On Board
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Volume 18, December 2019

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Ruins of the Church of St. Augustine in the Old Goa. Photo: Tannar Ruuben

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Never was ICOM-CC so active and visible at an ICOM General Conference as was the case for the conference in Kyoto, 1 to 9 September, 2019. This issue of On Board provides updates on our Kyoto activities: the joint sessions, our off-site visit to Nara, and the ICOM-CC post conference tour to the Tohoku region—a journey that left lasting impressions in the minds of the participants. This issue also highlights other ongoing ICOM-CC activities including a number of interim meetings by several of our Working Groups; plans for our Triennial Conference in Beijing; upcoming elections for the Board of Directors and Working Group Coordinators; the progress of the Publications Online Project; and an update on the EU nitrogen ban. Many of you will have read headlines about the discussions on the new museum definition and you will find a brief update on the topic on page 8. As the final decision on the definition has been postponed to June 2020, we will take the opportunity to discuss the suggested definition within ICOM-CC and update our members about progress and positions in the spring of 2020.

The ICOM General Conference was packed with more than 4,500 delegates, among whom was Shumeng DAI from China, the Young Professional who received the ICOM grant for Kyoto from ICOM-CC. We are pleased to present her impressions from the conference in this newsletter. The General Conference included updates from the ICOM Executive Board and Secretariat, with hot topic discussions such as disaster management, sustainability issues, and repatriation of collections. Some of the plenary sessions were recorded and can be found through this link. Here I will dwell on just a couple of items:

**Two new International Committees** (ICs) were approved by the Executive Board to start functioning from September 2019: the ICOM International Committee on Disaster Resilient Museums (DRMC) and the ICOM International Committee on Ethical Dilemmas (ICEthics). These new committees were initiated by ICOM members who see the need for these topics to be addressed through conferences, workshops, specialist meetings, and so on. The new ICs will deal with issues that are highly relevant for the conservation profession inviting clear potential for future collaborations with them and ICOM-CC. In addition, it will be interesting to see how they will contribute to upcoming museum discussions.

The future of the ICOM International Committees in general also was discussed in Kyoto. The report from the group analyzing the IC structure and functions, the International Committee Working Group (ICWG), has delivered and presented a report with a number of recommendations. Within this report several important topics are addressed such as improving collaborations between the International Committees, the importance of attracting new and young members, and the need to become truly global. More than 90% of ICOM members are based in Europe or North America. As of 2017, 76.5 % of ICOM-CC members are from Europe and 11.5% are from North America. We appreciate each and every one of these members, but when the objective is to be global, ICOM-CC should improve our global outreach. Organising events outside Europe and North America proves to work well to establish direct communication, improve the professional network, and boost a more global representation. We hope that our activities in Japan in September this year, and our Triennial Conference in China next year, will contribute to increased membership in the Asian and Pacific Region.

Collaborations between the different ICOM Committees and the lack of visibility of the International Committees is a topic that was also raised in the ICWG report. The membership of ICOM is increasing, but only around 40% of ICOM members have chosen an International Committee in which to be member. Therefore, the ICs organised a poster session presenting themselves in Kyoto. The ICOM-CC poster (Fig. 1) focused on presenting our Working Groups and the expertise network they encompass. Many thanks to the coordinators for their contributions to this poster. In addition, we distributed our ICOM-CC informational brochure and a special brochure focusing on the Beijing Triennial Conference 2020.

ICOM-CC joint sessions with several International Committees were organised in Kyoto. The cross-disciplinary discussions and the joint poster session are all good examples of how we can reach out of our own conservation community and meet other colleagues in a shared museum space. Most International Committees organise annual meetings, frequently in the months September to December, and many of our IC colleagues show interest in having conservation workshops and training of museum professionals organised in connection with these meetings. This
seems to be ‘low hanging fruit’ and an obvious collaboration for all of us to look into. A first step for the ICOM-CC Directory Board will be to investigate ways to facilitate these and other collaborations between the ICs and ICOM-CC Working Groups.

Having said that, the Board does not lack projects! Still in progress is the Publication Online Project. A brief report was given in On Board 17 - July 2019 and the work continues according to plan. We expect that by the end of this triennium all our Triennial Conference Preprints will be available on the publication platform with the exception of those from Brussels 1967 and Amsterdam 1969. Having the impressive body of published work by all our members available online is an important milestone that we are proud to achieve. We are grateful for the support and help we have received from the Getty Conservation Institute, from the Getty Research Institute, from ICOM Special Projects, and the ICOM-CC Fund. The Publication Online Project continues with a focus on past Working Group publications being digitized and uploaded online. A number of Working Groups have completed the necessary preparations to make this possible, while others are still pulling together their past publications. We plan to start uploading the former content as pilots for the next more than 2,500+ articles originating from Working Group meetings and conferences. Our membership is indeed a productive and scholarly group!

Going forward, the plan is to open our ICOM-CC publication platform for future Working Group publications. We consider this to be crucial for our network. Our organisation works for museums globally. This means that we also have an obligation to share information on best practices and recent research with those who may have difficult access, and fewer resources and opportunities. Open access to this type of knowledge is an important contribution to global cultural heritage conservation.

Another issue still being debated is the European Nitrogen Ban prohibiting the use of in-situ generated nitrogen in integrated pest management of our collections. If you are based in Europe, we urgently need your individual voices in the public consultation which recently was launched by the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) on this issue. This might be the last chance offered to the conservation community for a while, so please use your voice. Deadline for participation is 18 January 2020. Also, an appeal on the ban of nitrogen for disinfection purposes in all of Europe has been distributed to the ICOM National Committees in Europe—we need as many countries as possible to apply for a derogation. The appeal document and a letter to use for the public consultation can be downloaded from the ICOM-CC website.

This also has been a peak year for Working Group activities. There are several reports about interim meetings and other initiatives in this issue of On Board as well as an overview of all the activities that have taken place. Our Working Group involvements are important and I am deeply impressed by the number of meetings, the number of participants, and the high level of contributions and discussions. These events can only be carried out because we have engaged and devoted coordinators, assistant coordinators, generous institutions, and supportive sponsors who contribute with their time, resources, physical meeting locations and other assets. Thank you to all for making the events possible—this has greatly helped making 2019 another successful year for ICOM-CC.

2020 will also be a special year: we will be holding our Triennial Conference in Beijing, China, in September. Our Chinese hosts are working hard to make this conference a very special one without being overly expensive. Registration opens soon! This is a great chance to learn about Chinese museums and cultural heritage from behind the scenes. There will be several opportunities for visiting laboratories, museums, and Chinese cultural heritage sites in and around Beijing and I suggest to visit the conference website regularly for updates.

September 2020 will also see the end of this ICOM-CC triennium and you will be electing new members for the Directory Board and Working Group Coordinators who will continue the work in 2020-2023. We need individuals...
who are engaged and would like to commit to ICOM-CC in one way or another; either coordinating or working with obligations within the Working Groups or as Directory Board members. There are many ways to contribute on the Working Group level: collating and editing information for newsletters; gathering and sharing information on specific conservation projects; co-organising workshops, social media monitoring; and so on. The call for candidates will come out in the spring, but now is the time to start thinking about candidacies—either for yourself or a colleague you believe would be qualified for a role somewhere in the Committee for Conservation. There may be periods with a lot of work and when great patience is required—on the other hand: it is fun, it is rewarding, you learn a lot, and you make friends for a lifetime. After 15 years on duty, and stepping down in September 2020, I can only recommend it. Please read other testimonials from current Coordinators beginning on page 35.

2019 has had its extraordinary events. For cultural heritage and museums, many of them are related to disasters such as damaging flooding and fires. On the global scene there is a lot to fight for and our joined efforts are more than ever needed to work for the well-being and survival of cultural and natural heritage sites, of art works, of museums and their collections, and to contribute to future possibilities for public to access them, to learn from and enjoy them.

Approaching the end of this very intense year, I wish you all happy seasonal holidays and all the best for 2020 when I hope to see many of you in Beijing.

Kristiane
Would you like to know what ICOM-CC did in Kyoto? On the next pages we have compiled reports from ICOM-CC sessions and tours and some of the discussions that took place at the ICOM General Conference in Kyoto in September. The week was a colorful and polyphonic mixture of museum professionals engaging in discussions, sharing ideas, making new contacts, and reuniting with old friends and colleagues (Fig. 3) The Japanese Organisers did an excellent job and ICOM-CC had magnificent assistance from all our Japanese contacts collaborating with us to make our events happen.

Fig. 3. ICOM-CC attendees at the ICOM Kyoto General Conference 2019. Back row, from the left: Qiqian Chen, Kristiane Strætkvern, Joan Reifsnyder, Bart Ankersmit, Deborah Trupin, Jesper Stub Johnsen, Renata Peters, Anna Bülow, Stephanie de Roemer, and Yacy-Ara Froner. Front row, from the left: Achal Pandya, Estelle De Bruyn, Jacqueline Peterson-Grace, Shumeng Dai, Kate Seymour, and Ali Nasir. Photo: Kate Seymour
Joining the Museums’ Feast in Kyoto
Shumeng Dai

My week in Kyoto is like a dream to me. It happened so fast. I witnessed the opening and closing of the ICOM General Conference. I listened to all the plenary sessions and attended the joint sessions. I visited Kyoto’s temples. I met teachers and new friends. It was a special experience for me.

It was my first time to join the ICOM conference. To be honest, I was shocked on the first day to attend opening ceremony. I saw so many people from the world on the way to the main hall. Then I realized why the conference is known as museums’ Olympic games. It is upon the countries, above the ethnic groups, and exceeds politics and religions. People gathered for sharing and discussing thoughts around museums and culture issues.

In the following days, I listened to Mr. Kengo Kuma’s speech on architecture design, and experts’ sharing thoughts of museums’ sustainable futures. I listened Mr. Sebastiao Salgado’s speech on the Amazon forest, and experts’ concerns about a new museum definition. I listened to experts talking about their preparations for resisting disaster. I listened Mr. Cai Guoqiang’s art exploration and the experts discuss how they promote Asian art dialogue in the world. These speeches broadened my horizon and let me think with a worldview.

I joined the mentoring session to better understand the conservation definition and the ICOM-CC group. I attended ICOM-CC’s joint sessions with INTERCOM, ICOM SEE, ICAMT, ICMS, and ICOFOM. I realized that many subjects interlace with each other in the context of museums, as a conservation’s decision may relate to a museum’s budget, image, mission, security, environment, ethics, and museology. And this kind of joint session between different committees are really meaningful.

I visited the Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties and Horyuji Temple on the Off-site Meeting of ICOM-CC. The Japanese spirit and attitude of conserving heritage relics impressed me a lot.

On the last day of the conference, I witnessed the discussion about postponing the vote on a new museum definition. I can feel that ICOM is a democratic and vibrant organization.

Kyoto is a friendly city combining natural and man-made landscape, tradition and innovation. Here I met teachers and made new friends during the conference and social events. In this harmonious environment, we talked about our works and gave each other advice, and even made a potential cooperation.

I appreciate that ICOM offered me this opportunity to join the ICOM Kyoto 2019 conference. I’m glad to have met many participants and to participate in the meetings and topic discussions.
I have started to share my experience of the ICOM Kyoto conference with my supervisors and colleagues since I have been back in my country. I gave a talk at my museum recently. I think the significance of this trip is that it makes me think outside of the box and awaken my passion for work. Following in the museum experts’ steps, I hope I can contribute to this profession in the future as well. Since the ICOM-CC next Triennial Conference will be in Beijing in September 2020, I hope I can assist the committee to prepare and successfully hold the conference.

Fig. 6. ICOM Kyoto General Conference opening evening fireworks. Photo: Qiqian Chen

A New Museum Definition
Kristiane Strætkvern

Since the 2016 ICOM General Conference in Milan, ICOM has worked to arrive at a new Museum Definition to replace the current definition, adopted by the 22nd General Assembly in Vienna, Austria, in 2007, which is:

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

In 2017 a standing committee on Museum Definition, Prospects and Potentials (MDPP), chaired by Ms. Jette Sandahl, was established with the mandate of “analysing the historic background and the epistemological roots of the museum concept, and exploring, researching and observing current societal trends as they implicate also museums”. In December, 2018, the MDPP submitted its report and its recommendations to the ICOM Executive Board, stating (amongst other issues) that:

“A new museum definition needs to acknowledge and critically reflect the legacies and continuous presence of societal inequalities and the asymmetries of power and wealth marring the geopolitical relationship between continents as well the national, regional and local societal contexts. Equally, it also cannot ignore the alarming crisis of the destruction of nature and the unsustainable relationship between people and the rest of nature. There is, furthermore, a related and intensifying concern with the accountability and transparency under which museums acquire and use the material, financial, intellectual and social resources at their disposal. In museums, as in society in general, the expectations of equal rights and equal access to culture, of cultural democracy and cultural participation are growing steadily, and the relationship between museums and their different constituents and communities needs to be restated and reinterpreted, in a new, relational language that supports the opportunities to be discovered in real partnerships and shared responsibilities, in cooperation and cocreation” (Ref.: ICOM/2019/EGA/2).

In January 2019 the ICOM Executive Board initiated a process in which ICOM’s members, committees, partners and interested stakeholders were invited and encouraged to take part in the development of alternative, more current museum definitions. By May 2019, ICOM had collected 269 diverse proposals. From these, MDPP made a shortlist of five proposals for new definitions and submitted to the Executive Board for discussion and decision on 21-22 July 2019. In July, the Executive Board selected the version below as a new alternative museum definition to replace
the current one in the ICOM Statutes, if approved at the ICOM Extraordinary General Assembly (EGA) on 7 September, 2019, in Kyoto:

“Museums are democratising, inclusive and polyphonic spaces for critical dialogue about the pasts and the futures. Acknowledging and addressing the conflicts and challenges of the present, they hold artefacts and specimens in trust for society, safeguard diverse memories for future generations and guarantee equal rights and equal access to heritage for all people.

Museums are not for profit. They are participatory and transparent, and work in active partnership with and for diverse communities to collect, preserve, research, interpret, exhibit, and enhance understandings of the world, aiming to contribute to human dignity and social justice, global equality and planetary well-being.”

Prior to the Extraordinary General Assembly, several of the plenary presentations and discussions in Kyoto had addressed the need for and the reasoning behind a new museum definition. The museum landscape has, and is still changing. A museum definition needs to include and address new trends in society and the new obligations, possibilities, and conditions for museums. The process behind the proposal is described on the ICOM website and all the working documents can be accessed by all ICOM members through their ICOM membership space.

The discussions in Kyoto were intense and engaged, and there was no doubt that the majority recognized the need for a new museum definition that is more in accordance with our times. Several of the plenary presentations and discussions in Kyoto clearly demonstrated that the good intentions in the suggested definition were acknowledged and appreciated, nevertheless, the EGA did not want to take the final vote. There were several reasons for this. Many committees felt that more time was required to discuss the wording of the definition. It was argued that the suggested text is a vision rather than a definition, and that important topics such as ‘education’ and ‘enjoyment’ are missing. ICOM-CC has noted that we prefer a definition to reflect the approved ICOM-CC terminology and use the word ‘conservation’ rather than ‘preservation’. The need for museums to actively protect their collections from disasters could also be addressed.

The long discussions ended in a postponement. The decision will be taken in June 2020 in connection with the ICOM annual meeting in Paris. For the time being, the procedure leading up to a new EGA in June has not been announced, but ICOM-CC will take the opportunity of the postponement to discuss and look into how our interests can be best covered in a new museum definition. How to include our members will be announced when the ICOM Headquarters have communicated the procedure. In the meantime, I will encourage all to seek information on the ICOM website and discuss the topic with your colleagues.

The Resolution on Storage
Kristiane Strætkvern

At the ICOM General Conference in Kyoto, five resolutions were approved by the General Assembly. One of these was based on the ‘Resolution on Collections in Storage’ which ICOM-CC has been working on since 2016 in collaboration with the International Committee on Museum Techniques and Architecture (ICAMT), the International Committee on Museum Security (ICMS), and the International Committee on Collecting (COMCOL). Prior to the General Conference, the resolution draft was endorsed by sixteen National and Regional Committees and seven International Committees. In the months leading up to the General Conference, ICOM Italy also submitted a resolution draft with very similar objectives. In Kyoto, the two drafts were merged into one: ‘Measures to Safeguard and Enhance Collections in Storage Throughout the World’. This resolution was the one approved in Kyoto. It can be downloaded from the ICOM website along with the other four resolutions that were approved. We hope that this resolution can inspire and raise awareness among our museum colleagues with respect to how they develop and protect their collections and collection storage in the future.
As representatives of the global museum community, the vision of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) is a world where the importance of natural and cultural heritage is universally valued. Today, more than ever, museums face unique challenges related to social, economic, and ecological issues. While serving as witnesses of the past and guardians of humanity’s treasures for future generations, museums play a key role in development through education and democratization.

From the Sustainable Goals Knowledge Platform: “The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are an urgent call for action by all countries—developed and developing—in a global partnership.”

In 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement posed as a global challenge sustainable development related to environmental protection and social justice as a collective responsibility. In this context, ICOM has established a Working Group on Sustainability with the participation of:

- Fiona Cameron (Institute of Culture and Society, University of Western Sydney, Australia)
- Yacy-Ara Froner (The Federal University of Minas Gerais)
- Daniel Inoque (Institute of Arts and Cultural Heritage of Mozambique, Mozambique)
- Robert Janes (Coalition of Museums for Climate Justice, Canada)
- Emlyn Koster (North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, United States)
- Michele Lanzinger (MUSE Museo delle Scienze, Italy)
- Henry McGhie (Manchester Museum, United Kingdom)
- Jenny Newell (Australian Museum, Australia)
- Diana Pardue (Statue of Liberty NM and Ellis Island, National Park Services, United States)
- Caitlin Southwick, Secretary (University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands)
- Deborah Thiagarajan (Dakshina Chitra, India)
- Paloma Salgado Tonda (Interactive Museum of Economics, Mexico)
- Zhao Yang (China Science and Technology Museum, China) and
- Morien Rees, Chair (Varanger Museum, Norway).

The Working Group’s mission is to help ICOM consider how to mainstream Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement across its range of activities, and to support its members and member museums in contributing constructively to upholding the Sustainable Development Goals towards climate change adaptation and mitigations. In the ICOM’S 34th General Assembly, held in Kyoto, the group presented and approved the resolution “On sustainability and the implementation of Agenda 2030, Transforming our World”. We hope these discussions continue and impact the ICOM community’s minds and actions.
On Monday, 2 September, ICOM-CC carried out a joint session together with INTERCOM (ICOM’s International Committee of Museum Management) and ICOM-SEE (ICOM for South East Europe). The session was chaired by Dr. Anna Bülow, Coordinator of the ICOM-CC Preventive Conservation Working Group. The original idea behind organising a joint session was to use the platform of the ICOM General Conference to discuss issues of importance to ICOM-CC with our museum colleagues from other International Committees, allowing for discussion and true exchange. In this respect, INTERCOM seemed the perfect partner, and during an initial meeting with Chair Ole Winther we settled on a theme around having to deliver more and more with fewer and fewer resources. This subject would also resonate with all international partners, and indeed, ICOM-SEE joined our session at a later point. It was decided to address issues of tradition, and the degree to which these could still support our current missions. The call for papers attracted 55 abstracts from a very international group of museum colleagues, from Africa to Scandinavia, and from South America to the Far East, of which eight papers were chosen for presentation in Kyoto.

Unfortunately the joint session was held off-site, which made for a selective group of interested colleagues. The keynote was given by Jesper Stub Johnsen (National Museum of Denmark) and contained some thought-provoking ideas that really demonstrated the National Museum of Denmark’s ability and desire to think outside the box, working with unusual stakeholders and completely re-thinking who they want to be for their audience, and who that audience will be! Furthermore, we had two very different contributions from Kenya and Belgium, respectively. Their papers focused on how to make museums safe places for cultural exchanges and empowering local communities to be ambassadors for cultural co-existence. They also explored the idea of shared and redistributed power within the museum world.

All contributions created a very lively and extended discussion, which made for an interesting afternoon, despite a number of invited speakers not being able to attend the conference. In the end, it was a good experience to work together with other international committees of ICOM, and the occasion certainly whetted the appetite for more!
On the second day of the Kyoto General Conference, ICOM-CC jointly organised a session entitled ‘Storage of Collections—Prepare for the Future’ with the International Committee for Architecture and Museum Technique (ICAMT) and the International Committee for Museum Security (ICMS) to highlight storage issues worldwide. The presentations covered the broad areas of conservation, architecture, design, documentation, and museum security. This afternoon session on 3 September was moderated by Jean Hilgersum, ICAMT, The Netherlands.

Gaël de Guichen (ICCROM, Italy) gave an overview of research and publications which explained how the field has addressed storages issues. The presentation showed how intergovernmental organizations have dealt with the problems which have a serious impact today on the 55,000 storage facilities.

Vernon Raplay (Victoria & Albert Museum, London, UK) spoke about setting up security for museum storage facilities. He discussed the security and operational implications of making museum storage accessible. He stressed design decisions and security innovations to keep the risks to the collection at acceptable levels.

Kiem-Lian The (Toornend Partners, The Netherlands) gave an overview of the management-planning and design for a new storage facility in the Netherlands. He spoke about a new storage facility for four museums including the Rijksmuseum. He outlined the concept and design of the building and the unique collaborative effort of the four museum partners in this development, consultancy services as a cost, and contract and construction management.

Achal Pandya (Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi, India) talked about how India has been actively involved in the Re-org project of reorganization of museum storage in India in collaboration with ICCROM. His presentation was a glimpse of success stories that emerged out of this partnership within limited budgets and meagre staffing in Indian museums by following the Re-org methodology. He also showed how India has been able to develop capacity through the concerted efforts of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) and ICCROM.

Gabriel Moore Bevilaqua (CIDOC, Moreira Salles Institute, Brazil) presented documentation strategies for storage after disasters in Brazil. In addition, he discussed tools for the physical control of collections, and storage organization.

Bart Ankersmit (Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands) talked about the influence of relative humidity and temperature on designing storage facilities. The focus was on how indoor climate specifications for museums are developed and controlled by the 9-step process to produce the optimum indoor climate specifications.

Jesper Stub Johnsen (National Museum of Denmark) took us to Denmark in his presentation where he discussed the concepts to be considered when designing a new storage facility. His presentation focused on the upcoming shared storage facility that the National Museum of Denmark, together with The Royal Library, Denmark, are in the process of constructing. He reviewed the plans of combining low energy consumption with high quality and high density storage. Jesper also dwelt upon the storage standards that exist in Europe for storage facilities.
A very successful session organized by ICOM-CC and ICOFOM took place on 4 September and closed the cycle of ICOM-CC joint meetings during ICOM Kyoto 2019. The session addressed questions associated with authenticity and was led by François Mairesse and Renata F. Peters. The presentations covered a diverse range of themes, such as memory, history, philosophy, decolonization, values assigned to collections by different interest groups, knowledge systems and knowledge transmission, among others.

Supreo Chanda started with a discussion on the conservation of living heritage, and how it needs to encompass the tangible and intangible along with authenticity. Asian values were explored, especially those around the idea of rebirth, and how they may forgo material components and yet preserve essence. Robyn Sloggett examined knowledge transmission and how authenticity is constructed in diverse communities in Australia and Southeast Asia. The analysis provided elements to contest cultural relativism in conservation decision-making. Mari Nakamura elaborated on perceptions of authenticity in the context of the Sakubei Yamamoto Collection (Japan), and debated whether it is possible to maintain the identity of the original through the use of digital data and replication in cases when the lifetime of the original material is at risk.

Scarlet Galindo followed with a case study from the Watercolour Museum in Mexico City, and explained how and why objects in the collection should be conserved. Gina Levenspiel discussed architectural replication and how the question of authenticity, addressed by repetition and rounded in architectural form, may uphold conservation’s capacity to acquire, transmit, contest and produce knowledge on architecture. Markus Walz combined different approaches of museology and suggested three perspectives for authenticity, from which different conservation strategies can be derived. Stephanie Auffret used her own trajectory as a conservator to investigate the relationships between conservation and authenticity, time, and context. Her emphasis was on the human dimension of conservation decision-making, and how different cultures experience their material heritage. Jian-Pai Shih (also known as Hsin-Hui Hsu) discussed ways for conservation and exhibition work to bridge and prolong the potentials embodied in Buddhist objects, by looking at the Buddhist context, museum practice, and conservation case studies.

The associated publication, which can be downloaded from the link below, contains the presentations above and expands the discussion with twelve more contributions. Julia M. Brennan, Jacquelyn Peterson and Kho Chenda explore a conservation project at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Cambodia. The discussion shows that the approaches used in the project provide a clear understanding of the significance of the collection for Cambodian cultural identity, as defined by survivors and founders of the museum. Bruno Bruiln Soares and Leandro Guedes outline a path for the decolonisation of museum practices.
A case study from the Museum of the Indian in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) shows how authenticity in museums should be connected to local knowledge, thereby questioning the primacy of materiality in the “original” object. Brian Castriota draws upon concepts from semiotics, aesthetics, and post-structuralist criticism to expand and clarify the concept of authenticity, taking into consideration both cultural relativism and intersubjectivity in the construction and performance of an object’s identity. Vanessa Ferey suggests that the history of North American ethnographic objects play important roles in the founding of French museums, and questions whether the associated archives and preventive conservation policies contribute to their authenticity. Abigail Hykin, Matthew Siegal and Tanya Uyeda use specific examples from conservation projects on public view at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston (USA) to explore how public display forces conservators to articulate the decision-making process behind conservation treatments. In the next contribution, Amanda Imai discusses Singapore’s endeavour to inscribe Hawker culture on UNESCO’s List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, and how it aims to preserve a multi-cultural, culinary heritage that is fundamental to the Singaporean diasporic identity. Joanna Lang uses the Warsaw Rising Museum (Poland) to discuss the concept of authenticity applied to an iconographic collection from the World War II period. The essay elaborates the uniqueness of the museum, which lies in the relationships between material objects, digital copies, and digital recreations. Paola Andrea López Lara reviews the history of acquisitions in Colombian museums in the 19th and 20th century to uncover the background of pottery restoration performed by looters during that period, and how they impacted understanding of pre-Columbian pottery. In the following chapter, Christina Margariti considers the shifts in conservation approaches in recent years, from practical to more investigative methods, and examines the impact of this new skill set on the authenticity of the conserved object. Maria Papadopoulou and Andromache Gazi use a collection from the National Archaeological Museum in Athens (Greece) to investigate questions around authenticity. Through a series of interviews, they examine the process of conservation-related decision-making as well as the role authenticity plays in the process. In the following paper, Stephanie de Roemer examines the ‘what is the essence of conservation?’ question by relating it to Greek and Chinese philosophy, and suggests the inclusion of Lao Tzu’s notion of Tao in the conservation process. Mei Tu uses time-based media and digital art to consider collection and conservation philosophical challenges, both from material and conceptual viewpoints.

You can download ‘What is the Essence of Conservation?’ here.
The ICOM-CC Offsite Visits
Nabunken, the Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties
Kristiane Strætkvern

The aftermath of the 2011 tsunami was among the themes ICOM-CC had decided to focus on during the 2019 ICOM General Conference in Kyoto. We were, therefore, very pleased to have the opportunity to go to Nara and visit the Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties where several of the damaged objects were treated. The tour was completely booked. Forty-five participants took the bus to the Nara Palace Site Museum where we started the day seeing how historic sites in Japan are presented and explained to the public throughout the country.

At the Nabunken, we were welcomed by Director General K. Matsumara, the Director of the Center for Archaeological Operations, Dr. Yousei Kouzuma, and the Head of the International Cooperation Section, Dr. Shinya Shoda, who gave an introduction to Nabunken. The research institute is a center for training and joint research with local government employees involved in archaeological excavations. Conservator S. Nakashima explained the work with the rescue of historical documents that were damaged by the 2011 tsunami: how the decay was put on hold by freezing; the freeze-drying and cleaning procedures; and the final conservation and restoration work. Introductions were followed by a very interesting tour of the laboratories. In the Archaeological Department we visited the laboratories for waterlogged wood with thousands of wooden tablets with inscriptions, and the conservation laboratories for pottery, metals, and roof tiles. We saw the large vacuum freeze dryer, the laser printer for labelling directly on artefacts, we met the conservation scientists, the dendrochronologists and visited the Laboratory for Environmental Archaeology. The two hours went very quickly and it was a true challenge for the excellent guides to pull the visitors away from the captivating finds, the interesting equipment, and the engaged dialogues with the Nabunken employees.

In the afternoon, the group split in two. The first group went to Horyuji-temple which is one of the oldest wooden buildings in Japan and designated a UNESCO world heritage since 1993. The other group explored the old town of Nara, trying out traditional Japanese calligraphy and ink stick making.

Fig. 14. Working with the laser printer labelling stones. Photo: Kristiane Strætkvern
Fig. 15. Stones with laser labelling. Photo: Kristiane Strætkvern
This was a truly inspiring and successful day which would have been very difficult to organise without our appointed Japanese contact person, Ms. Reiko Sakaki from the Tobacco and Salt Museum who managed all the contacts and the logistics for ICOM-CC to perfection. We are truly grateful for the efforts of Ms. Sakaki and we thank our hosts at Nabunken for opening up the doors to their world of conservation and scientific research.

Fig. 16. Nabunken explained! Photo: Kristiane Straetkvern

Fig. 17. One of the slides explaining the document rescue process. Photo: Kristiane Straetkvern
The aim of the tour was to travel in the Tohoku region of Japan, visiting places that were affected by the March 11, 2011 earthquake and tsunami, and studying the situation eight years later. What were the initial emergency responses? How were the logistical and practical challenges solved in the first phases? What has been done with respect to first aid for the collections and later treatments, and what is the situation today? What are the lessons learned, and how are the challenges, solutions and future concerns communicated to the public? All in all it was a very educational, but also emotional tour. Quotes from participants are inserted throughout this account.

The tour took place from Sunday, September 8th, to Wednesday September 11th, 2019, and was attended by nineteen individuals coming from Italy, Brazil, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, The United Kingdom, The Netherlands, Germany, Oman, and Japan. Some participants were conservators, others came with different museum backgrounds, and a couple were spouses or other family members. However, all came with a profound interest in safeguarding Japanese cultural heritage. The attendance and supervision by Japanese ICOM and museum professionals secured smooth transportation, a high level of information, professional content, and a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

The post conference tour was organised by Ms. Reiko Sakaki (Tobacco & Salt Museum, Tokyo, Japan), Dr. Nobuyuki Kamba (Emeritus Member, Tokyo National Museum, Tokyo, Japan), Kristiane Strætkvern (Chair ICOM-CC Directory Board), and Joan Reifsnyder (Secretary ICOM-CC). It was accompanied by Mr. Masayuki Handa (ICOM Japan, The Japanese Association of Museums, Japan) and translator Yuri Nambu. The ICOM-CC post-conference tour was generously supported by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan in the fiscal year 2019.

“The way the group was welcomed and the program for our visit was impressive and heart warming. The group was provided with a very good introduction to the overall consequences of the March 2011 tsunami and earthquakes, the reaction times and the logistical problems encountered. The complexities of the rescue operations—including monitoring radioactivity of artefacts after the break down of the nuclear plant in Fukushima—were explained. Remarkable that the Japanese Government already 25 days after the catastrophe decided to implement a cultural property rescue programme.”

The group was heartily welcomed everywhere it arrived. Thorough, informative introductions, as well as tours of storage sites and laboratories were given by directors, conservators, and curators. The events of the disastrous day of the earthquake, the tsunami, and the aftermath were laid out: how the immediate damage by the earthquake was exasperated by flooding from the tsunami along the coast line and from an avalanche of rocks and earth from a broken...
The tsunami affected a vast area which extended some 15 km inland from the coast. After the earthquake on March 11th, there was a power outage which lasted until March, 15th. The water supply was out until March 31st. Air conditioning units were not turned on again until April 5th, and the phone lines remained down until April 15th. Aftershocks continued and caused more damage with further power and water outages until April 18th.

"Tuesday morning was overwhelming. While driving through the landscape past the destroyed buildings, the single pine tree and the newly built concrete sea wall Mr. Kumagai described how he experienced the tsunami, the night, the days and the events following it. That his job as a governmental employee was to secure and rescue his museum and serve the public before tending personal needs. Unforgettable."

As soon as possible, objects were moved to temporary storage: to old schools and to museums that were not so damaged by the events. Some of these were built to resist earthquakes. Storage rooms were furnished with lights with no UV content, a rockwool sound-absorbing board roof, a beechwood floor, and light, cured board walls. In particular, the ceiling, floor and wall panels have a special specification of impermeable plywood attached with two layers of aluminum film. The rooms were climatised with dehumidifiers to retain a stable relative humidity not exceeding 60%; routines for insect control; as well as monitoring of radioactive levels and installation of earthquake resilient shelving.

Many of the museums had well-equipped conservation laboratories for paper, ceramics and waterlogged wood. In some places, the staff has been increased with more conservators to work on the damaged collections. Temporary and emergency treatments were carried out. These included for example: de-acidification, especially of paper materials; the application of anti-rust coatings for metal objects; stabilisation processes consisting of initial washing of paper to remove the sludge and salts from the water immersion, sterilisation and stabilisation of rinsed paper; re-identification of specimens followed by labelling; and placing objects in packaging with reduced oxygen levels. The treatments focused on low cost solutions.

"All institutions we visited did a good job to show us the work they do. All used the available resources to preserve the damaged collections. I was most impressed by those who did good conservation work with less resources. The tsunami did challenge the conservators. They got into problems which they had not encountered before. The institutions showed us how they try to find new methods and how they tested them. They honestly showed us what didn’t go well and what worked well."

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Fig. 19. Mr. Kodany from the Tohoku History Museum giving an introduction about the area and how it was affected by the disaster. Photo: Kate Seymour

Fig. 20. Earthquake-secure storage at Fukushima Cultural Property Centre. Photo: Kristiane Strætkvern
In total, the amount of objects saved numbered almost 460,000. Around 100,000 were lost. After some eight years, almost half of the objects have been treated. Objects pending treatment have been frozen, but further treatment is often delayed. Salvage has been difficult due to the fragile nature of collections such as natural history specimens and small shells. Other objects, such as paper with soluble ink, lacquer work, canvas paintings, water colours, and leather objects, and in particular the photographic collections are also challenging. Further treatment protocols for these objects are required and research is ongoing on the academic level. Hopefully, most of the objects stored and conserved will be returned to their origins at some point in the future.

“How they coped with the rescue after the disaster—moving their own collections to make room for the damaged collections from another 10 cultural heritage institutions was remarkable. Noteworthy also, was the supervision by conservators of the non-academic conservators and other museum staff on how to work on the rescue of the collections and carry out different tasks other than they traditionally do.”

The work was carried out by professional conservators, but non-academic staff were instructed in techniques, and treatment protocols were developed and refined. Displacement of people meant loss of craft skills. Capacity building of staff was required to provide a desired level of professional care for the objects. Plans for disaster management were in place prior to the earthquake and tsunami and these were put into action. The staff organised seminars and collaborated with other governmental departments. It was clear that a high level of professional standards was maintained during the time of the emergency. Where possible, the everyday functioning of the museum and caring for the collection continued. A collaborative and team spirit endured during this time of hardship and loss.

“The team showed huge dedication and pride in what they have achieved. They are making efforts to turn the lessons and experience of the disaster into something positive for the future and the world.”

How to follow up after the Tohoku post-conference tour?

During the tour, it eventually became clear what types of materials and objects it has been possible to treat on a national basis in Japan, what types still represent challenges, and where proper stabilisation treatment protocols need to be researched and developed.

This is where the ICOM-CC network can assist the excellent work ongoing in Japan. ICOM-CC has a large network of experts at its disposal who are actively exchanging ideas. Our committee has an obligation to share questions with our membership, via our Working Group newsletters or via our meetings. Also, the possibility to jointly organise targeted workshops between the Japanese conservators and specialist Working Groups should be investigated.
The issue of conservation after disaster exceeds all borders—whether the disasters are earthquakes, fires, flooding or unusual contaminations. The ICOM-CC Directory Board is currently discussing how to address this broader issue, for example as a plenary discussion at the forthcoming ICOM-CC Triennial Conference in 2020. Additionally, creating a list of experts who can give immediate advice with respect to material and types of damage is essential. Time is a crucial factor when disasters happen, and ICOM-CC should strive to react efficiently when they strike. Finally, the experiences and good advice should be recorded, organised, made available, and be used in future preventive collection management.

ICOM-CC is deeply grateful for the financial support provided by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan in the fiscal year 2019. We also are indebted to our Japanese museum colleagues who not only did an incredible job organizing and planning this tour, but even befriended us as mentors and supervisors on this memorable journey. It is our sincere hope that the connections created on this tour will continue across geographical boarders via discussion and collaboration.

“I assume that the world will face more scenarios like Japan did in 2011. I appreciate that the museums and other cultural historic institutions in Japan, especially in the Tohoku region share their knowledge from this experience. I also appreciate that they remind the world that we are vulnerable and have to take good care of our collections. A great thank you to all those who contributed to the tour.”

Hope for the Future after the Tour
Nobuyuki Kamba, October 8, 2019

I thought I understood well the importance of actually visiting the sites and standing at the places where things were born or where the unfortunate events occurred. However, this tour made me recognize this importance once again. At the same time, I saw that the time that elapsed since the disaster does not change the impression of the site for first-time visitors. While the memory of the disaster may be faded among the people, the reality of the disaster never fades. Through learning the rescue process and seeing the museum exhibitions and stabilization processes, I believe that the tour participants were able to network with the experts who continue to make efforts to restore cultural properties and now have a clear vision about the magnitude of the disaster and how the cultural properties are conserved.

I would like to consider the possibility of an international workshop like the Rikuzentakata International Workshop to share such experiences with ICOM-CC members and other museum staffs to deeply recognize the importance of preparing for the increasing number of natural disasters, and to obtain practical skills. We also need to think of collaborative projects with the newly created International Committee of Museum Disaster Prevention.
Since the tour, I began thinking more about preparing an environment in which the Japanese conservators actively participate in ICOM-CC to provide the accumulated experiences and skills on conservation and disaster prevention to the international society. I hope for making contributions to the international society through strengthening the cooperation with ICOM-CC and further advancement of conservations in Japan through obtaining beneficial information.

Observations and Further Thoughts

Post-Conference Attendees

We visited an exhibition at Rias Ark featuring Hiroyasu Yamauchi’s images and as well as debris collected from the area. The museum exhibition consisted of photographs taken by the curator and two colleagues in the days, weeks and months immediately after the tsunami. Each photograph was accompanied by a text describing the emotions of the curator as the shot was taken. Sanitised objects salvaged from the tsunami-hit area were mounted and displayed throughout the room.

“Amazing how a relatively small branch has been dealing with the huge challenge posed by the rescue operation. It was interesting to visit the original earthquake-proof storage rooms in the museum.”

“It was clear that we were entering the most affected area now. Here the life of relatives and the houses of the museum staff were lost. Even in these circumstances people volunteered to participate in the rescue of cultural property, both local and from other regions in Japan.”

“The exhibition of the debris and the many images taken immediately after the earthquake and tsunami made us all speechless. The further explanations and the reasoning behind the exhibitions provided by Dr. Hiroyasu Yamauchi only amplified the emotions. The message behind the silence in the images is noticeable; disasters like this have happened before and will happen again, humans cannot fight nature and it’s time to build our societies and establish our habitats with this in mind.”
The result was a very evocative exhibition. The intention is to use the information for educational purposes. There was an underlying political message which was that nature is overwhelming and that humans should change their mindset because nature cannot be controlled. Reference to historical documents and images exhibited demonstrated that the 2011 tsunami is not a once in a lifetime occurrence and happens effectively every 30-40 years. It is not, as the press reported at the time, unprecedented, exceptional, nor unique.
“Nǐhǎo!” “Hello!” Beijing China, September 2020

Plans for the 2020 Triennial ICOM-CC Conference

Achal Pandya, Vice Chair, ICOM-CC Directory Board

In September 2020, the ICOM-CC Triennial Conference will take place in China for the first time.

In recent times we have seen a great impetus in the domain of conservation in China, and a rise in the number of new laboratories along with the growth of art museums. The China National Organizing Committee (NOC) is not leaving any stone unturned to make the Triennial Conference a big success. The theme of the conference is “Transcending Boundaries: Integrated Approaches to Conservation”. The conference will take place in Beijing, the capital city of China, September 14–18, 2020.

About the Venue
Beijing is a historic city where history and modernity coexist. The venue for the conference will have all the facilities required for an international event including session rooms with translation facilities, and areas for poster presentations and a trade fair.

About the conference
An overwhelming number of submitted abstracts is an indicator that a diverse and large community of conservators and conservation scientists will be present for the conference. This includes an impressive number of submissions from Chinese scholars, promising a gathering of the larger international conservation community. The conference theme of sharing and exchanging knowledge, skills and traditions from both East and West will certainly be realized. This meeting in China promises to be a learning experience about each other’s conservation philosophies, policies, ethos, contexts, and of course the materials employed in conservation.

China has a rich and diverse cultural heritage, which reflects influences of different dynasties and history that span beyond 700 years. Beijing and beyond are full of historic attractions. This conference will be an opportunity for the participants to explore the rich cultural heritage of the country. In Beijing alone there are six UNESCO world heritage sites.

Beijing is a very good example of urbanism. Over a period of time it has become the political, educational and cultural centre of China, and a hub for international communication. It is home to the world’s most innovative modern architecture such as the CCTV Tower, the National Center for the Performing Arts, and the Olympic Stadium.

Accommodations in Beijing
Beijing has many types and levels of accommodations available. Shortly, conference-recommended hotels will be posted to the conference website.

Beijing Capital International Airport is 30 km or about one hour from the planned conference venue. Beijing South Railway Station is also accessible to the conference area. Hotels of all categories including five star hotels, budget hotels, guest houses, and youth hostels will be available in Beijing. The NOC will provide a more comprehensive list of hotels on the conference website soon.

About the Programme
The intense programme for the ICOM-CC Triennial Conference will offer something for everyone. The working group sessions spanning over five days coupled with plenary and keynote speeches will make the Triennial Conference an engaging academic event. The dates for the programme to be released are fast approaching. The opening of the early bird registration is also approaching very quickly. It is really a time to stay tuned to the ICOM-CC website and begin planning your visit to Beijing for the 19th ICOM-CC Triennial Conference where surely East will meet West in September 2020.

Registration Fee
Details for all fees for early bird, regular, for both member and non-member, and student registrations will be available in the very near future on the conference website.

As for all conferences, obtaining clearances and visas are part of logistics and sometimes these can be tedious and tiring. The Chinese NOC is facilitating this process by providing necessary special letters if someone tentatively plans to attend the conference. For most delegates, once you have registered online and paid as a delegate, a letter for visa use will be issued to you. However, a “TE” visa letter is required for some developing countries and this takes extra time. Please contact secretariat@icom-cc.org if you have inquiries about this letter. The form can be downloaded here.
As part the programme, the NOC has planned some interesting technical visits in Beijing for delegates to sign up for.

**These visits are as follows:**

- Exhibition and Relic Hospital Visit—Palace Museum
- Exhibition visit—National Museum of China
- Conservation Department—National Museum of China
- Lab Tour—Chinese Academy of Cultural Heritage
- National Library / National Museum of Classic Books
- Exhibition and Conservation Lab Visit—Capital Museum
- Zhoukoudian Site Museum
- Beijing Museum of Natural History
- Beijing Auto Museum
- National Museum of Art
- Beijing Stone Carving Art Museum

While registering for the conference do not forget to book one of the technical visits of your choice as places in each visit are limited. The Chinese NOC and ICOM-CC will be providing a diverse and extensive programme during the five days of the Beijing conference. Do check for regular updates on the ICOM-CC website, so you can begin to plan your own programme and technical visits for the 2020 ICOM-CC Triennial Conference from a wide selection of possibilities. The NOC is in the process of planning the opening of the conference as well as the inaugural evening reception, all in an effort to give participants a varied flavor of Beijing on the very first day. Registration for the conference will open in the very near future! Keep your eyes on the [conference website](http://www.icom-cc.org) and start practicing some of the common Chinese words today, see the chart below!

### Visa Letters for Category 3 or 4 Countries

If your passport is issued by a country in the ICOM Country Category 3 or 4, you will need extra time for obtaining a visa to China. These countries generally require a special visa for which you will need a "TE Letter" or "Invitation Letter of Duly Authorized Unit". For this reason, even if you have not yet registered and paid online as a conference delegate, but are planning on attending the Conference, please download, complete and return the “fast-track” form and send it to secretariat@icom-cc.org as soon as possible.

[Fast-Track Here](http://www.icom-cc.org). Contact ICOM-CC [Here](http://www.icom-cc.org).

[Consult Country Category 2020 Here](http://www.icom-cc.org).

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<td>Beijing</td>
<td>北京 běijīng</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thank you</td>
<td>谢谢你 xiè xiè nǐ</td>
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<tr>
<td>You’re welcome</td>
<td>不客气 bù kè qǐ</td>
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<td>Hello</td>
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<td>Good Morning</td>
<td>早上好 zǎo shēng hǎo</td>
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<td>Sorry</td>
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<td>No worries</td>
<td>没关系 méi guǎn xì</td>
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<td>He/She</td>
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<td>Museum</td>
<td>博物馆 bó wù guǎn</td>
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Reflections from Getty Foundation Participants

ICOM-CC Conference, Copenhagen, 2017

Davison Chiwara, Zimbabwe and Margarita Villanueva, Philippines

Once again, ICOM-CC is pleased to announce that the support from the Getty Foundation will allow assistance for a limited number of travel grants to museums and/or conservation professionals from emerging economies and developing countries to attend the 19th Triennial Conference of ICOM-CC in Beijing, China. This includes ICOM country categories 3 and 4 in Africa, Asia, the Pacific, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and Latin America.

Since 1993, the Getty Foundation grant has assisted close to 250 conservation and museum professionals by subsidizing their participation in the ICOM-CC Triennial Conference. Very often this experience extends horizons and experiences—both personally and professionally—for the grant recipient. Two of the most recent Getty Foundation grant recipients gave insight into the experience; what they took home; what having the opportunity to spend a week with colleagues from all over the world meant to them. These accounts follow.

Davison Chiwara, Zimbabwe, Getty Grant Recipient for the ICOM-CC Conference, Copenhagen, 2017

“Participating at the biggest occasion in the world of conservation of historic collections and works of art was quite beneficial to me. I learned about new technologies on material analysis and conservation. This includes powerful state of the art imaging technologies which assist in understanding condition of collections and provide information for advanced documentation and reporting. This helped improve my understanding of conservation of collections.

I also managed to establish networks with conservation experts on material culture from across the globe. This is vital for my professional growth in the conservation field as networking may open up avenues for collaborative projects and sharing of knowledge with professional conservators. Participation at the conference helped me to build confidence in my ability to interact with professionals in the field of conservation and related disciplines at such an international platform. I learned that visibility is key to securing funding for conservation. This is achieved through advocacy; diplomacy; outreach programmes; serving local communities through conservation programmes; conducting conservation clinics; collaboration with local, national and international initiatives; regular contacts with alumni; improving grant writing skills; marketing and responsiveness to the press.”

Recently, Davison commented on how participating in the Getty Foundation grant programme has influenced his professional work since 2017.

Fig. 30. Davison Chiwara at the ICOM-CC 18th Triennial Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 2017.

“My current PhD study focuses on the discovery of pesticide contamination of organic collections in Zimbabwe's museums using scientific methods such as XRF. Some of these collections were brought into these museums by explorers who traveled around the world in search of treasures. However, documentation about the treatment of these collections against pest infestation is sketchy and lacking in most of these museums. This poses serious conservation problems to the collections that the pesticides are meant to protect. Some of the collections are showing signs of deterioration which possibly could be a result of pesticide use in these museums. Also, staff and communities which use these collections are at risk from the pesticides, as research has shown they are hazardous to human health. Therefore, this research calls for prudent collections management and pest control measures which safeguard collections from deterioration caused by pesticide use as well as ensuring the safety of museum staff and communities from harmful pesticides. Indeed, the ICOM-CC 2017 Copenhagen Triennial Conference influenced me to do this research in Zimbabwe's museums. I discussed this work with some professionals who encouraged me to do it, as it will be the first of its kind to be conducted in Africa. No such studies have been conducted in Africa. The findings of this research can be used for comparison purposes with studies that have been conducted in other continents.”
Margarita Villanueva, Philippines, Getty Grant Recipient for the ICOM-CC Conference, Copenhagen, 2017

“The experience I had I owe to the Getty Foundation Connecting Professionals/Sharing Expertise International programme. Apart from the opportunity itself, the structure, planning, and attention to participants lent to every aspect mentioned. From the beginning we were provided with clear information, good organization, and I was made to feel welcome. I was put in touch with my fellow Filipino and grant recipient, Lourdes Po, whom I had not met before and am so excited to collaborate with in future.

In terms of activities, the get-together with the other grant recipients the evening before the Conference officially opened really set the tone for me. It was incredible to meet my fellow participants and so many respected professionals, not least of whom comprised the ICOM-CC and Getty teams. Everyone was so kind and generous, and took the time to get to know us, which led to further sharing and connections throughout the week. I could not have had a better first experience with ICOM-CC. I am left more excited and determined to further conservation efforts in the Philippines.”

Through the ICOM-CC and Getty teams, I developed a strong interest in preventive conservation in hot and humid climates. I am now a participant in the GCI MCE (Getty Conservation Institute Managing Collections Environment), “Preserving Collections in an Age of Sustainability” program and part of the Lopez Museum technical design team for a new storage facility, where we hope to advocate for sustainability through climate, collection and resource specific strategies.

Through my fellow GCI Program participants, I also had the opportunity to learn more about efforts and interests within my own region. I am now a member of the Asia Pacific Tropical Climate Conservation Art Research Network (APTCCARN) and am exploring collaborations for technical research. When we are ready, I hope we can share our efforts and actively participate in open dialogue for the Philippines and the Southeast Asian region.”

Margarita also updated us on her current activities and experiences since the 2017 Conference:

“Two years after the 2017 ICOM-CC Triennial Conference and my gratitude for the experience has only grown. Since the conference, my professional life has been enriched by further knowledge, new networks, lasting relationships, and exciting projects, all for which the Getty International Program has had a direct influence.

Who can apply to the Getty Foundation International grant?

Qualified museum and/or conservation professionals with a minimum of four years work experience who are currently employed in a museum or related institution may apply. Grants are not limited to ICOM members, however, special consideration will be given to individual members of ICOM and ICOM-CC, or Friends of ICOM-CC, or those working for an institution that is an institutional member of ICOM.

How to apply:

Applicants must complete the grant application form available at the ICOM-CC website (www.icom-cc.org) and on request from the ICOM-CC Secretariat (secretariat@icom-cc.org).

The firm deadline for application is:

SUNDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2020.

Submission by e-mail only to the ICOM-CC Secretariat. Any questions about the travel grant should be directed to: secretariat@icom-cc.org.
Latin America: Is Heritage in Danger?

Johanna Theile, ICOM-CC Board Member

Latin American countries are starting a new era. We are observing a social revolution begging for more improvements in health, immediate medical attention, and less expensive remedies. Higher pensions are needed today or an older person cannot live out a decent retirement. Free education is essential for everyone. We see this in a destroyed Venezuela, coups in Bolivia and Chile, with a lot of problems without any real solutions. In countries there is less funding for museums and heritage. Heritage is often not perceived as one of the important issues for a country’s identity. I am one of those who believes that we have to conserve our past to have a future. Conservators in Mexico are protesting in the Zócalo, in the heart of Mexico City. We are getting reports from colleagues in Peru, Argentina, Colombia and Brazil about similar issues. In Chile during the last four weeks, millions and millions of people have been in the streets, asking for change. Sadly, minority groups are turning to violence and have burned churches, destroyed monuments and sculptures, and damaged natural heritage like de Cerro Santa Lucia in the center of Santiago. All heritage is riddled with graffiti. More recently, there has been heavy destruction as well in the city of Valparaiso, one of Chile’s World Heritage Sites. It is sad to witness. I sincerely hope that this deplorable situation comes to an end soon. I condemn violence and damage to a country’s heritage as a way to win demands, no matter how noble. It is simply unacceptable.

Getty Foundation Grants to attend the ICOM-CC Beijing Triennial Conference

The Getty Foundation, through its Connecting Professionals/Sharing Expertise Initiative, provides funding that focuses on supporting the attendance of colleagues from countries with emerging economies at large-scale international forums for professional exchange. As a result of the grants, professionals from countries that are often underrepresented have the opportunity to connect with international experts working in their fields, enhance their practical and theoretical knowledge, and share lessons they learned with their local communities.

Once again, the generosity of the Getty Foundation will allow a limited number of conservation professionals to attend the ICOM-CC Triennial Conference in Beijing from 14-18 September 2020.

The deadline for submissions is 23 February, 2020.
Full guidelines and eligibility can be found on the ICOM-CC website, and the application form can be downloaded from the ICOM-CC website (www.icom-cc.org) or by writing to secretariat@icom-cc.org.

Application is made through ICOM-CC only, and NOT by contacting the Getty Foundation.

On Board 18 – December 2019 - 27
The eighth interim meeting of the Art Technological Source Research Working Group was held at the Cologne Institute of Conservation Sciences on 26 and 27 September on the subject “Reflecting on Reconstructions: the role of sources and performative in art technological studies”. During the two-day meeting, eighteen papers and nineteen posters were presented which explored a whole range of questions concerned with reconstructions. They covered theoretical and methodological issues as well as case studies on sources and works of art from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century. Presentations and poster sessions stimulated lively discussions which were continued during the coffee and tea breaks.

Eighty-five participants from Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, Great Britain, Switzerland, France, Austria, Spain, Norway, Romania, and the United States attended the meeting. The group comprised senior conservators as well as emerging conservation professionals, students, conservation scientists, art historians, and archeologists. Certainly, the event was a wonderful opportunity to meet old friends, to make new ones, for networking, for the exchange of ideas, and for discussing future collaborations.
"Recent Advances in Glass and Ceramics Conservation 2019” was held 5-7 September in London. This was the first-ever joint activity between the ICOM-CC Glass and Ceramics Working Group and the Icon Ceramics and Glass Group. The conference was hosted by the British Museum (fig. 36), and talks took place in the BP Lecture Theatre. The conference was attended by 180 delegates from 25 different countries; of these, roughly 60% reported to be ICOM members.

Over the course of three days, the conference included 24 oral presentations, seven of which were given by students enrolled or recently graduated from conservation programs across five different countries. Forty poster presentations expanded attendance and networking opportunities. In addition, a host of interesting tour options were offered to attendees the day prior to the conference (4 September), and included: visits to the British Museum conservation labs (fig.37) and newly-renovated Islamic Galleries, the Wallace Collection, the Victoria and Albert Museum, Fenton House, Leighton House, the Museum of London Archaeological Archive, the Contemporary Ceramics Centre, and walking tours of popular conservation suppliers. The conference dinner was well attended and was held at the swanky locale of 116 Pall Mall, a spectacular Georgian building located in the exclusive St James district of London.

In all, it was an incredibly inspiring four days from start to finish. Many new connections were made, the quality and caliber of the talks were extremely high, and our publication of preprints was a hit. The demand for printed copies was so high that we will be arranging a second print run. The organizing committee of the Icon Ceramics and Glass Group, fearlessly led by Dana Norris, and the team at the British Museum, expertly led by Duygu Camurcuoglu, are my partners in crime and the reason this meeting was the immense success that it was (fig. 38). The ICOM-CC Glass and Ceramics Working Group is eternally grateful for their hard work, dedication, and organization skills.
The 11th Interim Meeting of the ICOM-CC Leather and Related Materials Working Group took place for the first time in France within the Musée du quai Branly–Jacques Chirac in Paris on 6 and 7 June 2019.

This conference was organized by the Research Centre for Preservation (CRC) together with the Conservation Department of the musée du quai Branly and with support from the school of conservation, Institut du Patrimoine (INP). Prior to the conference, visits were offered to participants in different institutions in Paris or close by: the conservation workshop of the Musée du quai Branly; the specimens collection of the natural history museum; the Research Centre for Preservation, the Institut national du patrimoine; and the skin-based collection and laboratory of the music museum.

Our main objective was to make this event accessible to a wide audience, in particular young professionals and students, but also to encourage the participation of French-speaking professionals. For these reasons we offered reduced registration fees and simultaneous translation French to English. This was made possible thanks to the support of several French national institutions, the CNRS, the French Ministry of Culture and the natural history museum; professional networks such as the Fondation des Sciences du Patrimoine, and the DIM (Domaine d'intérêt majeur) Heritage and ancient materials, ICOM France through the general delegation to the French language and languages of France, as well as Hermès.

The meeting was a real success as it was full only 48 hours after the registration opening! We welcomed 105 participants (about 20% ICOM members) coming from 15 countries, mostly from Europe, with many students and young professionals. The interim meeting was marked by a great diversity regarding the skin-based materials presented, the field concerned, and the professions represented. We welcomed 21 oral presentations and 15 posters related to archaeological leather, scientific development, fur and skin, gilt leather, new conservation approaches or technical history. At the end of the first day, guided tours of the Musée du quai Branly were offered to the participants, followed by a cocktail dinner on a boat cruise.
“Metal 2019”, the 9th interim meeting of the ICOM-CC Metals Working Group, was held from September 2-6 in Neuchâtel, Switzerland. The meeting was hosted by the Haute Ecole Arc Conservation-restauration, part of the University of Applied Sciences Western Switzerland, and held at the campus of the University in close proximity to the conservation training program at the school. The conference welcomed 264 attendees from 29 countries to discuss the conservation and scientific study of metallic cultural heritage. The attendee breakdown was 78 full ICOM members, 15 ICOM student members, 31 non-ICOM students, and 140 non-members. Countries represented were Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States.

The one-session format of the Metals Working Group conferences offers an in-depth, wide-ranging view of the profession including conservation practice, preventive conservation, and the latest scientific research in our field. Fifty-five papers were presented related to the history, conservation and scientific investigation of metallic cultural heritage, including ten papers by Young Conservation Professionals (YCP). Full papers were 20 minutes in length and YCP papers were ten minutes in length. Metallic cultural heritage from contexts as diverse as indoor and outdoor contemporary sculpture, terrestrial and marine, museum collections, architectural, and spiritual were addressed. Papers addressed solvent-nitrile glove interactions with metals, reburial of marine iron artifacts, development of new corrosion inhibitors for copper alloys, eco-friendly and non-hazardous coatings including fluoropolymers, and dry-ice blasting techniques for cleaning historic metals.

Poster authors presented a record-breaking 53 posters and 53 Flash Poster Presentations on a broad range of subjects including knowledge transfer between conservators and traditional metalworking trades, historic bells, acoustic emission testing, indoor air quality and corrosion of lead, vapor phase corrosion inhibitors for large and composite objects and the use of gels in the cleaning of metals. Posters formed a backdrop to the beautiful historic architecture of the Neuchâtel Town Hall.

Digital conference preprints were available to attendees at the conference and will shortly be available for purchase on www.lulu.com. A fabulous social program added to the success of the conference and included visits to the Haute Ecole Arc Conservation-restauration training program and workshops to hear about current projects from students and faculty, mid-conference off-site sessions with an opportunity to visit one of seven local museums and cultural institutions with a discussion on relevant conservation issues at the collection. A gala conference dinner at the beautiful 18th-century mansion Le Palais du Peyrou, opening and
closing receptions, and a post-conference day trip to the Val de Travers rounded out the program. Attendees were also able to participate in one of four pre-conference workshops:

- In-situ electrochemical impedance spectroscopy (EIS) for metal heritage
- Managing metal corrosion
- Air pressure testing of museum microclimates for conserving metals & building energy
- Laser cleaning 1- and 2-day workshops, with certification.

I am grateful for the support of ICOM-CC in the management of another successful Metals interim meeting, the Metals Working Group assistant coordinators, as well as colleagues at the Haute Ecole Arc Conservation-restauration for their hard work in organizing and hosting the meeting. The support of Bridget Bachelard, Director General of Haute Ecole Arc, and Regis Bertholon, Head of Studies and Research, Haute Ecole Arc Conservation-restauration, was critical to the meeting. Steering Committee members Christian Degrigny, Laura Brambilla and Edith Joseph, as well as numerous members of the local organizing committee, worked hard to ensure a successful conference and warm welcome to all attendees at one of the largest interim meetings in recent memory.
Textiles Interim Meeting
20-21 June, 2019, Abegg-Stiftung, Riggisberg, Switzerland and Kyoto, September

Deborah Lee Trupin, Coordinator, Textiles Working Group

On 20 and 21 June the Abegg-Stiftung in Riggisberg, Switzerland hosted an interim meeting for the Textiles Working Group, “A Challenging Dimension: The Conservation and Research of Costume and Accessories”. There were 15 full papers, four “peka-kucha” talks, one panel discussion, and ten posters presented, as well as a lab tour that included two student presentations. There also was time to visit the museum, and of course, connect with friends and colleagues. The presenters came from 13 countries, from the US to Japan, Sweden to Brazil. Participants came from those countries and more, for a total of 22 countries represented. Of the total of 130 participants, approximately half were ICOM-CC Textiles Working Group members.

There was tremendous enthusiasm for this Interim Meeting, starting with the paper submissions and going through the end of the meeting. Because of the size of the venue, the number of participants had to be limited. There were dozens who wanted to attend but could not. The quality of the presentations was high and discussion—particularly during the panel session—was enthusiastic. Many at the meeting commented on how energetic and warm the atmosphere was. For the warmth of the atmosphere, we cannot thank the Abegg-Stiftung enough. They were the most generous hosts imaginable, providing transportation from Bern to Riggisberg both days, coffee, tea, and lunches both days, and even hosting all the attendees to a gala dinner. Their gracious hospitality gave participants delightful opportunities to connect with one another. We will be including a meeting summary in our upcoming Newsletter. We also are working on publishing a number of the papers on the ICOM-CC Textiles Working Group webpage and hope to have this up by early 2020.

In September, in connection with the ICOM General Meeting in Kyoto, ICOM-CC Textiles Working Group member Mei Ishii organized an afternoon of visits for the Textiles Working Group and a few Costume Committee members attending the Triennial. Mie arranged for us to visit the conservation studio and collections storage areas of the Kyoto Costume Institute and the textile conservation studio of Shokakudo, a private company contracted to do work on Japanese important national heritage in the National Museum. In both places, we were thrilled to see the pieces being treated and the quality of work. After the visits, Mie arranged for us to visit a specialist needle shop and for participants and our hosts to meet for dinner. It was a small and very convivial afternoon and evening. Altogether, 18 people participated, from 6 countries. We are very grateful to Mie for organizing this special day.

Fig. 45. Left to right: Marjolein Homan Free, NL; Mie Ishii, JA & our organizer; Fumiko Umeno, JA; Naoko Ueyama, JA, Head of Textile Conservation at Kyoto Costume Institute, our host; Adelheid Rasche, DE; Eiko Uchiyama, JA; Chris Eckardt, US: Deborah Trupin, US; Yuka Ito, JA; Eszter Mátyás, HU(ngary); Vanessa Bray, AU. Photo: Ali Nassir
The Wet Organic Archaeological Materials working group (WOAM) held its 14th interim meeting in Portsmouth, England from May 20-24th 2019. 123 people attended from 19 different countries. It was a very busy conference with 54 papers and 20 posters presented over the course of four days. A fifth day of tours encompassed visits to the Mary Rose Trust’s conservation labs and Historic England’s conservation facilities at Fort Cumberland. The multi-year commitment that the scale of waterlogged wood treatments often necessitates meant that conference attendees had opportunities to catch up on the progress of “old friends” including projects like the Saving Oseberg, the Vasa and the Yenikapi Shipwrecks. However one of the most striking things about the conference was the range of new projects and new challenges that have emerged in the last three years. The lifetime achievements of Dr. Ian Godfrey, Dr. Poul Jensen, Khoi Tran, and Tara Grant were honoured during the conference. Each has made significant contributions to the conservation of waterlogged organics and has actively and energetically promoted the field during their storied careers.

In a conference that was filled with a number of fabulous highlights, perhaps the most memorable was dining in the Mary Rose Museum overlooking the ship herself. For many conference attendees, familiar with the history of the ship and her treatment, this was the first opportunity to visit and experience the sheer magnitude of the work that has been done and the energy was really palpable. We are deeply grateful to the Mary Rose Trust, Historic England, University of Portsmouth, and Flag Fen for their hospitality, and to Dr. Eleanor Schofield, Angela Middleton and David Pearson for faultless local arrangements and masterful planning.
Why Become a Working Group Coordinator?

I have been a member of ICOM-CC since joining as a student. The triennial meetings of the Conservation Committee and its working groups’ interim meetings provide stimulating programmes and conversations with many international peers. These exchanges, experiences and connections have proved invaluable to me in my work environment, for information on specific treatments from the committee’s substantial publications, discussions with international colleagues at meetings, broadening my communication skills.

After assisting in the planning, organisation and facilitation of an interim meeting of the working group Sculpture, Polychromy and Architectural Decorations, in Glasgow, Scotland, I was inspired to become more involved in the Committee’s work and stood for the new Working Group Coordinator for the Triennial 2014-2017. This was a steep learning curve for me, one that has been (and still is) invaluable to me and my work. In my understanding, the role of the Working Group Coordinator is that of a facilitator. Attending business meetings with the other 21 coordinators and the Directory Board, updates and feedback from ICOM and ICOM-CC Working Groups are exchanged and discussed. It is through these meetings that I gained a bigger picture of the context of the Conservation Committee and the International Council of Museums, and learned much about publication, editorial and administrative standards and methodologies. The Directory Board and secretariat of ICOM-CC provide guidance to the group coordinators, while the group coordinator disseminates information to the working group members via email, social media, such as LinkedIn and Facebook, and vice versa. At the beginning of the triennial, the group coordinator has the opportunity to draft the triennial programme for the working group. This is a great chance to get members involved in inviting them through online surveys, email, at interim meetings, and the business meeting at the triennial, to share what they would like to see discussed and/or further researched in the field of the Working Group.

For the triennial meetings coordinators assist in the call for abstracts, and editorial process for the preprints and in shaping the working group sessions for the 5-day conference. During the conference Working Group Coordinators chair their sessions with the help of up to six Assistant Coordinators, and hold the Working Group’s business meeting.

I have met and gotten to know many wonderfully diverse and inspiring people through my volunteer work as Working Group Coordinator for ICOM-CC. The role provides much opportunity for further professional development and I particularly found the broad and diverse environment of international working very inspiring and insightful. Most of all, however, engaging with an international institution and its objectives in such a direct way, it gave me a real sense of being part of a community that stands for and practices its aims and objectives in support of the International Council of Museums. I am most proud to identify with and be an advocate for the ICOM-CC.
Become a Working Group Coordinator!

Kate Seymour, Working Group Coordinator Liaison, 2017-2020
Sculpture, Polychromy and Architectural Decorations Working Group Coordinator, 2008-2014

Here are 10 reasons why you should stand as a Working Group Coordinator at the next the International Council of Museums Committee for Conservation (ICOM-CC) elections:

1. **Community:** ICOM-CC represents the conservation community within the museum sector. It is the largest of ICOM’s International Committees and allows conservators, conservation scientists, art historians, museum professionals and conservation specialists to meet and discuss issues relating to our field. The community functions because of its active members and the Working Group Coordinators promote and stimulate the development of that community. We need members to stand and advocate for our field.

2. **Networking:** ICOM-CC brings you in contact with a multitude of like-minded professionals who are in positions to provide advice and support for the care and conservation of cultural heritage. Joining ICOM-CC and volunteering as a Working Group Coordinator puts you in the hub of the conservation field and allows you to give a hand in defining the direction that the field will take. Be proactive and you will expand your network!

3. **Professional Development:** As Coordinator you will run the activities of the Working Group. You will be the filter through which all the latest ideas within your field and sector are passed. You will be able to discuss best-practice and state-of-the-art solutions with your peers and develop professionally. You will also have access to a broader field of professionals working within the museum sector, which will help place your development within a wider context. Be a forerunner and move forward in your career!

4. **Leadership experience:** It will be your task, together with the Directory Board, to run the business of the Working Group. This will provide you with a clearer understanding of how ICOM and the Committee for Conservation function, and the importance of our committee within the framework of ICOM. You will become a leader within your community, which is a great way to gain leadership experience outside of the traditional office or studio environment. Be inspiring and become a team leader!

5. **Friendship:** Collaborating with other Working Group Coordinators, Assistant Coordinators and the Directory Board members will forge new professional friendships and further your networking skills. Our field is small and widespread, so ICOM-CC provides a focal point for meetings and other activities relating to conservation. Long-lasting collaborations are a natural outcome of your three-year term as a Working Group Coordinator. Be connected and reach out to others across the globe!

6. **Soft skills:** Managing the tasks given to you as a Coordinator to run the Working Group, together with a usually already busy work schedule, requires the development of soft skills such as time management and team building. Fostering the development of a team across cultural and geographical boundaries will give you skills rarely to be found elsewhere! Be ready for the challenge!

Fig. 50. Kate Seymour, Working Group Coordinator Liaison, ICOM-CC Directory Board, 2017-2020. Photo: Ben Brack
7. **Broaden your knowledge:** Working Group Coordinators review papers and posters for ICOM-CC Triennial Conferences. You will be the first point of contact with authors who will present at our Working Group sessions at the Triennial Conference. The reviewing and editorial functions will bring you into contact with new knowledge and innovative research, and provide you with excellent editing skills.

8. **Mentoring:** Taking up the position of leadership as a Working Group Coordinator will give you the opportunity to mentor or advise emerging professionals to the field of conservation. This role will also allow you to connect with your peers and use them as sounding boards, finding solutions to problems you encounter in your work. Disseminating these ideas in newsletters or discussion groups will strengthen your network and provide interest for future activities. Be inspirational – pay it forward!

9. **Stay Inspired and Stay Motivated:** giving back to the community, being in a position of leadership, and forging new networks can revitalise your own interests and passions within the field of conservation. Becoming a Working Group Coordinator will keep our activities alive and our sector fresh. We need new input and dedicated members. Be enthusiastic and discover new ideas!

10. **Improving your Resume:** lastly, giving back to the conservation community doesn’t look bad on your CV! It may help you within your own organisation or when searching for a new job. Showing that you have dedicated time and resources to improving and furthering the international conservation community will be a good way to impress your peers and employers. Be motivated and lay a pathway for your future!

ICOM-CC will provide you with a global environment in which you can develop your ability to work within a team to a high professional standard and make a difference in the field of conservation. The reasons noted above have impacted my personal development and career. My involvement in ICOM-CC as a Working Group Coordinator and Directory Board member has given my career a boost and brought me in contact with a world-wide community. I can only encourage you to do the same. Make a difference and stand for election in the Spring of 2020!!

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**Opportunities to Participate in the ICOM-CC Leadership:**

**Candidacies opening in March 2020**

The **Call for Candidacies** to the **ICOM-CC Directory Board** and for **Working Group Coordinators** will open on 1 March 2020. The announcement, guidelines and a candidacy template will be available on the ICOM-CC website at that time.

If you are interested in standing for election to the Board or as a Coordinator, please watch the website (www.icom-cc.org) for information.

Questions to: secretariat@icom-cc.org
You Should Be a Directory Board Member!

Tannar Ruuben MSc, MA
Senior Lecturer, Head of Paintings Conservation Studies
Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Helsinki, FINLAND
Media, Design and Conservation / Degree Program in Conservation
ICOM-CC Directory Board – Member and Treasurer 2014 - 2020

After returning from our last Directory Board meeting in Goa, India, so well organized and hosted by our colleague Dr. Achal Pandya from Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi, one of my friends commented to me: “What a wonderful profession you are in, traveling the world and seeing world art treasures. Amazing!” This is very true, though being on the ICOM-CC Directory Board is not entirely about enjoying the travelling and admiring our common cultural heritage.

I was first asked to stand for ICOM-CC Directory Board elections in 2014 at the Triennial Conference in Melbourne. After serving for nine years in the Education and Training Working Group as Assistant Coordinator and Coordinator, and after six years as an assistant Coordinator in Paintings Working Group, I felt that participating as a Directory Board (DB) member would give me a good opportunity to learn and experience in-depth the whole range of issues in the scope of ICOM-CC. With its currently more than 3,300 members it is by far the largest of the ICOM International Committees. It has been an eye-opening experience for me after being a member of this professional organisation since 1993.

Apart from being a DB member, I also served as the Treasurer for ICOM-CC during my two 3-year terms. It was the first time it became clear to me that in our global, non-profit organization we are dealing with very limited financial resources. These resources have to be managed with great care and insight, in order to be able to prioritize, finance and maintain many important special projects within ICOM-CC. Keeping a precise record of all transactions throughout the year and preparing extensive financial reports together with the Chair for ICOM Office Headquarters in Paris has been one of my duties. Despite the amount of work, I have really enjoyed it, developing a systematic approach that allows me to provide timely financial reporting at the end of each year before the Annual Report deadline. Every International Committee subsidy from ICOM depends on the accuracy and clarity of the Annual Report as one of the several criteria. I was re-elected in 2017 and must say that I have very much enjoyed being also part of the current Directory Board.

Being a Directory Board member actually requires quite a lot of involvement and time, most of which is done on your free time. Elected DB officers, including the Chair, two Vice Chairs, the Liaison to Working Groups, and Treasurer, have multiple special tasks in line with the ICOM-CC Strategic Plan. The Chair has oversight and particular responsibility, and the entire workload management is unimaginable without the long-standing secretary of ICOM-CC, Joan Reifsnyder. There is plenty of interesting and challenging work to be done for all elected members of the DB over a 3-year period. In our work and actions, all the International Committees, including ICOM-CC have to follow the strategy and quite strict guidelines given by ICOM.

Meeting two times a year for very intensive and long 3-day meetings, mostly at one of the DB members home institutions, has been an additional bonus to have an insight into other organizations and institutions, and learning from new colleagues you meet. Often DB members are invited to give lectures or even short workshops and to share their own knowledge with staff or students from these institutions. Apart from these intensive meetings, the Directory Board and its secretary work continuously throughout the year on multiple tasks and projects, many of which have much broader meaning and influence exceeding the scope of ICOM-CC and its membership. These include preparing and working on resolutions related to various aspects of preserving our common cultural heritage; selecting the venue for the Triennial Conference and assisting in planning and organizing the event; selecting Getty Grantees to participate at the ICOM-CC Triennial Conference; peer reviewing and selecting the papers and posters for the Triennial Conference together with the Working Groups coordinators; preparing ICOM-CC events for the ICOM General Conferences; producing the biannual On Board newsletter; and many more tasks.

In between the in-person Directory Board meetings, we also have short online video conference meetings when specific issues require more immediate focus and direct communication. Video conferences are a useful tool and a good supplement, but can never replace the face-to-face gatherings where time spent together also allows broader understanding of individual competencies, motivations and
backgrounds, thus providing better platforms for balanced decision making, prioritisation, and strategic planning.

Visiting new places and being able to see and admire world art and cultural heritage treasures on the way comes as a bonus to this duty. Meeting face-to-face with wonderful colleagues during each meeting, exchanging experiences, and debating current issues in conservation and the museum field is one of the best parts about being a member of the DB. Each member of DB brings their own strengths, experience and perspectives to the work done by the Board, aiming to strengthen the conservation community and provide every member as much access as possible to information and knowledge in the field. One great example of this work is the ICOM-CC Publications Online Platform, one of several Special Projects, which is currently expanding to include also the ICOM-CC Working Group publications in addition to the Triennial Conference Preprints. The Directory Board cannot work effectively without the great input from ICOM-CC Working Groups, their Coordinators and Assistant Coordinators. This input has increased a lot over past years, helping to strengthen ICOM’s conservation community’s visibility and influence as well as cooperation with other International Committees within ICOM.

For many members of the DB it is sometimes hard or even impossible to find financing to participate at the meetings. I have been extremely lucky to get financial support from my home institution, Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Helsinki, Finland, even though my institution has had some extremely tough times in recent years due to governmental cuts in its finances. Although it is desirable for all DB members to be physically present at every meeting, there is an understanding that this may not always be possible due to a supporting institution’s limited finances.

To conclude, I would like to invite and encourage all the ICOM-CC members, especially those who already have gained experience working as Working Group Coordinators or Assistant Coordinators, to put forward their candidacy for membership in the ICOM-CC Directory Board, to be elected at the 19th ICOM-CC Triennial Conference in Beijing 2020. It truly is a fulfilling and life-enhancing experience.

Fig. 51. Tannar Ruuben, Member and Treasurer, ICOM-CC Directory Board, 2014 - 2020. Photo: Kate Seymour
Let’s Connect!
Become an ICOM Family member and connect with your colleagues all over the world!

ICOM Family: stimulating personal contacts between the 33,000 ICOM Family members worldwide. This initiative is based on reciprocity. By becoming a member of the 'family', you can get in touch with colleagues around the world and meet them virtual and in real life.

For more information and joining the community that embraces the idea of hospitality & sharing insights in a warm-hearted atmosphere visit:
www.icomfamily.com

ICOM-CC Medal 2020

In early January 2020 the Call for Nominations will open for the ICOM-CC Medal that will be presented during the Triennial Conference in Beijing, China.

Every three years at the Triennial Conference, ICOM-CC recognizes individuals who have made notable contributions to ICOM-CC and to the field of conservation.

Watch for announcements and guidelines on the ICOM-CC website along with a list of past recipients.
Nominations can be made by current ICOM-CC Voting Members.
The nomination deadline is 1 March 2020.