, e.g.: Cité de la voile Éric Tabarly, Lorient, France (Photo: R. Rivard, 2005); Ecomuseum boat tours, Seixal, Portugal (Photo: R. Rivard, 1993).



Fig. 5 • Third museum landscape: "Citizen museums", sites and museums of conscience, e.g.: National Constitution Center, Philadelphia, USA (Photo: R. Rivard, 2003); Fier Monde Citizen Ecomuseum, Montréal, Canada (Photo: R. Rivard, 2012).

related to museum ventures called "musées citoyens" or "citizen museums", as it gradually became involved in sustainability issues, validations and undertakings, and in integrating into the new media society. [Fig. 5]

If I make an equation similar to Hugues de Varine's previous definition, it could read as such: citizen and conscience museums = society and its milieu + issues, stakes and challenges + ideas, partners and social actors + committed citizens. It is rather long and more complex, as is the third museum landscape I am trying to define. This landscape shows an important switch from material culture and heritage, that is a real departure from objects per se or as witness to subjects, to some intangible aspects of our societies, to ideas, to issues affecting our lives and our milieu.

"Citizen museums" deal more and more with issues of real life and with concerns and problems, such as climate change, social justice, human rights, war and its consequences, demographics and food availability, poverty, growing cleavage between rich and poor, racism ... Museums and sites of conscience are an active part of this museum landscape. Most of these responsibility-developing museums want to convey how to become better citizens, how to repair ecological damages done to nature and so on, by stressing the importance of community, of discussions, of pooling resources, of searching and finding local possible solutions, of working for sustainability ...

And now, let me ask you two other and final questions: Are we, museums, ready for such drastic changes in museum landscapes? ►



## René Rivard

Are we ready for more "ideas and issues" museology and practices?

The answers to these questions are as many as there are museums. The answers to these questions belong to each of you, dear colleagues and museum workers, especially to you, younger generations.

In conclusion and to help you finding answers, let me give you some "food for thought" inspired by the writings of Hugues de Varine, Robert Janes, Stephen Weil, Duncan Cameron, Tomislav Sola, Peter van Mensch, Jean-Claude Duclos, not last and not least, by those of Alma Wittlin, and so many others who were or are deeply involved in social and citizen museums, in creating forums dedicated to making a better world for everyone, using the available and image-building museum resources to the best of their capacities:

We, museums, have to start from the roots, and no more show only the branches, the objects of our collections.

We, museums, have to start with the people we serve and help them build their changing cultural landscapes.

We, museums, have to raise social ideas and suggest practical tools to foster a better quality of life and of our environment.

This is what can be considered a true "democratic job" for museums.

Let us now listen to the Québec diva, Diane Dufresne, who has this very important message for us:

Let's not destroy the beauty of our world ...

Let's not destroy the songs of birds, the blue of the sky ...

Let us make the Earth a beautiful garden, for those who come after us ...

Salviamo noi la magia del mondo ...

Let us unite. Let us become advocates and promoters of good ideas.

Let us help our communities to tackle issues and solve problems.

This will be of great benefit to all of humankind.

Thank you – Grazie – Merci beaucoup.

## Notes

[1] Alma S. Wittlin. *Museums: In Search of a Usable Future* (Cambridge, MA/London, GB: MIT Press, 1970).

[2] Wittlin 1970, 203-217.

[3] Examples (accessed: July 2016): Musée de la Gaspésie, Gaspé, Canada [<http://museedelagaspesie.ca/en/>]; Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology, Drumheller, Canada [<http://www.tyrrellmuseum.com/>]; Xian Museum, Xian, China [<http://e.sxhm.com/>].

[4] Examples (accessed: July 2016): Cité de la voile Éric Tabarly, Lorient, France – [<http://www.citevoile-tabarly.com/>]; "Ludovica" exhibition, Québec City, Canada [<http://www.francisvachon.com/blog/ludovica-a-legoland-like-exhibition-opening-in-quebec-city/>]; Ecomuseum boat tours, Seixal, Portugal [[http://www.europeana-inside.eu/ecomuseu\\_municipal\\_do\\_seixal.html](http://www.europeana-inside.eu/ecomuseu_municipal_do_seixal.html)].

[5] Hugues de Varine, 'Le musée peut tuer ou... faire vivre', *techniques + ARCHITECTURE*, 326 (1979), 82-83.

[6] Examples (accessed: July 2016): National Constitution Center, Philadelphia, USA [<http://constitutioncenter.org/>]; Red Cross Museum, Geneva, Switzerland [<http://www.redcross-museum.ch/en/>]; Fier Monde Citizen Ecomuseum, Montréal, Canada [<http://ecomusee.qc.ca/en/>].

M. Cristina Vannini

## Looking inside the "Cabinet" twenty-one years after

Stephen E. Weil's *Cabinet of curiosity. Inquiries into museums and their prospects* was first published in 1995, making it twenty-one years since this curious and brilliant mind organized part of his writings into a proper publication [1].

This Memorial Lecture may sound somewhat didactic to some of you, but I am convinced that it is important to review Weil's thoughts. The 24th General Conference of ICOM hosted by Italy, with the theme "Museums and Cultural Landscapes" provides a welcome opportunity to reconsider his thoughts. Weil's work was never translated into Italian.

### Museums and Cultural Landscapes

I am sure this conference theme would have fascinated Weil, because in his meditations he outlined cultural landscapes in which museums have a specific and consistent role to play. His landscapes were mainly those of "advocacy" and "legacy", and we reflect on the role of museums in the cultural landscape, and as cultural landscapes, themselves.

What has changed in the years since Weil's meditation on museums and the museum field? How have things developed? Which are the main issues and questions that are on our agendas?

Nothing has changed and everything has, one might say: Nothing, because some issues are still debated and we might never hear the "final word" because these issues are at the very core of what the museum is and what it is for;

Everything, because the world has changed dramatically since Weil's departure, and so has the contextual cultural landscape.

Obviously, the degree of transformation of the museum field depends on the point of view from which one wishes to consider the surrounding context. Nowadays, the points of view are many, because, despite globalization, they depend essentially on geopolitics, or, if we prefer, on a geo-cultural approach, an approach for understanding why acceptance and application of models may differ significantly around the world [2]. Nevertheless, a multi geo-cultural point of view is essential if museums wish to establish a fruitful dialogue with and between their visitors and their communities. In fact, our cities and our societies increasingly host greater numbers of people coming from different places and specific cultural backgrounds, who, with their fellow travellers, recreate a form of geo-cultural "aggregation" in the areas they moved to. Sometimes, this leads to tension with neighbouring communities. Museums, with their ability in collecting, elaborating and narrating histories, can definitely be places that encourage intercultural communication between people of different backgrounds and cultural heritage. In fact, the contribution museums can provide by assuming the role of "mediator" may help to reshape relationships among differing parts of society, passing on the results, and creating a better social environment.

### Museums essentially political instruments

Devotion to such a mission – we cannot deny this – makes museums essentially political instruments with a political mission. Educational programs, reciprocal community engagement, planning for empowerment and wellbeing of visitors, are political acts. In some Western countries, these activities are carried out following Enlightenment's legacy. This is also reflected in ICOM's definition of "museum" as '... permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment'. Elsewhere, similar activities may engender a more nationalistic interpretation of cultural heritage. In fact, each geo-cultural group interprets and enables the mission of advocacy of its museums, exerting the right to decide what is considered valuable and why, in the attempt to harmonize, at least at a local level, "aboutness" and "isness" of art and culture [3] – as Weil termed it, reflecting on Susan Sontag's essay *On Style* (1965). The world has witnessed the saddest and most tragically distorting confirmation of this self-determination of cultural heritage since 2014: the systematic destruction, looting and pillage of some of the most relevant sites to human history. This was foreshadowed in 2001 by the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas [4]. On a completely different, less dreadful level, the flourishing of local and community museums, eco-museums, and other types strictly connected to their territories can be considered positive developments.

Often, these processes are sustained by good practice of marketing in the field of culture, as Weil ▶



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entreated. In fact, territorial marketing, urban design and the concept of urban bias [5], active citizenship and participatory democracy have contributed to the development of a trans-disciplinary museological approach. The newest trends here, a holistic comprehension and multifaceted vision, have provided multiple narratives for the museum subjects displayed. With this, today, we are closer to Weil's idea that museums should offer not a "banquet" of ready-made courses but a menu of ingredients among which visitors can choose what to prepare for themselves.

### Museum Studies and Museology

If museums are to be "moderators" in this sense, must then people who work there be the facilitators of choice and guides of taste, as Weil envisaged? If it were so – in our time when specialization reached the infinitesimal degree and generalization moved beyond the physical dimension into the virtual, and the augmentation of virtual reality to the nth degree – Museum Studies courses should provide a broad range of skills for the students. This means that a single ideal profile for THE museum professional may remain a daydream, and interdisciplinary skills and staffs are required more than ever before. Although universities aim at doing their best, experience is still what makes the difference, helping to find the best possible solutions within varying cultural and technological contexts (i.e. in communication, restoration, analysis, archiving, not to mention innovations in conservation, intellectual property, reproduction, management of unpublished

materials, royalties and copyrights – Weil, the lawyer would have enjoyed working on these subjects).

As it is difficult to define one single appropriate professional profile, we might better recover the old term "museologist". This could be used to cover all the aspects of the multifaceted profession, as well as defining the "function" in society, and the space the person works in, but not specifically the professional activity. But would this term be acceptable or rather be misunderstood and misleading?

This leads us to the importance of professional language – the "power of wording". This professional language, besides using terms specifically related to museology, should be based on shared common concepts, like: democracy, human rights, common good, dialogue, participation, peace, solidarity, sharing, equality or inequality. These are "political" concepts which might need an advocate, and are dealt with by museums and museum people. Here, museums have the right to help elaborate – through "historical processes" – a strong legacy to society. Weil was aware that the ultimate goal of a museum is to improve people's lives, often dealing with the extremes of the human condition. In fact, he taught us that museums don't need to exhibit things that are palatable to everybody, because – and this is important to state – "art often bites".

### The museum, a hub of creativity?

Museums may aim to have social impact and to be hubs of creativity in their cultural landscapes. They can provide the basis for social and cultural advancement of the communities, helping to create critical mass, when developing shared concepts while elaborating their contents [6]. But many museums have a very aesthetical approach, and most of them strive to find a balance between the two aspects.

Museums have always been called to foster art, both inside and outside their physical boundaries. This can raise questions about the acquisition of collections, historical, or contemporary, or purpose made, or about expropriation of art, and brings ethical principles to attention. These issues may concern restitution of looted artworks, the alienation of parts of or entire collections, or ownership of crowd-funded pieces of art, open data copyright and ownership as economy of knowledge teaches us – issues, which Weil might have been keen to meditate on.

### How to evaluate museums?

We have become familiar with the idea that institutional growth and management behaviour is guided by numbers. But too often performance indicators lack certainty, while qualitative indicators have not yet been unequivocally decided upon. Some of the suggestions which Weil provided however are now considered in evaluation processes: ►

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- Museological activities and museological services (as also asked for by Kenneth Hudson, another museum thinker whose centennial is this year)
- Length of visit, but also the impact of activities on visitors and communities
- Significance of the collections of different institutions (not all collections are equally important)
- Grants received
- Professional quality of personnel
- Staff education and lifelong learning programs
- Publications by the museum and its staff
- Salary and salary scales in comparison with other professions

These are issues we must learn to evaluate, but often we rely more on the perceptions or sentiments of visitors on these subjects than we do on objectivity of statistics.

Funding is still at a standstill, certainly in the case of the public sector. New models for private sponsoring have been developed. But do they work? How can this be measured effectively? Will we ever stop demonising private money? Some countries are trying to find effective ways of integrating public and private spheres. Will we ever find a common strategy for public funding and the private sector in order to sustain museums as part of the welfare of a community? Also here, geo-cultural barriers and peculiarities suggest not forcing a "prefab" model without analysing the reality on the spot, even if the model has performed well elsewhere. Museums can be profitable, but for whom? Museums can play an active part in economic recovery, on the local, national and international levels, including

manufacturing processes besides the tourism industry. This can be a win/win situation. However, in many countries, this is not the case. For example in Italy, this remains problematic as the dialogue between the many cultural sites and tourism industry is worsened by the complex topography and the conservative condition/politics.

Thus, questions remain unanswered: Will the time ever arrive when the past will help shape a better future through the interpretation of the present, and, can museums be the best advocates for this legacy, helping to promote democracy and dialogues between cultures?

These issues become apparent when looking back into the "cabinet" under the guidance of Stephen E. Weil, with sharp eye, brilliant mind and his all-encompassing curiosity.

## Notes

[1] Stephen E. Weil, *A Cabinet of Curiosity, Inquiries into Museums and Their Prospects* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995); *Making Museums Matter* (Smithsonian Books, 2002), *Rethinking the Museum and Other Meditations* (Smithsonian Institution Scholarly Press, 1990), *Beauty and the Beasts: On Museums, Art, the Law and the Market* (Smithsonian Institution Press, 1983).

[2] Weil's concepts can be termed 'liberal American'. We cannot overlook the difficulties which a market oriented "American" approach is causing in Western societies, least in other parts of the world.

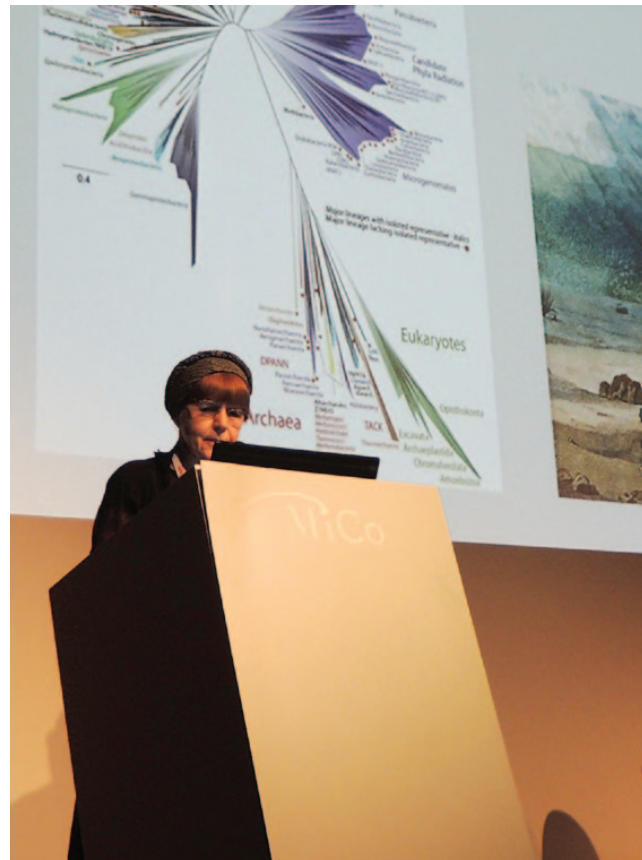
[3] Weil 1995, 47–50.

[4] We may condemn such behaviour, but we cannot deny that even in most remote archaeological times, sacking and destruction occurred with the aim of affirming the power of the conquering civilization over other cultural entities and expressions.

[5] The concept "Urban bias" refers to an economic argument according to which development is hampered by groups, who, by their central location in urban areas, are able to pressure governments to protect their interests, a structural condition of over urbanization (cf. Michael Lipton, *Why poor people stay poor: urban bias in world development*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977); Greg Downey, 'Being Human in Cities: Phenotypic Bias from Urban Niche Construction', *Current Anthropology*, 57, Supplement 13 (2016), 52–64.

[6] Cf. Richard Sandell, 'Communities and Museum Consequences', in *Memory and Creativity = Social Change, ICOM Memorial Lectures 2013 Reader*, edited by Hadwig Kraeutler [Vienna 2014; <http://icom-oesterreich.at/publikationen/icom-memorial-lectures-2013-reader>], 16–20.





### INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION AND CULTURAL ACTION (CECA)

The International Committee for Education and Cultural Action (CECA) has taken part in the ICOM Memorial Lectures from the first session held in Vienna 2007. The Committee is proud to have counted Dr Alma S. Wittlin as one of the outstanding early contributors to the Committee's journal, *Museums Annual*. Next to collection, conservation, and research, education and cultural action are core functions of a museum. It is one of the main goals of CECA to involve audiences effectively in museums and exhibitions, for this we seek to connect with other disciplines and to further opportunities for the international museum community.

***Dr Mila Chiovatto, President CECA***

***Prof Emma Nardi, Immediate Past President***

### INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR EXHIBITIONS AND EXCHANGE (ICEE)

The International Committee for Exhibitions and Exchange (ICEE) is honoured to support the 2016 ICOM Memorial Lectures. This provides an opportunity to reflect on the important stewardship role played by ICOM members for the development of the museum field, and public accessibility of museums. The ICEE encourages a cross-cultural dialogue about exhibitions within its membership, providing a platform

for museum professionals to deepen and share their museological knowledge, and best practices in exhibition development and traveling exhibitions. Through its activities, the ICEE aims to foster an inclusive and collaborative network of museum professionals dedicated to moving the exhibition field forward.

***Antonio Rodríguez, President ICEE***

***Carina Jaatinen, Immediate Past President***

***Anne-Marie Raymond, Secretary***

### INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE TRAINING OF PERSONNEL (ICTOP)

The International Committee for the Training of Personnel is delighted to be a sponsoring partner to the ICOM Memorial Lectures 2016. Many of us are familiar with the important work that Dr Alma S. Wittlin offered to the museum/heritage community in the 1940s–1970s; she held a deep commitment to the museum world, covering essential themes. Some of us were fortunate enough to have known Stephen E. Weil, while most have read his numerous contributions to the field, and thought about the consequences for museums. With the inspiration of key figures in our history, ICTOP feels confident that this ICOM event will help advance our formation and professional development work, so key to ICOM's creation and ongoing success of implementing our mandate.

***Prof Dr Darko Babic, President ICTOP***

***Prof em Dr Lynne Teather, Immediate Past President***

### INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE ON MUSEUM MANAGEMENT (INTERCOM)

The ICOM Memorial Lectures 2016, exploring the work of great historical museum thinkers with experiences and reflections of today, give a unique opportunity to revisit Stephen Weil's inspiring commitment to the diversity in the museum field, and the museum as a social enterprise. INTERCOM, the International Committee on Museum Management, is about improving standards of management in museums across the world with a growing acknowledgment of the audience and an increased manifestation in social justice. INTERCOM believes in the power of museums to create impact and that museums need to learn new skills as the importance of social responsibility continues to grow.

***Dr Ole Winther, President INTERCOM***



## Hadwig Kraeutler

The ICOM 70 Years' Jubilee Lecture, the Fourth Alma S. Wittlin and the Eleventh Stephen E. Weil Memorial Lectures were held as part of the ICOM General Conference 2016 in Milan, Italy and under its theme, 'Museums and Cultural Landscapes'.

It is my pleasure to thank all who shared their knowledge, expertise and resources: the speakers, the functionaries, ICOM's international and national bodies, who had agreed on this collaboration for ICOM Memorial Lectures 2016. They did not hesitate to take on an active role, helping intellectually, practically and financially. My gratefulness goes especially to the four International Committees of ICOM, Education and Cultural Action (CECA), Exhibitions and Exchange (ICEE), Training of Personnel (ICTOP) and Management (INTERCOM), who from start to finish were supporting the event.

ICOM Memorial Lectures allow a specific type of interdisciplinary session within the frame of the triennial General Conferences. This session is large enough to represent diverse fields, periods and levels of seniority within the profession and the international organization, and fills an important role in these terms. In this vein, it also seems appropriate to include the new officers of International Committees (in their respective statements in this documentation of the ICOM Memorial Lectures 2016) thus pointing at the dynamics as well as the more constant elements of our international organisation, and at one of ICOM's rather difficult jobs: sustaining flexibility and stability.

The ICOM Memorial Lectures 2016 event was attended by some 220 delegates. The audience was honoured by welcoming words by Hans-Martin Hinz, President of ICOM, who underlined the importance of this kind of exchange of theory and practice, in a spirit of co-operation and of progressive and socially responsible museum work. He also called for commemorating the Syrian museum colleagues who had lost their lives through terrorist acts. Anne-Catherine Robert-Hauglustaine, Director General of ICOM, reminded of the ICOM founders' hopes after World War II, to further democratic and non-violent developments, of ICOM's ongoing mission in this sense. She introduced the Jubilee Keynote and Memorial Lectures' speakers, three internationally renowned and active museum professionals.

The Web-publication of these papers by Bernice L. Murphy, René Rivard and M. Cristina Vannini, gives me the opportunity to thank these highly esteemed museum experts again for all cooperation, for preparing and sharing their work so freely, and especially for making it available in this format. As was clearly laid out by the three lectures, 21st century museums are not just passive elements of cultural landscapes, caring for and conserving collections. They are part and parcel of dynamic environments and reflecting as well as promoting the social landscapes in which they exist. Museums, and their specific instruments, collections of "traded" objects, can be network nodes in these landscapes. They can offer most diverse and inspiring formats for thinking, experiencing and exchanging ideas. Museums provide factual social

continuity of expertise, spaces and structures – physical and immaterial – and of public visibility. This, in a democratic attitude and approach, also entails an ethical task to engage in relevant communications, in the incessant and inescapable acts of shaping and redefining our societies.

Since the first Memorial Lectures held in 2007 in Vienna, also organized under the auspices of ICOM Austria, which was a resounding success and set a pattern, the ICOM Memorial Lectures have provided opportunities for scholars and practitioners from throughout ICOM's various disciplines to meet and exchange ideas. This time, in ICOM's 70th year, they focused attention on aspects of change and continuity within museum thinking relating to the surrounding physical and mental landscapes, the topics and challenges arising thereof for museum professionals.

Without the support by my "personal museum landscape" this 2016 edition of ICOM Memorial Lectures would not have been possible to achieve. I would like to acknowledge the most valuable help afforded by ICOM Austria, President Dr Danielle Spera and her dedicated staff, and by ICOM Austria treasurer and Director of GrazMuseum, Otto Hochreiter, who generously gave permission to access a treasure of the museum's collection, an early 18th century Austrian artist's vision of "Palmyra", as well as by ICOM Italy, regarding the ICOM 2016 lead image, for allowing their use for the visuals. ►

## Hadwig Kraeutler

My special thanks go to Prof Dr David Fleming OBE for judiciously leading the discussion, inviting immediate reflections on the ICOM 2016 Memorial Lectures, and also asking for similar occasions of interdisciplinary collaboration for the future, and to Prof Dr Lynne Teather who found meaningful words for her closing remarks, exhorting us to reflect, re-join and re-integrate ICOM's strengths.

In slightly overstepping my role, underlining that the following not only applies to the ICOM 2016 Memorial Lectures event, but to all of the 24th ICOM General Conference, I borrow and repeat the graceful words with which René Rivard framed the Alma S. Wittlin Memorial Lecture:

*Finalmente, vogliamio ringraziare i nostri amici italiani del ICOM per la bella ospitalità e la stimolante organizzazione cui, in Milano. Mille grazie per tutto.*

**Vienna, November 2016**

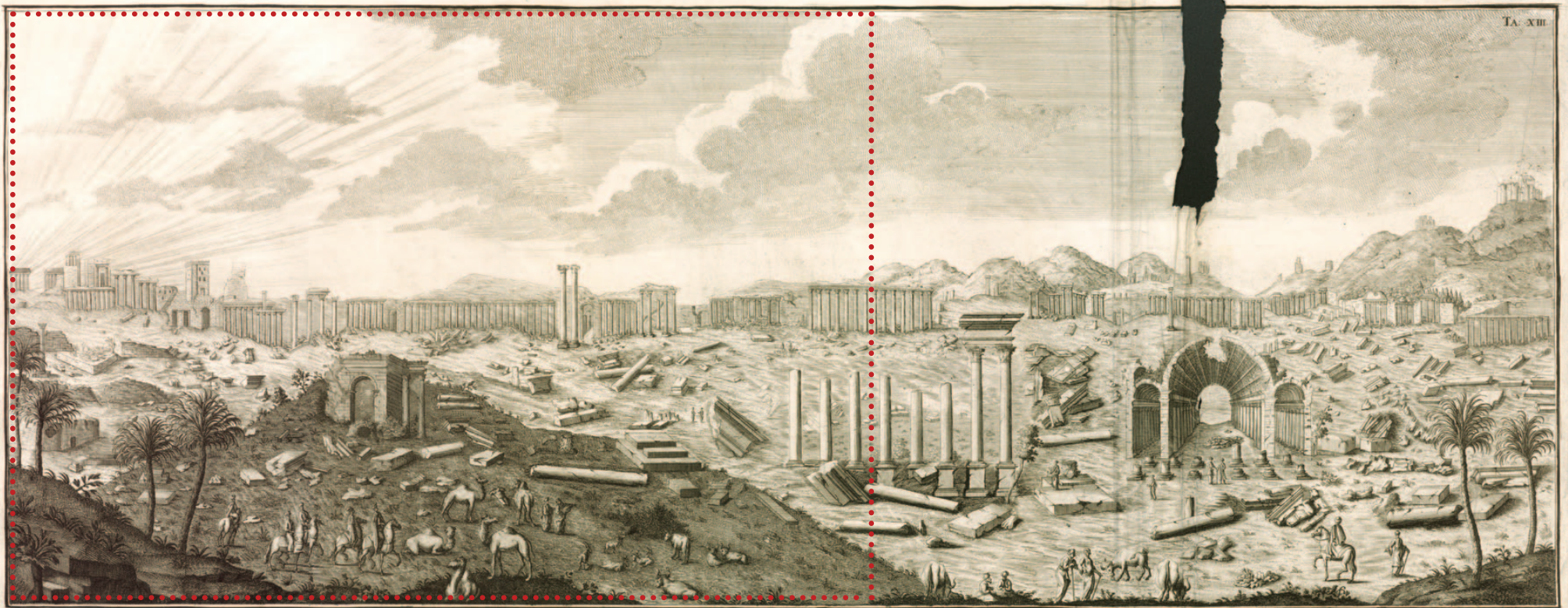
ICOM International, ICOM Austria, ICOM Milano 2016, CECA, ICEE, ICTOP and INTERCOM invited to the

## ICOM MEMORIAL LECTURES 2016

MILAN, 5 JULY 2016, 13:30 – 15:00

<b>Opening · Welcome</b>	Danielle Spera, President, ICOM Austria Hans-Martin Hinz, President of ICOM
<b>Introduction to the ICOM Memorial Lectures 2016</b>	Anne-Catherine Hauglustaine-Robert, Director General of ICOM
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Die Ruinen der Stadt Palmyra einer alten freien Republik in dem Palmyrenischen Syrien Welche Salomon erbauet, Seleucus de s. Alex. Nachfolger erweitert Kaiser Hadrianus wieder aufgerichtet, & Aurelianus aber An. 270 verlor, und die Araber zu letzt gänzlich verheret. Diese Barbaren haben bisher die Besichtigung dieses Ortes so gefährlich gemacht, daß nach dem Abriß den N. le Brun in der Reise nach Orient davon heraus gegeben, der gegenwertige der erste ist, welcher die Liebhaber der Antiquitet von der Wahrheit des vorigen versichern kan. In dem er über einstimmet nicht nur mit dem Nisse des N. le Bruns sondern auch mit demjenigen so einige Schwedische Cavaliers neulich auf Befehl S. Königl. Maj. von Schweden aus Orient mitgebracht haben.

(Im Orient. Des Captn. Magasin)

Les Ruines de Palmyre ancienne republique dans la Syrie Palmyrene bâtie par Salomon, embellie par Seleucus Successeur d'Alexandre, restituée par l'Emp. Hadrien sacragée sous l'Emp. Aurelien l'An 270. et ruinée depuis par les Arabes Ces Barbaires en font l'accès si difficile, qu'après le dessein que M. le Brun en a publié (voy. au Lev.) celui-ci est le premier qui peut rassurer les curieux sur la verité du precedent Puisqu'il s'accorde bien avec le dessein de M. le Brun et avec celui que quelques Cavaliers Suedois ont apporté de l'Orient par Ordre de Sa Maj. le Roy de Suede.

Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach, "Die Ruinen der Statt Palmyra", Entwurf einer historischen Architektur, Vienna 1721, Volume 2, Plate XIII [Original: 325 x 725 mm; Reproduction, GrazMuseum, Graz 2016].

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Page 2: Translation of Bernhard Fischer von Erlach's comment into English by Hadwig Kraeutler, into Arabic by courtesy of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs.

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