Museum Studies

Bridging Theory and Practice

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Museum Studies – Bridging Theory and Practice

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Museum Studies

Bridging Theory and Practice

Foreword and Acknowledgements

The collection of 27 chapters brings forth Finnish museum professionalism. This volume is the end result of a three-year collaboration (2018–2020) between the Museum Studies Programme at the University of Helsinki and Finnish museum professionals. The aim of this collaboration has been to investigate how, indeed, theoretical concepts reach the shores of museum practices and help promote best-practice methods. Museums are in the business of mediating the long-term understanding of society and acting as a bridge between past, present and future. We editors are thrilled to be able to present ideas used in the Finnish context to a wider audience.

Our process included a writing retreat weekend in January 2020 at the Lammi Research Station of the University of Helsinki, with support from the Department of Cultures, University of Helsinki. This intensive period helped not only in collaboratively developing our chapter ideas and synergies among our writings, but also created a strong sense of camaraderie for those that were able to attend. Given that the world changed so soon after that time, with the introduction of worldwide social restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we are especially thankful that we were able to spend this weekend together.

We would like to extend our appreciation to ICOFOM and the University of Jyväskylä for their kind support, as well as to all the professionals who have donated their time to our project. An endeavour of this magnitude does not succeed without the dedicated efforts of many people. We are truly thankful for all of their selfless contributions. It has been incredibly gratifying to see how our museum community, nationally and internationally, works as one.

We editors hope that our book will encourage present and future museum professionals gain a more significant voice in stating matters near and dear to them.

Nina Robbins

Suzie Thomas

Minna Tuominen

Anna Wessman

Helsinki, 16.4.2021

Introduction to the Book

Nina Robbins, Suzie Thomas, Minna Tuominen, Anna Wessman

This book is a handbook for everyone who is interested in museums and the wider cultural and cultural heritage debates. In the spirit of lifelong learning, it aims to connect the humanistic discipline of museum studies with the wider context of society. Museums possess power as safekeepers of our memories. This book will, in its own small way, take part in the discussion of making our past and future memories matter, to show how important it is for us to understand our past. In our contemporary culture it often seems that no time is allowed for this kind of understanding; the constant flow of issues and "must dos" often hinders us from seeing the connections between our past and present. In this turmoil, things in the past can too easily be regarded as non-urgent and less important. We, the editors, wish to shed light on why museums matter; we believe that it is important to launch a book that is directed both to readers within the arts and cultural heritage sector and readers outside of it. It is clear that readers within the sector tend to agree with one another on the major cultural issues. For these readers, our book offers up-to-date knowledge on the latest developments that have taken place in Finland. It is as important to make these issues visible to readers who situate themselves outside the sector and to connect these issues with the wider context of society. The knowhow of cultural heritage disciplines will aid in understanding the changes we are facing in the 21st century and help give them perspective.

Museum Studies – Bridging Theory and Practice is an edited collection of 27 chapters by leading scholars and practitioners, most of whom work in Finland. The book will, for the first time, give a concise presentation of current research and practice in Finnish museum studies to a wider international audience, as well as to students and museum professionals in the field in Finland. The book combines current theoretical and practical approaches to museum studies, thus making it the first English-language handbook of Finnish museology.

We are naming this book Museum Studies – Bridging Theory and Practice in order to show the intertwined connection between theoretical knowledge and practical approaches to museum work. We acknowledge the history of the two concepts, museology and museum studies, and how they have been used to describe the work done in museums (Brulon Soares 2019; Lorente 2012; MacLeod 2001). In this volume the focus is on valuing both concepts; this is why the authors have had the choice to decide which term suits their chapter the best.

The main sections are as follows: Museology and Museums as a Profession; Collection Management Leading to Collection Development; Communities and Audiences; Exhibitions as Transmitters of Changing Museum Identities

and Ethics. Recent developments in the field of museum studies in Finland are highlighted and discussed through these main themes. Each section begins with an introduction, which points out the main issues discussed in the subsequent chapters. These function as a preview of the chapter contents. In addition, these introductions bring together issues and highlight similarities among the chapters.

It is natural that every author has their own style of writing, and these differences are welcomed, since they promote the multivocal perspective that our book strives to achieve. The contributing authors represent a wide spectrum of interests, including museum professionals from fields such as museum directorship, collections managers, curators and educators. Academics contributing to the book come from related fields such as archaeology, cultural heritage studies, art history, ethnology and of course museology. Furthermore, many of the authors who are now scholars also worked in the museum field prior to their transitioning to university positions.

All of the chapters in this volume were written prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, with the pandemic growing into its global magnitude during the editing process of the volume. For certain, we will see tradition-breaking research projects regarding new best-practice procedures done in museums due to the pandemic in the near future. For now, it is safe to say that, as important as all the digital solutions for museums are, they are not able to replace face-to-face human communication or actual encounters with original museum objects and environments.

There are issues and large areas of knowledge that our volume will not cover. For example, this first volume does not cover extensive descriptions of object research, the work of public art commissions done in museums or various AR (augmented reality) and VR (virtual reality) options available to museums. Nor does it cover issues of conservation, just to name a few. Furthermore, work needs to be done in museums to increase their level of sustainability, i.e., to address issues regarding global warming, systemic racism, assessments of queer and trans experiences in relation to museums and the effects of Western colonialism. These are issues that museum professionals are currently finding the need to address in their everyday work, and certainly any future volumes will be able to publish results and the best-practice methods regarding these themes.

The list of issues that are not present in this volume underscores the multitude of museum-related themes. Indeed, museum professionals are and will be in the future bearers of plenty. We do hope that some of these themes can come to the fore in future publications, especially at this moment, when we seem to be experiencing a boom in museum studies research in Finland. We should also acknowledge, with deep gratitude, that the museum professionals featured in this volume contributed their chapters, despite their very busy schedules.

Our endeavour owes a lot to the long tradition of museum practices. Ever since the cabinets of curiosities the interest in seeking material evidence for literary comprehension of the world has accumulated collections, first in the Western world and later on globally. In the turmoil of our contemporary culture, one

needs to keep in mind that the tasks of collecting and educating have always been at the core of museums, but our understanding of these tasks has been in constant flux. To study and understand this flux is the power that will keep museums current, both now and in the future.

It is often stated that the role of museums in recent decades has transitioned from being a place for storing collections to institutions that focus more on the public, critically reflecting on their own role in society (Anderson 2004; Hooper-Greenhill 2013). Duncan Cameron rather critically suggested that "our museums and art galleries seem not to know who or what they are" (2004, p. 61). Discussions can also sometimes suggest, perhaps without intention, that museums can either be social institutions or collection keepers – not necessarily both, and not necessarily with the same priority given to both roles. Elaine Heumann Gurian, for example, seemingly demoted museum objects to being "like props in a brilliant play" (2004, p. 271) and Eugene Dillenburg rejected the idea that collections are an integral part of what actually makes museums museums (2011, p. 10). These different approaches to museums were clearly in evidence during the ICOM (International Council of Museums) Kyoto 2019 General Conference in Japan, when professionals from all over the world discussed the meaning of museums, culminating in a quite heated debate over the new Museum Definition.

In our view, collection work will always be an essential role for museums, and this is directly linked to their societal position as well; museums are indeed educators, facilitators of participation and even entertainers. But this is not possible without their stewardship responsibility. The concept of responsibility has been key ever since the cabinets of curiosities and the first museographical documents, which laid the historical basis for how to manage, upkeep and care for collections (Impey & McGregor 2001). The era of the grand museums in the 19th century transmitted that legacy to wider audiences through the first public museums and their educational approach, such as was done in the Louvre or the British Museum (Pearce 1992). The early years of the 20th century saw a vast growth of museum institutions in Finland and elsewhere in Europe (Pettersson & Kinanen 2010). In the post-war period, it became time to assess the level of professionalism, and university education related to this started (Vilkuna 2010). This led to a situation in which concepts such as old and new museology were born. Old museology referred to the background of how museum collections are cared for and new museology to the greater concept of why we regard museum work as important (Halpin 1997; Maroević 1998; Vilkuna 2010). Throughout the years of critical assessment and self-reflecting, the identity of museums was enhanced and seen as one of the core elements in building sustainable museum futures. Eventually concepts such as social museology (Moutinho 2016) and critical museology (Shelton 2013) emerged. The latest research and publications show that museums can indeed become strong policy makers in society.

It is widely known that museology is a young academic discipline. As shown in recent publications, this is a fact that makes museology potentially more flex-

ible and able to react to the current turmoils of society. In Finland, museology has been taught as a university subject since the 1980s and publications on best-practice methods have followed ever since (Heinonen & Lahti 2001 (1988); Ketonen 1999; Rajakari 2008; Pettersson 2009; Kinanen 2009; Jyrkkiö & Liukkonen 2010; Pettersson & Kinanen 2010; Niemelä & Jyrkkiö 2012). These publications are directed toward domestic readers; this is why we feel that it is important to share the tradition of this knowledge with international readers as well. While the book draws primarily on expertise and developments from within Finland, it has a relevance for students and professionals transnationally, as it showcases the best practices in teaching museum studies, as first developed by the University of Helsinki (Thomas, Wessman & Heikkilä 2018). Our book is based on the work done during 2018–2020 when the curriculum was developed further, focusing on making theory meet practice (Robbins 2019; 2021). Some might claim that Finland, which is located in the North, might be a less active participant on the international level. It is precisely due to the flexibility of the discipline and the flexibility of a young nation that Finnish museology might offer fresh perspectives. The international community of museum professionals is very closely-knit, in which the concepts of lifelong learning and continuing professional development are widely applied. We, as editors, believe that this aspect also makes this a valuable book for a wider audience.

Throughout the chapters, concepts such as museological values and museological impact factors are discussed. These are tools for readers to help them understand why our past matters. The concepts of values and impacts are often nonspecific, and their definitions may be very philosophical or theoretical in nature, thus making it difficult to find accurate ways to measure their existence or efficiency. In the field of museum studies theoretical developments often end up having practical and very concrete outcomes, and the chapters presented in this book by museum professionals and researchers introduce ways to measure the immeasurable. Eventually, they will help us navigate in the field of museological significance.

This first English-language book on Finnish museum studies is a building ground for both the above-mentioned issues and any future ones that might arise. This can be seen in the energetic, highly intelligent and dedicated approach that current students of museum studies programme have shown in their work. Our first book is intended to help this next generation develop museum studies further, and in ten years' time, or sooner, we will perhaps see new results, going in new directions.

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Section I

Museology and Museums as a Profession

The first section of the book highlights the history of Finnish museology, especially the role of the University of Jyväskylä. The first professional courses for museum workers in Finland were arranged by the Museums Association in the 1920s (Vilkuna 2010). This book highlights one hundred years of museum professionalism and places itself in this continuum in which history, but also concepts used to describe that history, are seen as crucial. Johanna Enqvist's chapter comes first in our book because it concentrates on the importance of these concepts and how they direct and guide our thinking.

Recent decades have shown us that the change from a more traditional approach towards acknowledging museums' roles as proactive players in society has become evident. Current issues, such as the division of wealth and inequality, urgent environmental matters demanding immediate actions and the understanding of cultural sensitivities globally, are all huge endeavours, and museums have a responsibility to be part of the overall discussion when searching for tools to cope with these issues. In this work, museums can be strong policy makers in society. The need for a clear vision and the understanding that museums are bearers of power are both important. In order to deal with this shift of attitudes, leadership is required. However, such leadership will need professionals who are able to self-direct themselves in conjunction with it. In this area, the concept of life-long learning is crucial. This section gives an insight into current and future leadership in museums, emphasising the need for understanding the history of the organisation in order to be able to see the wider context, as described in Nina Robbins' chapter. Here she places museums into the wider context of economic and societal theories and brings museological value discussion to the fore (Robbins 2019). Museums are in the business of originality, and it is in the hands of museum professionals to bring forth the importance of this and create fruitful opportunities for meaningful encounters.

Kerstin Smeds' chapter presents a broader perspective. She places Scandinavian museology within the overall European context. She gives us a clear perspective on why the need to understand concepts is important. It seems that the discussion on what museology actually is has intrigued scholars and museum professionals since the start of the discipline. This becomes clear not only in Smeds' but also Janne Vilkuna's chapter. Studies show that education in Finland is highly valued and the Pisa Effect is an internationally known concept (www.ktl.jyu.fi). The museum profession is no exception to this, as is described in Leena Tokila's chapter on continuing education. In Finland, the Museums Decree (2005, renewed 314/2019) means that university-level education in museum studies is broadly accepted by many as a requirement for gaining employment as a museum professional. This makes the museum studies courses offered at the Universities of Helsinki, Jyväskylä, Turku, Oulu and Tampere especially significant disciplines, given their tangible connection to future career plans for prospective students. Vilkuna's chapter uses an archival approach to describe in detail the developments that led to this exceptional position of museum studies in Finland. These studies directly prepare students for a profession that has its roots in the cabinets of curiosities of the European courts. Furthermore, as we note in

the book's title, theory and practice have always been deeply interwoven within museum studies, and the discipline has had several names, such as museology, museum studies and museography (Brulon Soares 2019). This legacy-chain of knowledge and the understanding of historical perspectives and concepts provide students with skills to navigate among contemporary, short-term fluctuations. Susanna Pettersson and Kimmo Levä describe the changing operational ground of museums and museum leadership. They advocate the need for new strategies and concentrate on developments in museum professionalism and management.

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Reflections on Museology – Classifications, conceptualisations and concepts at the core of museology theory and practice

Johanna Enqvist[1]

Abstract

This chapter theorises the museum as an agency or technology of classification (Fyfe 1995) to discuss and demonstrate how world views, ideologies, knowledge and power are composed and entangled in the classifications, conceptualisations and conceptual systems of museums. I argue that the analysis, deconstruction and awareness of nature and implications of conceptualisations, as well as the discourses to which they are attached, are crucial, regarding both the theory and practice of museology. Drawing from critical museology and heritage studies, I consider the concept of the museum in light of its history as a Western institution and deeply implicated in the modernist and nationalist quest for an order of things and peoples (Bennett 1995). While museums have transformed and redefined their principles and practices in recent decades, the museum institution has not abandoned its original function as an instrument for characterising and representing the world by cataloguing. Classifications and conceptual systems offer a critical key to the investigation and deconstruction of the museum's categorical legacy. This chapter presents the connection between classification and conceptualisation, as profound human activities, and the formation of concepts and discourses, as well as the intertwined dyad of knowledge and power operating and manifesting itself in the museum institution. At the operational level, I examine some examples of processes and applications, such as semantic web ontologies, through which worldviews, knowledge systems and more or less consciously pursued ideologies embedded in classifications and conceptual systems are integrated into museum practices.

Keywords: concepts, classification, theory, critical heritage studies, critical museology

Introduction

In the history of the modern museum, the concept of the museum has been fluid and debated, constantly rethought and redefined, both in museums and heritage organisations and in academic research concerning museums and heritage (Davis,

1. This chapter has been peer reviewed.

Mairesse & Desvallées 2010; Woodham 2019). As some museums have radically transformed, adjusted and re-invented their principles, policies and practices over recent decades, ICOM stated in the aftermath of the 2016 ICOM General Conference that the museum definition from the ICOM Statutes in 2007 no longer seems to reflect the challenges and manifold visions and responsibilities of museums (ICOM 2019). ICOM has thus invited members and other interested parties to take part in creating a more current definition (see also Ehanti, this volume). The responses to ICOM's request, and the new alternative museum definition based on them, stressed the museum's institutional role as media or as a cultural service, which enables and encourages its clients to engage with their heritage and to participate in the process of heritagisation, where the past is used in the present and for the future:[2]

> 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. (ICOM 2019)

Despite the current aspirations to redefine the concept and purpose of the museum to appear as a more inclusive, more participatory and more democratising facilitator of the critical dialogue, the decades-old characterisations of the museum as a "Classifying House" (Whitehead 1971, p. 155, p. 159; 1970, p. 50, p. 56) or "an agency of classification" (Fyfe 1995, p. 203, see also Macdonald 1996) remain accurate. Museum practices – the ways museums classify and organise space, people and artefacts – compose classifications, conceptual systems and discourses, which guide us to perceive reality and its subjects, objects, actors and their relationships in a particular manner. Within these frameworks, museums offer representations of the world, which are socially constructed and profoundly connected to their societal and cultural contexts (Shelton 2013).

However, despite their seemingly natural, normal and rational nature, these depictions of the world are not inevitable, but contingent. To allow and enable the genuinely democratised and inclusive discussion – a critical dialogue – about the past in the present, the naturalising process and ideologies embedded in

2. The process of composing the proposition for the new definition apparently turned out to be far from unanimous. For instance, François Mairesse, a professor at the Université Sorbonne Nouvelle and the chair of the International Committee of Museology, critiqued the proposal as being "not a definition but a statement of fashionable values, much too complicated and partly aberrant" (Noce 2019). The proposition for the new museum definition was intended to be put to a vote as part of the ICOM Statutes at the Kyoto International Conference in 2019. However, after a debate among ICOM members, the Extraordinary General Assembly decided to postpone the vote (based on the arguments presented in the debate, see, e.g., Ehanti, Turtiainen & Patokorpi 2019; Nelson 2019). The museum definition proposal is to be submitted for a vote again at the ICOM General Conference in 2022 (ICOM 2021).

museum practices could, and should, be made more visible and analysed critically, both at the theoretical and operational levels of museology.

It is essential to acknowledge that taking a critical perspective does not mean merely to judge the current state of affairs as problematic, but to increase awareness of the fact that the current situation that seems to be inescapable is not (Hacking 1999). Concerning museology, the critical approach has been emerging since the 1970s "in opposition to the objectivist claims, universalist pretensions, and ideological effects of operational museology", as Anthony Shelton (2018, p. 1), an anthropologist and researcher in critical museology, has put it (see also Smeds, this volume). According to Shelton (2018), and aligning with the more or less explicated goals of critical heritage studies (Smith 2012a), critical museology examines not only the practices of operational museology, but also the range of academic, administrative and professional heritage institutions, organisations and policies through which institutional narratives and discourses are mediated and regulated. The suggested purpose of critical museology is to sustain an ongoing critical dialogue that provokes a self-reflexive attitude towards museum practices (Shelton 2013, p. 18).

In the creation of the representations and displays – the museum's distinctive ways to communicate with society and address its diverse communities – classifications, concepts, terms and conceptual systems play a crucial part. They are necessary for ordering the otherwise chaotic reality and abundance of potential museum objects, the collections of artefacts and specimens. At the same time, they carry a package loaded with connotations, allusions and direct references connected to ideologies, knowledge systems and structures of power, intertwined with the development and history of Western science, societies and nation-building (Aronsson & Elgenius 2015). As one of the Western institutions, the museum is deeply implicated in the modernist and nationalist quest for an order of things and peoples (Bennett 1995; Macdonald 1996). Classifications and conceptual systems, the supporting structures of institutional discourses, thus offer one key to the investigation and deconstruction of this legacy.

Moreover, as cultural theorist and critic Mieke Bal (2002, p.13) has claimed, we should care for concepts because they "are the sites of debate, awareness of difference, and tentative exchange". Bal's thesis states that interdisciplinarity in the humanities must seek its heuristic and methodological basis on concepts rather than methods. Merely borrowing a loose term here and there would not create real interdisciplinarity. Instead, we should embrace concepts, not so much as firmly established univocal terms, but as dynamic and vague, as they are. While groping to define what a particular concept may mean we gain insight into what it can do. Bal (2002, p. 11) stresses that it is in this groping that the valuable work lies, and such groping, our fumbling efforts to analyse and define concepts, is a collective, continuous endeavour. Therefore, concepts are the backbone of cultural analysis and interdisciplinary studies, such as museum and heritage studies – not because they mean the same thing to everyone, but because they

do not. For the same reason, concepts can also work as instruments in building a bridge between museology theory and practice.

Classification and conceptualisation – Creating order

A certain Chinese encyclopaedia, a fictitious taxonomy of animals described by Jorge Luis Borges in his 1964 essay, *The Analytical Language of John Wilkins*, is often used to illustrate the contextuality, arbitrariness and cultural specificity of any attempt to categorise the world:

> Animals are divided into: (a) those that belong to the Emperor, (b) embalmed ones, (c) those that are trained, (d) suckling pigs, (e) mermaids, (f) fabulous ones, (g) stray dogs, (h) those that are included in this classification, (i) those that tremble as if they were mad, (j) innumerable ones, (k) those drawn with a very fine camel's hair brush, (l) others, (m) those that have just broken the flower vase, (n) those that resemble flies from a distance. (Borges 1964, p. 103)

Borges' fable inspired the philosopher, historian and social theorist Michel Foucault's (1966/2002) seminal work *The Order of Things*, in the foreword of which he writes:

> Out of the laughter that shattered, as I read the passage [in Borges], all the familiar landmarks of my thought – *our* thought, the thought that bears the stamp of our age and geography – breaking all up the ordered surfaces and all the planes with which we are accustomed to tame the wild profusion of existing things, and continuing long afterwards to disturb and threaten with collapse our age-old distinction between the Same and the Other. (Foucault 1966/2002, p. xvi)

Foucault (ibid., pp. xvi–xix) asserts that Borges not only demonstrated the exotic charm of another system of thought, but also the limitation of our own, the impossibility of thinking disorder, i.e., combining things that are inappropriate in terms of the prevailing classification systems and conceptualisations we have adapted. Arguing that the museum in its classifying role has been actively engaged over time in the construction of varying rationalities, museologist Eilean Hooper-Greenhill (1992, pp. 4–5) quotes Borges (and Foucault) as well, noting that "the system of classification, ordering, and framing, on which such a list is based is so fundamentally alien to our western way of thinking as to be, in fact, 'unthinkable', and, indeed, 'irrational'". However, she asks how we can be sure that there is not a rationality that explains the sense of the list. As Hooper-Greenhill suggests, the whole classification process used to create museum collections, with all the exclusions, inclusions, values and priorities, also creates systems of knowledge, *epistemes* (see also Foucault 1969). Therefore, we should be aware of the fact that existing classifications and taxonomies within the museum might enable some ways of knowing, but prevent others.

The cultural, post-colonial and social theorist Couze Venn (2006) points out that museums, as cultural artefacts and documents of prevailing rationales and intellectual discourses themselves, reveal how a society or culture at a particular time in history addresses "the ordering of the orderable" (ibid., p. 36). Like Foucault (1966/2002; 1969) and Hooper-Greenhill (1992), Venn connects the question of order, on the one hand, to the idea of the knowable and orderable, and, on the other hand, to a worldview, one that is profoundly contextual, historical and contingent. The techniques and practices that museums apply to collect and interpret their objects, classifying, cataloguing and naming, can thus be defined as a distinct epistemological genre, as particular ways of understanding the world and composing a category of knowing (Robinson 2019, pp. 34–35). The aspirations to reform the museum into "democratising, inclusive and polyphonic spaces for critical dialogue" (ICOM 2019), with participatory practices and shared agency in the creation of institutional heritage, evidently generate situations where diverse knowledge and knowledge systems are compared and contradicted. Especially in participatory or communal research projects, negotiations concerning these epistemologies should be part of the research subject and under analysis as well (Atalay 2010), to which classifications and conceptualisations offer considerable value. However, it is not worthwhile to evaluate the truth value of conceptions and belief systems that seem to be in contradiction to scientific knowledge and worldviews. Their value lies instead in their capacity to propose alternative conceptions of reality and to convey unfamiliar ways of being in and perceiving the world (Enqvist 2016, pp. 28–29).

The knowledge systems and rationalities embedded in a museum's ordering practices also connect these practices to the intertwined nature of knowledge and power. As Foucault (1980) argued, knowledge and power always occur together, and knowledge is power in the sense that it creates space where power can work (see also Foucault & Gordon 1980). For instance, the discipline of history, as an inspection of the past, also controls the past by knowing it (Husa 1995). Like history, other fields of research or expertise, such as heritage governance, generate spaces of knowledge, for which they position themselves as guardians and authorities. Moreover, because power is involved in the construction of truths, and knowledge has implications for power, the production, distribution and consumption of knowledge are always political, understood as workings of power (Macdonald 1998, p. 3). The anthropologist and museum and heritage scholar Sharon Macdonald (ibid.) accurately summarises that at the museum, politics lies not just in explicit policy statements and intentions, but also in implicit and apparently non-political details, such as the architecture of buildings, techniques of display or classification and the juxtaposition of artefacts in an exhibition.

Concepts, Terms and Discourses

Concepts have been studied and theorised in several disciplines. This is obviously the case in linguistics, but also in philosophy, psychology and history, as well as in the cognitive and computer sciences. Despite their varying emphases and definitions regarding the meaning of the concept, all the perspectives analysing

concepts agree that they are kinds of mental representations that categorise the world for us, creating order to an otherwise chaotic reality (Machery 2005; Murphy 2002, p. 5; Smith & Medin 1981, p. 8). As suggested by the cognitive metaphor theory in linguistics, we classify the world through our embodiment, so concepts are part of our experience as neural beings (Johnson 2017; Lakoff & Johnson 1999, p. 19). In addition to their embodied nature, conceptualisations and their linguistic forms are adapted, by growing as a member of a specific community and culture (Larjavaara 2007, p. 152; Piccinini 2011, p. 179). Consequently, the connection between conceptualisation and culture brings conceptual systems to the fore, firstly, in any attempt to study and represent cultures and cultural artefacts, one of the central ideas of the museum, and secondly, in any analysis of the past, present or future museum as a cultural institution and artefact in and of itself.

The sociocognitive approach to terminology describes concepts, the items which need definitions in a terminological sense, as units of understanding, through which it is possible to observe and dissect the interaction between the human mind, language and the world (Temmerman 2000, p. 73). Especially regarding research, it is crucial to acknowledge that boundaries of knowledge are the same as boundaries of concepts and the language used to designate them (Kivinen & Piiroinen 2008, p. 207; Raatikainen 2008, p. 11, p. 13). This does not insinuate that scholarly thinking is predetermined or delimited by some inherent and fixed conceptual frames. On the contrary, conceptual creativity is an essential trigger for intellectual innovativeness and paradigm shifts (Bal 2002).

Although language composes one aspect of the concept, concepts should not be conflated with words and language. The multidimensionality of the concept can be represented within the framework of the so-called semiotic triangle, as three aspects of the concept (Karlsson 1994; Ogden & Richards 1923):

- The mind, or meaning, which is sometimes compared with the concept itself. The concept is its meaning.
- Language, or linguistic expression (word, name, definition and sign), which designates the concept. Pictures or images are also signs, and thus belong to the sphere of language.[3]
- The world, meaning a referent, is the object or objects of the world to which the concept refers.

Discourse can be understood as the home of the concept, where its meaning emerges in relation to other concepts in the network of a conceptual system. In everyday language, discourse usually refers to a discussion, but as a scholarly

3. In terminological work, the mere designation is often called a term, which is then the linguistic form of the concept. Designations vary in different languages, and even in the same language there can be synonymous designations. That is why the starting point for terminological work is always a concept – the meaning of the term.

term, it can be defined as a coherent perspective that guides our communication and interaction. As such, discourse composes a context-specific framework for making sense of some aspect of reality (van Leeuwen 2014). Since concepts, including scientific categories, are bodily and perceptually based, metaphorical models link a language system to the world of experience and functioning of the embodied mind, our cognition and conceptual system (Lakoff & Johnson 1999, 1980; Temmerman 2000). Language can thus be defined as a resource for discourses that both reflect and affect the social context in which they are created, maintained and reproduced (Fairclough 1995, pp. 40–41; Verschueren 2009, pp. 19–20).

Consequently, and in contrast to the understandings and criticisms of discourse as solely linguistic, and thus exterior to material reality, the concept of discourse can be regarded as a multi-modal, multi-semiotic and historically contingent social practice (van Leeuwen 2014). While the central role of language in human interaction and communication has to be acknowledged, the multi-modality of discourse puts alternative modes of meaning-making under analysis as well: how concepts and discourses emerge through embodiments, visualisations, physical constructions, technologies and practices. Aligning with the embodied origin of our conceptual systems, Karen Barad's (2003, 2007) theory of agential realism offers one thought-provoking theoretical framework to back up the analysis of the multimodality of concepts and discourses. In Barad's account, meaning and materiality are not separate and separable, but co-emergent in the process of creative becoming. Barad states that concepts and things do not have determinate boundaries, properties or meanings apart from their mutual intra-actions; therefore, meaning and materiality emerge in a continuous materialising performance of the world. Also, we are all part of it: "We do not obtain knowledge by standing outside of the world; we know because we are of the world" (Barad 2007, p. 185). Barad refers to this as onto-epistemology – the study of practices of knowing in being.

According to Foucault (1971, 1969), the formation of utterances in a discourse is regulated by practices of discourse, the set of socially established ways to communicate. Practices of discourse direct us to write or speak about things in a specific manner, defining what is normal and accepted interaction in particular situations (see also Fairclough 1992). Classifications and conceptualisations can be regarded as constitutive elements of discursive practices that regulate our communication. Besides language and texts, these rules can concern material reality, institutional structures and the organisation of people, tools and architecture, which can all express the prevailing practices of discourse. Foucault (1971) also described discourse as "violence against things", as he states that it is the discursive practice that guides the way we communicate, but it also alters the subject of the communication. Practices of discourse thus convey a specific ideology or worldview composing and producing ways to perceive reality and its subjects, objects, actors and their relationships. In an academic context, this worldview can be compared to a paradigm or a particular combination of theoretical and philosophical commitments.

Hence, discourse, supported by its distinct conceptual system derived from the classifications of the world, both constrains and enables what can be said, as well as how the world can be represented and signified, constituted and constructed with meanings (Fairclough 1992). It also defines what counts as meaningful statements or knowledge, referring to both the subject of knowledge and the conventions of producing knowledge (ibid., pp. 127–128). Foucault (1969, 1971) furthermore claims that the anonymous rules that guide the practices of discourse are too obvious to be detected by the people who are creating and maintaining a discourse. The action, effects or ideology of discourse can, therefore, only be examined and revealed through consistent and systematic analysis.

Nonetheless, conducting research on key concepts and the official discourse of archaeological heritage management in Finland (Enqvist 2016), I discovered features that at first glance seem to question the coercive nature and almost independent agency of discourse, as claimed by Foucault. For instance, some of the heritage officials I interviewed were both conscious of and displeased about the fact that institutional discourse concerning archaeological heritage twined so intensively around the Antiquities Act, presenting mainly juridical arguments for the protection of archaeological sites. Also, the dissonance between the conceptions written in official texts and the reflections archaeologists expressed in personal interviews was evident. In the interviews, the archaeologists articulated far more complex views and versatile understandings of the key concepts than they did in the texts they had produced while representing the institution of heritage governance. Those working as heritage officials considered the restricting of the concept of heritage merely to the material objects as a pragmatic, conscious choice they had to make, to simplify communication with their interest groups, especially when they were dealing with laypeople (Enqvist 2014; 2016, pp. 266–267).

Although the awareness of the interviewees seemed, to some extent, contrary to Foucault's assumptions about the conductive and coercive power of discourse, one might argue that this is how discourses work. They produce and maintain a world view that includes conceptual classifications, identities and roles – an ideology – that composes a coherent framework in which some choices appear to be more practical, logical, correct or even necessary than others. From this perspective, they would not really be choices at all, but more like explanations produced retrospectively for the choices the discourse makes for its participants. Besides, an authoritarian work culture, as well as controversies, tensions and insecurities caused by a lack of resources and work opportunities, have for a long time characterised the social context of Finnish archaeology. These detrimental characteristics may have created a social environment where archaeologists, especially those working in heritage management, have been likely to exercise strong self-control in order to preserve and protect not only archaeological heritage, but also the conventional discourse within which conceptualisations, such as the given meaning of the concept of heritage, are constructed and represented (Enqvist 2016).

The museum as a classifying house

While museums have transformed, adjusted and re-invented their principles, policies and practices in recent decades, the museum institution has not abandoned its original function as an instrument for characterising the world by cataloguing. The process of classifying, i.e., creating categories through distinctions and combinations, concerns not only the artefacts in museum collections, but also the museum itself as an institution, the people governing, researching, curating and visiting the displays and the physical and organisational structures, buildings and environments involved in composing the museum.

The primary questions regarding classification processes arise from the prevailing understandings of the museum and its purpose as one of the cultural institutions serving contemporary society: How do we define the museum compared to other cultural institutions or memory organisations, e.g., to libraries and archives?[4] How do we categorise different kinds of museums? (see also Oikari and Ranki, this volume) What kinds of objects are appropriate to collect and display in a museum in the first place, i.e., what makes up the heritage that a museum is supposed to preserve and represent? The distinctions we make answering these questions, such as the conceptualisations of nature and culture or art and ethnography, also turn into materialised manifestations, which both reflect and create a societal and cultural context with a particular spatial and temporal order, identity and interaction (Gordon-Walker 2019; Hooper-Greenhill 1992, p. 6; Macdonald 1996). In the following, I examine some examples of the processes and applications with which world views and ideologies embedded in classifications and conceptual systems are woven into museological practices.

The concept of ideology refers here to a general system of thinking which consists of all ontological, epistemological and ethical conceptions and beliefs about the world, not just consciously conducted political or religious ideologies. As an analytical tool, ideology connects the analysis of conceptual systems and discourses to the human mind, and the activities of individuals and communities, guided by ideologies (Fairclough 2004, pp. 9–10, 1989; Heikkinen 1999; Verschueren 2011). The underlying presumption for this analysis states that a conceptual system reflects and produces ideological meanings, i.e, elementary conceptions and categorisations concerning good and bad, right and wrong or us and them. Ideologies thus define how communities themselves, their membership or relationships to other communities or how the social hierarchies, values and rules of a particular community are represented (Heikkinen 1999, pp. 95–97). At the same time, ideologies serve power by legitimising existing social relations and positions of power (Fairclough 1989, p. 2; Heikkinen 1999,

4. It is noteworthy that one of the major targets of the opponents regarding the proposal for the new museum definition (ICOM 2019) is the proposal's claimed inability to catch the distinguishing characteristics of the museum in relation to other cultural institutions, such as cultural centres, libraries or laboratories, or to take into account the "extraordinary variety" of museums (Noce 2019).

p. 94). The conceptual systems adopted, produced and maintained by museums are not an exception in this regard.

Museums are constituted within the prevailing epistemological context. Therefore, they enable different possibilities of knowing, depending on the context, rules and structures in place at the time (Hooper-Greenhill 1992, p. 191). The emergence of the museum in the nineteenth century is linked with the development of modern ways of seeing and knowing the world, through the eyes of the detached viewer, depicted as ordered and organised representation, as "world-as-exhibition" (Bennett 1995; Macdonald 1998, p. 10; Mitchell 1991, p. 13, p. 19). Embodying the close connection between knowledge and power (Foucault 1980), museums were thus places where political power could operate to maintain the existing social order by representing the newly created nations and categorisations of people based on cultural, racial and class differences as facts and knowledge with tangible evidence, i.e., museum objects (Bennett 1998; Macdonald 1998, p. 11; Mitchell 1991, p. 7). Museum collections also offered relevant source material for research. Consequently, the arrangement of objects and displays in museums aimed to manifest the profound principles and evolutionary order revealed by science. Museums were hence not conceptualised just as containers of scientific facts, but as important actors and educators in spreading the scientific world view to the uneducated masses (Bennett 1998; Macdonald 1998, pp. 12–13).

Accordingly, this two-fold purpose of the museum, in addition to stressing knowledge as the museum's primary product, also included and required an ideological categorisation of people engaged in museum activities. This created the role of experts/educators, whose responsibility was to produce, save and share knowledge, and non-experts/learners, whose task was to obtain and acquire that knowledge. Experts, researchers and museum professionals, further classified by their disciplinary expertise, were thus granted privileged access to examine collections as their research object, as well as authority to define what knowledge is and how it is supposed to be represented.

Besides the division of people into the roles of active communicator and passive receiver, the disciplinary perspectives, with their classifications and conceptualisations, are elementary to the categorical legacies with which museums must work today (Gordon-Walker 2019). Also, they are focal instruments for so-called authorised heritage discourse (AHD), a theoretical concept coined by the archaeologist and heritage scholar Laurajane Smith (2012b, 2006), which refers to the official, traditional and mainly Western way of understanding and defining heritage in contemporary societies. Created, maintained and reproduced within the network of national and international heritage organisations, their institutional practices and key texts, AHD privileges expertise and represents heritage as an official canon of sites and artefacts that sustain the narratives of nation, class and science (Smith 2006; on Finnish AHD, see Enqvist 2016; Linkola 2015; Vahtikari 2013).

Research knowledge always includes classifications, which serve their aim if they successfully ascertain and reflect real differences and similarities in the world. A famous example of such a successful scientific classification is the periodic table of the elements (Dupré 2006). In effect, classification serves a particular purpose at all times. Different purposes, such as research and collection management, will motivate and produce different classifications. However, as Hooper-Greenhill (1992, pp. 4–5) has noted, classification in the museum often takes place within an "ethos of obviousness". This note aligns with my conclusions (Enqvist 2016) on Finnish AHD regarding archaeological heritage, i.e., it represents the world turned into indisputable and naturalised conceptual categories, as well as into quantitative measurements – exact numbers reflecting scientific rigour. Things in this world are divided into taxonomy-like categories and classes, which are then appointed, by the practice of naming, to specific expertise and experts. For instance, the category of archaeological heritage is defined as particular kinds of material entities whose physical integrity, interpretation and representation archaeologists, the experts, control as owners and guardians of heritage (see also, Smith 2006). The world, classified and named in a certain way, is thus taken as a circumstance-like condition, almost as a self-organised system following some natural order (Enqvist 2016, p. 265). Furthermore, this epistemic certainty does not concern merely the classification of physical reality and material things, but also the categories based on values and evaluations related to artefact types or individual artefacts (ibid., pp. 272–273).

The categorisation of disciplines itself is profoundly connected to one of the most pervasive distinctions in museums, i.e., the distinction between nature and culture. This distinction is based on the Western philosophical tradition and the Enlightenment, but was established even more firmly throughout the nineteenth century with the emergence of modern museums (Berger 1980). According to Caitlin Gordon-Walker (2019), museums have been instrumental in representing and reproducing the nature/culture distinction through their material collections and exhibitions, paralleling the emergence of academic disciplines. This division into separate departments, or even separate institutions, devoted respectively to natural history and human culture, came with more formalised strategies for the interpretation and care of museum collections. Understood through taxonomic systems, as a scientifically ordered entity, nature was thus conceptualised as more knowable, something which could then be mobilised for various purposes. For example, the classification of indigenous peoples as scientific specimens which belong to the realm of the natural, enabled the legitimising of colonial practices, such as slavery, the appropriation of territory and the establishment of laws and institutions intended to civilize indigenous populations. The scientific mastery of the natural world is also connected to the technological and physical mastery over what was later conceptualised as natural resources to be exploited or, with the emergence of the conservation movement, protected (Gordon-Walker 2019, pp. 251–252).

Although there is no uniformity with regard to the detailed terminology of heritage governance between countries (Ahmad 2006), the current categorisation of

institutionally managed cultural and natural heritage within AHD is internationally agreed to include tangible, intangible, digital and environments (Council of the European Union 2014; UNESCO 2003a; 2003b; 1972). This categorisation relates not only to the nature/culture division, but also to Cartesian mind/body dualism (aka substance dualism), stating that mind and matter, the mental and the physical, are ontologically distinct substances (Robinson 2017). In feminist thinking, the opposition between mind and body have been correlated with an opposition between male and female, with the female regarded as trapped in her bodily existence at the expense of rationality (Lennon 2019). As the philosopher Kathleen Lennon (ibid.) notes, such enmeshment in "corporeality" has further been attributed to colonised bodies and the lower classes (Alcoff 2006, on categories reflecting the bourgeoisie gender system; see also Sarantola-Weiss, this volume).

Nationalism, imperialism, colonialism, cultural elitism and ethnic and social discrimination represent kinds of grievances, societal control and governmentality of which critical heritage studies is aiming to neutralise and deconstruct through critical analysis and redefinition of heritage (Smith 2012a, pp. 534–535). Consequently, rethinking, recognising and dissolving modernist dichotomies, such as the division of nature and culture, mind and matter or the human and non-human worlds, has been claimed as one of the strategies of critical heritage studies, and a vital presumption in novel research perspectives based on posthumanism and new materialism (González-Ruibal 2013; Harrison 2013, pp. 44–45; Sterling 2020). In terms of museum theory and practices, a posthuman reconceptualisation of research and documentation procedures could support the analysis and description of objects as "thingness" and "socio-material compositions", as suggested and demonstrated by museum and digital heritage scholar Fiona Cameron (2018, p. 352). Nevertheless, the categorical legacies of Western science and thinking will undoubtedly continue to outline the organisation and practices of museums, as well as other cultural institutions dealing with heritage, long into the future.

Interpreting cultural heritage with ontologies and vocabularies

As demonstrated in this chapter, museums and memory organisations have a long tradition of using classifications, conceptualisations, taxonomies, term lists and controlled vocabularies to organise and interpret their collections (Hyvönen 2012, p. 57; Parry, Poole & Pratty 2010, pp. 96–97). Ross Parry, Nick Poole and Jon Pratty, museum scholars with expertise in digital heritage (2010, p. 96), elaborate further that "semantic thinking" has always been an integral part of museums; the ongoing act of making meaning with and among collected objects defines museums today and has throughout their history. In other words, museums are places where "we give or reinforce meanings to things" (ibid.). In recent decades, the automated and systematic processing of computer technology has come to support and augment this semantic project of museums. The application of the

principles and technologies of Linked Data and the Semantic Web is the newest approach to address the problems of managing and publishing syntactically and semantically heterogeneous, multilingual and highly interlinked Cultural Heritage (CH) data produced by memory organisations. This development has led to the creation of national and international portals, such as Europeana, to open data repositories, such as the Linked Open Data Cloud and to publications involving-linked library data in the USA, Europe and Asia (Hyvönen 2012, p. vi).

Ontologies, i.e., formal and explicit specifications of a shared conceptualisation, such as domain-specific gazetteers, classifications, concept hierarchies and controlled vocabularies, are integral to the structure and development of the Semantic Web. Ontologies can be processed with algorithms, so they are used for facilitating and harmonising metadata descriptions, for fostering interoperability across different organisations and domains and for data linking (Hyvönen 2012, pp. 57–62). As explicit representations of conceptualisations and conceptual systems, ontologies offer a particular, fixed and ordered selection of meanings with which objects, or their metadata, can be precise and annotated, and thus enriched. In Finland, the National Library maintains Finto, a Finnish thesaurus and ontology service, which enables the publication and utilisation of vocabularies, ontologies and classifications. The Finto service also includes the Ontology for Museum Domain and Applied Arts (MAO/TAO) combining three different ontologies, one of which is composed, maintained and updated for the description of museum objects by the Finnish Heritage Agency (Kouki & Suhonen 2017).

In the most optimistic aspirations, the Semantic Web enables global memory organisations (museums, libraries and archives) to share their collections and contents online, as open, semantically rich and connected data, with new kinds of intelligent semantic search and recommendation services (Hyvönen 2012, p. 2). Moreover, as Parry, Poole & Pratty (2010, p. 103) note, the principle of the Semantic Web to connect meaning and object resonates with museums' long-time objectives to define, classify and present. However, regarding cultural heritage data and the Semantic Web, there lie some dilemmas to solve and obstacles to overcome before this vision can become reality, if ever. The biggest problems are caused by the fact that, unlike digitisation or cataloguing, the Semantic Web is not a coherent practice or set of practices. Therefore, it is difficult for museums to make informed decisions about which technologies, platforms, models and methodologies to use (Parry, Poole & Pratty 2010, p. 104). One of the fundamental challenges to the ability of museums to make their collections semantically rich is the same lack of time and resources, which had slowed down the actual cataloguing process even before the arrival of new technologies (ibid., p. 102). The composing, maintaining and updating of ontologies and vocabularies needed in the process is not a simple task either, but requires a considerable amount of person-years and expertise, both in substance and conceptual analysis.

In addition to the practical and economic challenges, the practices of meaning-making involved in applying new technologies raise complex issues and

questions that are more deeply rooted in the foundations of the museum institution and its purpose. How do we ensure that the evolving practices and technologies, such as ontologies, align and support the paradigms, perspectives and ideals chosen for future museums? In what ways might they transform the museum institution, or the ways museum objects are interpreted, understood and accessed? (Cameron 2010, p. 80) As Cameron (ibid., p. 81) argues, collection management databases are, after all, the primary tool with which museums document, organise and interpret their objects, and at the same time, define and communicate their significance and value. Cameron stresses her point by referring to historian and museologist Gaynor Kavanagh's (1990) acknowledgement that it is in the individual object records that conventional and totalising practices take root. How an object is acquired and documented will, to a considerable extent, determine how it will be understood in the future.

Concerning the semantic future for museums, there are at least two different versions, according to Parry, Poole & Pratty (2010, p. 99). Firstly, there will be an "extreme vision of the hard Semantic Web", with prescribed and persistent ontologies based on existing collection standards and term lists predicated by the professional community of experts. Secondly, there will be a vision of a "soft Semantic Web", with user-defined ontologies and community-created solutions, composed by several communities of interest, also outside the museum institution. The vision of a softer future emerges from justified suspicions concerning the possibility to construct universally applicable ontologies, instead of localised, variable and liquid conceptualisations more suitable to capture the dynamic and contextual nature of any conceptual system.

There is, indeed, empirical evidence showing that the difficulty of prescribing categories that can be applied universally, i.e., the problem of conceptual fit, is particularly evident concerning access to and documentation of Maori and Aboriginal collections (Cameron 2010, p. 88). This observation supports the idea of considering and exploring alternative classification systems that acknowledge, for instance, indigenous knowledge models. Also, as addressed already by Hooper-Greenhill (1992, p. 7, pp. 194–196), instead of having some essential, fixed identity, the identity and meaning of material things are constituted in each case according to the articulations of the epistemological framework, the field of use, the gaze, technologies and power practices. This polysemy of objects thus means that an object's meaning and its classification is not objective, self-evident or singular, but situated and contextual (Macdonald 2006, p. 6; Robinson 2019, p. 33). Accordingly, the imposition of an artificial order and fixed categories in acquisition, documentation or object records is ill-suited to the new ways of seeing objects as polysemic entities, with fluctuating and varying meanings, open to interdisciplinary interpretations (Cameron 2010, p. 84; see also Häyhä et al., this volume).

The aforementioned idea of fluctuating and contextually constructed meanings also aligns with the most recent critical understandings and theorisations of heritage, as a cultural process composed of a series of discursive practices and

implicated in power relations and ideological constructs, i.e., a performative process of meaning-making, of doing instead of being (Harrison 2013, p. 113; Harvey 2001). At the same time, it is evident that there are in fact several concepts of heritage, the meanings of which do not have strict boundaries (on the history of heritage definitions, see, e.g., Davison 2008). Instead, they demonstrate deeply intertwined, overlapping and interacting aspects of the phenomena called heritage (Enqvist 2014; 2016). However, only one of these meanings is currently chosen to characterise Cultural Heritage regarding the development of Semantic Web technologies: the official definition, which classifies heritage within the categories of cultural and natural or tangible and intangible heritage (Hyvönen 2012, p. 1). While concentrating and building on these fixed categories, this conceptualisation misses the actual process of heritagisation, the framing and practice through which heritage is created and maintained.

Conclusion

The community of museum and heritage professionals can be considered a specialised epistemic community that shares a knowledge system and a discourse, which is organised and structured by classifications, conceptualisations and concepts, the units of understanding. Any analysis and redefinition of the societal meaning, goals and purpose of the museum institution thus require analysing and deconstructing the prevailing implicit and explicit classifications, but also the categorical legacies that frame and guide museum theory and practice.

Museums have played an essential role in creating and legitimising the scientific framework for classifying and conceptualising, for instance, the categories of nature and culture, to further support the ideals of empire, nation, gender, industry or conservation (Bennett 2004; Gordon-Walker 2019; Yanni 1999). However, this also applies to the idea of human exceptionalism in regard to other species, as well as to our detachment from nature and the environment. Challenging the existing order can enable us to be not only more aware of the manifold implications of classifications and categorisations, but also to think, literally, outside the box to create novel and innovative perspectives, and to facilitate a constructive and critical dialogue that could increase our understanding of ourselves and others. In other words, we should consciously work to be aware of the existence and the ways in which particular concepts and discourses construct our social reality and conventions, which are transmuted into an inevitable and naturalised way of organising the world (Waterton, Smith & Campbell 2006, p. 343).

Nevertheless, museums are stuck with classifications – every display is organised and constructed on a particular conceptual system, the order for which it also has the potential to re-create and redefine. Classifying concepts and specific terminologies applied to museum collections and displays reflect understandings of general concepts and profound conceptions, such as the nature of time or humanity. Therefore, conceptual analysis can serve as a useful tool for much-needed self-reflection on ontological, epistemological and ethical commitments behind

representations created at museums. As concepts and their meanings associated with museum objects are plural, cross-disciplinary, alternative and sometimes conflicting (Cameron 2010, p. 86), the role of the laypeople, museum visitors and collection users should also be recognised and appreciated in the cycle of knowledge and meaning-making.

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Locating Museology Outside the Box

Nina Robbins

> *Joskus sanotaan, että pitää ajatella laatikon ulkopuolella. Mutta ei laatikon ulkopuolellakaan voi ajatella ilman laatikkoa*. Bengt Holmström (Helsingin Sanomat, 16 July 2018)
>
> Sometimes you hear that you should think outside the box. But even outside the box, you cannot think without the box. Bengt Holmström (Helsingin Sanomat, 16 July 2018)

Abstract

My chapter explores the possibilities of how museum professionals can prepare themselves for value-related discussions with other stakeholders within society. In this process, it is important to view museological issues from a wider perspective. By locating oneself outside the box, so to say, this becomes more plausible. While engaging in such discourse, one should not disregard the value of museum collections. The care of collections, century after century, is clear evidence of a significant value mechanism at work in the field of museums. This heritage should be seen as the basis for current museum work, and it resonates well with society's increasing demands for a sustainable future.

Key words: museology, value discussion, Doughnut Economics, sustainable future

Introduction

In this chapter, I bring forth concepts such as museological values, significance, object energy and impact in connection to the current economic theory of Doughnut Economics. In addition, I use terms such as systems thinking and self-directing in order to achieve a mutually beneficial co-existence of cultural significance and contemporary economics. It may seem like somewhat of a stretch to combine these concepts, but it is my pre-research hunch that is motivating me to bring together concepts of cultural significance and economic realities. With this chapter, I am locating myself outside the box, but am also bringing with me thirty years of museum experience as an insider.

This text is part of the history and theoretical section of the book. In connection to other authors, it provides a theoretical line of thinking of how to construct a culturally significant and sustainable future. Furthermore, it will be essential for current and future students of museum studies to learn to evaluate these culturally significant aspects of society from outside the box. The abilities for

critical evaluation, cross-disciplinary co-operation and argumentation skills will be essential tools for current and future museum professionals. This chapter provides a means to reach this end.

I deal with four concepts, where one concept leads to another. First, the concept of museological values is used to show how value dialogue can be an identity builder in museums, and how this work in turn has impact. This impact is only useful if it is put into a wider context, which is presented as the second concept. The concept of Doughnut Economics gives museological impact a global framework. The third concept introduces evidence of how the doughnut works in the field of cultural heritage and the idea of object energy is presented. The fourth and final concept locates the individual in the centre of this process, where the abilities of self-directing and using the systems thinking method offer concrete tools for future museum professionals.

There is growing interest in new economic theories that offer ways in which the concept of cultural heritage can be connected with the concept of economic sustainability (Senge 2008; Jackson 2009; Raworth 2017; Mazzucato 2017). There is no doubt that economic thinking is the leading political force in our current world. It is even claimed by some to be the master narrative of our times (Raworth 2017, p. 6). However, there are also multiple layers in societies, for which current contemporary economics cannot offer sustainable truths (Stiglitz 2012; Stone 2017). One example of current criticism comes from the economic circle itself, when 180 CEOs claimed in 2019 that shareholder value is no longer considered the only value-forming mechanism (Gelles & Jaffe-Bellany 2019). Historically, museums have been in the business of collection care and visitor pedagogics (Impey & McGregor 2001; Pettersson 2020). The institution bears roots all the way to the cabinets of curiosities and this tradition also has something to offer the current global discussion on sustainability. One could perhaps even claim that a fundamental part of the institution's historic focus has been in the area of sustainability. That said, it is also fruitful to inspect the current sustainability discourse from the economic point of view. After all, we still live in a reality where we have to take this master narrative into account and find new and attractive ways in which to integrate culturally significant chapters into that narrative.

The Context of Value and Impact Discussion in Museums

Value discussion is an essential part of any museum practice, as it helps give the needed support for decision-making. It is clear that our world values various phenomena from multiple perspectives: philosophical, aesthetic, morally bound, ethical, economic, etc. Since the 1980s, social psychology has surveyed people's values in over 80 countries and found out that there are ten clusters of basic personal values across cultures: self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, security, conformity, tradition, benevolence and universalism. The survey also shows that all of these basic values are present in all of us and can be engaged if triggered; the level of their intensity varies over the

course of our lives, but also on a daily basis. According to the study *Are There Universal Aspects in the Structure and Content of Human Values?* carried out by the social psychologist Shalom Schwartz, these values constitute the value network of human existence (Schwartz 1994; Raworth 2017, pp. 107–108). The fluctuating network of values built into us and our society will eventually affect the ways in which we see and recognise points of significance in our society. In addition, value discussion can also be reached from a more philosophical viewpoint. Philosopher George Dickie (1926–2020) introduced a broad concept of an institutional art theory, where he explored the value network of us humans from the artwork and artworld points of view (Dickie 1974). Namely, to learn to appreciate something as art, a context that is learned from childhood onward is needed. This claim resonates well with Schwartz's notion of network of values built into us and our society. It seems that context and the ability to read that context are both key when we engage in discussions about values.

The context in this chapter is museological, and the aim is to point out culturally significant aspects of society. Therefore, the value discussion here is museological in nature. In this context, it would be perfectly plausible to emphasise the philosophical and/or aesthetic perspectives regarding museum values and take some of the monumental theories or concepts such as Immanuel Kant's concept of *ohne Interesse* as our starting point (Beardsley 1958; Adorno 1970; Bourdieu 1979; Wollheim 1980). Alternatively, one could also start from the very practical points of view such as visitor experiences, rescue plans or insurance values (Faro Convention 2005; Piekkola, Suojanen & Vaino 2013). The problem with philosophical and pragmatic value assessments is that they tend to focus on single and perhaps isolated themes and are to some extent determined by outside factors and players. One can also engage in value discussion from a museological perspective. When value assessment is museological in nature it recognises a wider range of issues crucial to our work in the heritage sector (Robbins 2016; 2019). This approach comprehensively takes the whole span of museum operations into account. However, it also addresses the need to take both philosophical and practical approaches into consideration. If value discussion is museological in nature, it has a chance to work as a functional tool regarding museum practices.

An example of a museological value assessment was a survey that I published in 2016 involving Finnish art museums. As part of the survey material, museum personnel were given an opportunity to freely choose values that best fit their museum. The following five values emerged from the material as the most important ones in Finnish art museums at that time: artistic value, aesthetic value, museum value, research value and value related to locality (Robbins 2016, p. 178). These were also congruent with the concepts presented in the operating ideas regarding Finnish art museums and can be interpreted as their overall collective values. The questionnaire also asked to what degree museum professionals deal with value assessments in their everyday work. The answers included various actions, such as acquisitions, disposals, prioritising functions within collection management, art historical evaluations, research and publica-

tion projects, monetary evaluations, including insurance or accounting values, work with visitors and preservation plans within the community – the list is long and comprehensive. The research showed that museum professionals have a lot of information, knowledge and know-how regarding value assessments, especially museological value assessments, but to a large extent this information has not been comprehensively utilized. It is time to bring this information to the forefront.

To recognise the various value networks as identity builders in museums and to harness them to benefit our cultural heritage are both substantial endeavours. In this work the concept of the impact factor becomes helpful. In general, it has been used by museum scholars as a key concept when studying meaningfulness in society, either from the economic or more intangible points of view. What do people consider meaningful in their own environment, and why? (Weil 2002; Knell 2004; Scott 2013; Piekkola 2013). Often impact is something that is quantified, but for non-profit institutions it has been challenging to find suitable ways to do this (Holden 2006; *Vaikuttavuusindikaattorit* 2009). To find ways to register impact is seen as important because with this ability it is possible to align the value goals of non-profit institutions with the value goals of society at large. Museum scholar Stephen Weil wrote about the role of impact in museum operations already in his 2002 book *Making Museums Matter*:

> Viewed from outside their own sometimes insular world, museums might find themselves more highly regarded than ever when they are consistently able to present themselves as organizations that warrant support through their demonstrable effectiveness in accomplishing well-articulated and worthwhile purposes that can logically be shown to make a positive difference to their communities. (Weil 2002, p. 108)

The time of the isolated past may be over, but more measures are needed in order to connect the values dear to museums with those of society at large. The task is to make the heritage sector matter in a society where the turnover of themes and circulation of events is accelerating. In order to be able to justify the impact factor in the field of heritage, one needs to point out the impact of intangibles. "Intangibles, we find, are emerging as central ingredients in business success, sustainable community development and social policies concerned with the well-being of communities and their citizens" (Scott 2011, p. 4). So, it is not only in the heritage sector that intangibles are being studied. Market-based corporations have also started to use terms such as "shared value" or "social capital" in their daily way of doing business, and new, more synergetic ways are being explored (see also Luukkanen-Hirvikoski, this volume). "They (traditional corporations) continue to view value creation narrowly, optimising short-term financial performance in a bubble while missing the most important customer needs and ignoring the broader influences that determine their long-term success" (Porter & Kramer 2011, p. 4). Professor John Holden argues that due to a misunderstanding of the concept of value, it has been difficult for non-profit institutions to take part in society's impact discussion at large. One needs to

define what values and impact mean for different players. Politicians are interested in instrumental values, museums professionals in intangible values and audiences in both intangible and institutional values. As a result, there is often a misunderstanding, where investors do not understand the value structure or goals that audiences and museum professionals prioritise (Holden 2006, pp. 32–35). In order to minimise this misunderstanding, museum professionals need to voice in a clearer manner the value network behind their work.

Museums are gathering places in our Western society where visitors have learned to trust the neutrality of produced information, but the concept of museums being neutral safe havens of society also has opposing opinions. Art historian Carol Duncan argues in her influential book *Civilizing Rituals* (1995) that museums hold power in their way of providing a place for rituals and secular first-world knowledge, and this aspect has been imbedded in museums' purposes. In her book she studied the ritual content of secular ceremonies and drew her examples from the birth of the most influential art museums in the Western world such as the Louvre in Paris, the National Gallery in London and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (Duncan 1995, pp. 7–8). According to her, these museums are good examples of the temple-like architectural structures that are trusted to hold our memories for educational and aesthetic purposes, but also present places for Western rituals to be performed, be they historical, aesthetic, social or political in nature. As holders of objective knowledge in the name of the Enlightenment, the purpose of museums to collect, educate and present were methods used to make museums matter at the time when the idea of publicly open collections was born and applied throughout Europe in the 19th century:

> Through most of the nineteenth century, an international museum culture remained firmly committed to the idea that the first responsibility of a public art museum is to enlighten and improve its visitors morally, socially, and politically. (Duncan 1995, p. 16)

In addition to the educational context, art museums in particular came to be seen as places for aesthetic contemplation during the 19th century, and this goal was emphasised with details of display, such as movable wall structures or colours, where the most significant works of art were separated and illuminated within a straight line of presentation. All these methods aided the viewer in the act of looking and being part of the ritual, being part of official and institutionalised high culture (Duncan 1995, p. 16, p. 19, p. 55).

The order of the world and our understanding of objective knowledge has changed since the birth of these institutions, and the rituals practiced inside their walls must also change. This has become very evident during our book project. In the course of just a few months, the world changed dramatically due to the Covid-19 pandemic and we authors had to revisit our pre-pandemic arguments. Nevertheless, one needs to keep in mind that at the time of writing it was not possible to see the entire impact that all of this will eventually have. Duncan's perspective to see museums as places of secular rituals makes a clear point that museums are manifestations of politics and they hold power, both in the kind of stories they

tell and who they choose to include in these stories (Duncan 1995, p. 9, p. 22; see also Ehanti, this volume). These questions have been begging for an answer since the 1990s, and supporting arguments have been presented since that time.

Museologists Eilean Hooper-Greenhill and Stephen Weil have advocated for the importance of audience engagement in the process of making museums matter. In Hooper-Greenhill's volume *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge* (1997) and Weil's volume Making Museums Matter (2002) the core message is that it is vital for the wellbeing of museums and their collections that the community surrounding the institution sees it as something worth valuing. Furthermore, in the two extensive reader-type volumes *Reinventing the Museum,* edited by Gail Anderson (2004), and *Museum Studies – An Anthology of Context,* edited by Bettina Messias Carbonell (2006), as well as in the collection of articles *Museums and Public Value,* edited by Carol Scott (2013), the reader is taken through a paradigm shift and presented various new alternatives as to how to make museums matter. Values outside the Western world, the legitimacy of collections and alternative historical narratives are presented in these works. The common threads in Gail Anderson's reader are related to the public aspect of museums and the museum's ability to serve and fulfil the needs of its community (Anderson 2004, p. x). Several articles in Anderson's reader suggest focusing on the educational mission of museums. It gives an overview of relevant issues since the early years of the 20th century and strongly suggests that methods of audience engagement should be emphasised in the future, and that collections should be considered in a supporting role as props (Anderson 2004, p. 4; Gurian 2006, p. 271).

In a time when the role of museums is more and more under scrutiny, one should ask whether contextual information or contemporary usability are the only possible building materials for an object's value network and significance. Are these aspects the only ones to be considered when deciding the level of relevancy of the object as part of a museum's collection?

The need to emphasise the public aspect of the museum had a strong presence in the political scene of Europe and the United States during the course of the 19th century (Duncan 1995). Ever since John Cotton Dana's historical article *The Gloom of the Museum* was first published in 1917, the message that museums should bring their actions closer to the greater community has been increasing. In an article by art historian Alma Wittlin, *A Twelve Point Program for Museum Renewal,* first published in 1970, she writes about exposure, educational goals and the challenges of funding and identity (see also Pettersson, this volume). All these issues are still relevant to current museum professionals, but one should look into the relationship between the audience and the object a bit more closely. As her fourth point, Wittlin brings up the character of museums as unique places, where visitors are able to study original objects. She talks about the importance of three-dimensional object-concreteness as a unique character of museums (Wittlin 2006, p. 46). It is this nature of museums as holders of original and concrete objects that will be the main differentiating factor when

making museums matter in the future. There are not many institutions in society that both possess the same uniqueness and are trusted to function as mediators between the past, present and future.

It is evident that we need audience engagement in order to make objects from the past relevant to contemporary consumers. In this context, museologist Kenneth Hudson's concept of the Great Museum fits well into the global discussion (Hudson 1993). The concept goes beyond the functions of the museum as an institution. It sees all of society as bearing culturally significant signs that we as inhabitants have to learn to pick out and interpret. The museum institution exists to help people see these signs and take part in their signification process. In the new global era, one has to see the concept as extending beyond any one nation's borders and reaching out to show people culturally significant signs on a global level.

Museum Professionals as Mediators

In addition to this history and museums' responsibilities to their current public, it is important to bring forth the purpose of museums as mediators. Museums are established institutions to which society has entrusted its legacy. This responsibility is not to be taken lightly and the role has to be seen as the role of a mediator between generations. A museum's collection work and visitor work are often presented as contradictory, and this can be seen in sentences such as "a paradigm shift from collection-driven institutions to visitor-centred museums has really taken hold" (Anderson 2004, pp. 1–2). This indicates that collection-driven museums belong to an era of traditional museums, and to see museum functions from the contemporary visitor's point of view would be a more preferable approach. This discussion suggests that these two core elements of museum work are indeed contradictory, and that what impacts one negatively impacts the other positively. Current and future museum mediators need both functions. Both collections and audience engagement are to be seen as essential in contemporary museum work. One does not replace the other by being either more traditional or more progressive. The history of museums as public places and places of museographical knowhow are both factors that any future endeavour needs to build upon.

As previous paragraphs showed, the impact discussion in museums has originated from either the economic or pedagogical points of view. In addition to these studies, it is beneficial to expand the impact factor to also include museum collections and their original objects. Museum collections are an essential and enduring part of society. It is important to understand that there have been institutional structures showing interest towards meaningful objects century after century. All this is strong evidence of museum collections' impact value, at a time when the concept of impact value is seen as quite relevant in society. This is why traditional economic or pedagogical approaches alone are not sufficient. One has to also focus on the concept of an impact factor in the area of collections. One cannot include only the impact of our own time, but must also apply

this concept to both the past and future. This approach will intensify the role of museum professionals as mediators. It is essential that museum professionals understand and see their role as mediators, and not merely as contemporary time consumers. To see one's role as a mediator is to see collection management as something that will outlive one's own career. This implies being a safekeeper, helping to ensure that any short-term fluctuations will not disturb the more important long-term continuum. Professor of museology Janne Vilkuna from the University of Jyväskylä states the following: "Their (the younger generation of museum professionals) research and preservation-related expertise will determine what kind of past our future will have" (Vilkuna 2003, p. 10, translated by the author).

One can ultimately address this issue through the following question: To what extent has a museum succeeded in its work as a mediator? One way to measure such success is to look at the impact factor of meaningful objects in society. Museum collections and their museological value are things that not many other institutions in society possess. This reality should not be disregarded in time and place, where one's own impact is indeed a factor. The fact that there are societies in the world that consider museum collections to be important is a straightforward indicator that an impact factor is truly present in the field of everyday museum practices. The continued existence of museum objects throughout the centuries is very strong evidence of this.

From Impact to Policy Making

Museum professionals have to see their role as mediators who transfer the impact of museum work to the next generation. This process can be seen having policy-making potential. Museums possess political power, which needs to be defined from within the organisation. In order to make museums matter in the present world order, museums need a flexible focus adaptable to change and learning (see also Tokila, this volume). To reach these goals museums need self-directed evaluation and they need to define their own network of values and position in their community (Weinberg & Leeman 2013, pp. 19–27). These goals show that the necessary premises for museum operations have to be in order, but in the heritage sector one cannot ignore the meaning of intangible values, which in this context are the development of local identity through public museum collections and the distribution of their significance (Scott 2011, p. 11). Understanding these goals will eventually synchronise the value goals in society, be they immaterial or economic in nature (Holden 2006, pp. 56–60).

Furthermore, if museums are seen as places of secular rituals and are currently in need of a paradigm shift, or this shift is already taking place, as we have seen in Duncan's and Anderson's books, museums indeed have to be considered political entities. Politics presents itself in every exhibition, publication or opening speech in every encounter with the visitor, be it inside the institution or as part of its fieldwork.

This aspect should be made more visible. One method is to openly present the scenarios behind any public activity of the museum, for example, to openly write about the reasons and justifications of exhibition processes as part of exhibition visitor material, to expose the "behind the scenes" work to the public (see also Tuominen, this volume). This thought was presented by Stephen Weil already in the early 1990s:

> To what extent are museum workers able to articulate for themselves the values, attitudes, and assumptions that underlie the exhibitions they now organize? To what degree can or ought those values, attitudes, and assumptions be articulated to the visiting public as well? (Weil 2004, p. 77)

These questions still remain relevant, maybe even more so now than 30 years ago. Weil asked for more open communication at a time when museums were questioning their role as rightful interpreters of all cultural material that was entrusted into their care. This discussion is still active and intense and has perhaps a larger global resonance than it did at the time of Weil's article (see also Thomas, this volume). This is the reason why we must take up the challenge for a more open approach. This kind of exposure to the public would alter the character of internal connections and sources of expertise, from tacit to more visible, and would thus intensify the impact of museums as part of a political and economic society, helping to synchronise the values between the humanistic and economic sectors. In this process, one needs to keep in mind that today's politics is largely practiced in the economic context of the given society, which in turn is controlled by the global market. This is why, as much outside the box as it may seem in this context, an overview of new economic trends and skills with which an individual will be able to navigate in the contemporary flux is given in the following paragraphs.

Connecting Values and Impact with the Doughnut

This section introduces the concept of the Doughnut Economics by the British economist Kate Raworth. This short insight into economics will help us connect issues dear to museum professionals with fluctuations in society. Using this larger perspective, it is possible to connect aspects of museological value discussion and significance, people's aspiration for self-directing and the meaning of museological impact as part of a sustainable economy. These aspects of society are indeed direct manifestations of the Doughnut Economics at work.

Raworth's book *Doughnut Economics* (2017) points out how interconnected the globe is from the economic point of view. She describes economic development since the mid-19th century and focuses on the central role of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth in contemporary economic theories. She calls for a more detailed discussion on our concept of growth in an era when constant monetary GDP growth will no longer be a sustainable vision for the future, given the globe's finite resources. She argues that we need to define the meaning of growth from a wider perspective and integrate such conditions as social equality, political

voices, preserving natural resources and access to education and healthy living into the scenario. The GDP way of thinking is too narrow a concept to be applied to the contemporary challenges of the world's shrinking natural resources, and it does not address the issue of human inequality that the 21st century is facing. The economic crash of 2008 was a wake-up call for many. Not only was the economic structure of the world in crisis, but issues such as global inequality, food supply, security and climate change also started to demand more and more attention. By no means were these issues new in 2008, but they started to appear more widely through the news and social media, and people started to become more instantly aware of the vulnerabilities of our globe. Economist Kate Raworth sums up the situation as follows: "Due to the scale and interconnectedness of the global economy, many economic effects that were treated as 'externalities' in twentieth-century theory have turned into defining social and ecological crises in the twenty-first century" (Raworth 2017, p. 143).

The neo-liberal economy has been under a critical eye for a long time and increasingly so after the financial crash in 2008. This criticism is not entirely new, as is seen in numerous historical efforts to break down the circle of wealth accumulating wealth (Stiglitz 2012; Harvey 2005; Raworth 2017). It has long been known that a large percentage of global income is in the hands of a small percentage of people; this is known as Pareto's 80–20 rule (Raworth 2017, p. 166). Economist Thomas Piketty argued in 2014 that in time and place when the return to capital grows faster than the economy as a whole, it leads to wealth becoming concentrated to those who own capital (Raworth 2017, p. 169; Piketty 2014). Global technology has made the level of inequality better known to wider audiences than ever before, and it seems that this scale of inequality has reached the breaking point. IMF (International Monetary Fund) research shows that inequality hinders GDP growth. The more unequal societies are, the more fragile and slower economic growth they have (Raworth 2017, p. 173).

Raworth writes about the challenges of globalism and the prospects we are facing before the year 2050. The common estimate predicts that the global economy will triple in about thirty years, which will bring a whole new perspective to the concept of sustainability. According to her, it will no longer be enough to teach future economics using the mindset that originated in 1950s textbooks, which in turn were rooted in the theories of the 1850s. It is no longer possible just to master any old curriculum (Raworth 2017, p. 6, p. 8). Raworth writes that we need a new kind of thinking and a new kind of authority. "For the twenty-first century a far bigger goal is needed: meeting the human rights of every person within the means of our life-giving planet" (Raworth 2017, p. 25).

Raworth takes a critical stance and questions the need for constant GDP growth as a goal. "Today we have economies that need to grow, whether or not they make us thrive: what we need are economies that make us thrive, whether or not they grow" (Raworth 2017, p. 30). She points out that the history of GDP is actually not that long. It originates from the political situation of the mid-1930s in the United States, where a measure for national income was needed

to be able to monitor the advances made in society, especially during the time of Roosevelt's New Deal. For that purpose, economist Simon Kuznets made a calculation, which became known as Gross National Product (GNP). It was based on the income generated by a nation's residents (Raworth 2017, pp. 36–37). The GNP soon became a very useful tool and by the 1960s, it was taken as a valid measure for a society's success. A decade later critical voices started to appear and arguments for the transition from growth to global equilibrium appeared (Meadows et al. 1972, p. 24). Even Kuznets had already stated early on that one should make a distinction between quantity of growth and quality of growth (Raworth 2017, p. 40). In the 1980s emphasis changed to measure the growth within a nation's borders and GNP changed to GDP (Gross Domestic Product), but there were no changes as to the demand for and expectation of constant growth. The economic crisis of 2008 made Western leaders rethink Kuznets' 1930s calculation and they came up with various growth-related word combinations such as sustainable growth, balanced growth or long-term, lasting growth, but they still very strongly insist on growth as the main measure (Raworth 2017, p. 41). Nevertheless, the need to define growth in more specific terms entered the discussion. To conclude, since 21st century globalism does not correspond to the calculations of the 1930s, a newer deal is needed.

Raworth introduces a way of thinking that she calls Doughnut Economics. Her model is based on a circular form, hence the name Doughnut, where "the social foundation of human rights and the ecological ceiling of planetary boundaries create the inner and outer boundaries of the Doughnut" (Raworth 2017, p. 49). In her model, sustainable life takes place between the inner and outer boundaries. Outside the ecological ceiling lie ecological risk factors such as climate change, land conversion and biodiversity loss. Inside the Doughnut lie preconditions for sustainable human life, such as social equality, peace and justice, having a political voice, education and health (Raworth 2017, p. 49). It is easy to see that all these factors are very much interconnected. Once one sector reaches a crisis point it inevitably affects all the other sectors. Her model describes the goal but admits that the world still has far to go to meet this goal. Furthermore, in the efforts to solve the obstacles on our way to meet the goal, we need different tools than what the 90-year-old GDP model has been able to offer.

British economist Tim Jackson called for sustainable economics already in his 1996 book *Material Concerns*. In his 2009 publication *Prosperity Without Growth*, he developed the concept further and showed how we must alter our way of thinking about the concept of investment. Instead of relating the concept only to the growth of new products produced by market-oriented enterprises, we should widen our scope and consider the possibilities of sustainable investments. As an example, he uses cultural institutions as places that possess the know-how for producing sustainable investment in societies (Jackson 2009). Furthermore, Kate Raworth connects the sustainability of ecological resources with the demands of the economy and argues that the almost 90-year-old concept of constant economic growth cannot solve the contemporary ecological problems we are facing. What is needed is a regenerative economy.

> Financial income is just one narrow slice of what an economy generates when its aim is to promote human prosperity in a flourishing web of life. … the new metrics will monitor the many sources of wealth – human, social, ecological, cultural and physical. (Raworth 2017, p. 240)

This is exactly where museums will be in demand. To see itself as a sustainable investment that produces regenerative good for its surrounding community has always been at the core of museum operations. We need a sector of society to show us the culturally meaningful aspects of society – to show us the culturally meaningful aspect of regenerative economics.

Theorists of regenerative economics are interested in forming scenarios of what comes after GDP, since the classical curve of constant growth ultimately leaves us hanging in the air (Raworth 2017, pp. 246–250). The mainstream economy has not invested in that question; even economist Walt Rostow in his 1960 book *The Stages of Economic Growth* does not address this, but ends his five stages of economic growth at the age of mass consumption (Rostow 1960, p. 6). We are entering the stage after mass consumption and the question for the 21st century is: How sustainable is the next stage? It seems that a human lifetime is just not long enough for us to truly understand this question. According to Raworth, GDP has played such a central role in economics that questioning its ultimate importance has not even occurred to many.

We are entering an era where the damaging effects of inequality on the social, political, ecological and economic levels are proving to be too serious for policy makers to ignore. We cannot any longer shun the efforts towards a sustainable society by claiming these things are too romantic or socialist in nature. The idea of sharing prosperity has often been seen as a naïve utopia and has had serious political connotations in history (Couto 2010). In our contemporary culture technology has made sharing easier and faster, both on the individual and global levels. Individuals are more widely and more quickly aware of the opinions and behaviour of other people, and they have the technology to make their opinion globally known and heard. Worldwide communication and data streaming are transforming our communities in unseen ways. We are no longer talking only with the voice of single nations; we are talking with the voice of the globe (Ormerod 2012, pp. 28–29). The concept of sharing has taken a new turn and it is too valuable of a tool to be discarded because of its interpretations in the past. As Kate Raworth has pointed out, our planet needs the concept of sharing. This global level requires individuals to learn skills of self-directing in order to avoid falling into the patterns of past failures. The word "sharing" includes the idea of the individual responsibility and accountability that one has to have in order to make the act of sharing successful.

The question of what happens next is not an alien one to museum professionals. They are in the field of questioning our past, present and future. They constantly have to make decisions and choices as to what kind of past our future will have (Vilkuna 2003, p. 10). It is up to museum professionals to point out culturally significant moments and transfer such knowledge to the future. This is why

they should see their careers as being mediators, not just current consumers. Museums and their collections are part of the regenerative everyday, with regenerative economics being one part of this.

In the heritage sector, various methods of analysing and mapping cultural significances are cooperative and aim to point out cultural importance in society. They offer ways to make deeper connections with phenomena surrounding us by use of a method that uses novel and adaptive thinking. With the help of these methods, the heritage sector of society can take part in the discussion of what will be relevant in the future. For example, *Significance 2.0* (Russell & Winkworth 2009) was written in Australia and subsequently modified in Europe in such works as the Dutch *Assessing Museum Collections* (2014) or the Finnish *Merkitysanalyysimenetelmä* (Häyhä, Jantunen & Paaskoski 2015; and this volume). In general, these methods investigate the realm of culturally significant objects by cooperating with experts and interacting with object users. In this process, it is essential to try to determine an object's history from the beholders' point of view by recording the significance and stories integral to it. The selected objects are enriched by these stories and their context in the community is recorded as a statement of their significance. The community's voice is heard, thus connecting things from the past more closely to lives in the present. Museologist Peter van Mensch talks about cultural biography and says that culturally significant collections can be seen as impact-increasing potentiality in society (van Mensch & Meijer-van Mensch 2011, pp. 32–33). Another example from the Finnish cultural historical museum sector is the *TAKO Tallennustyöjako* (Distribution of Preservation Responsibilities). *TAKO* means that museums actively discuss and exchange ideas as to what to preserve and collect. With this sharing of information, the tendency of multiple museums collecting the same items or working in the same field of preservation is avoided (see also Ahola, this volume).

Analysing significance and engaging in TAKO co-operation are both ways of sharing knowledge, dividing resources and offering peer support to map out the Finnish cultural biography. These forms of co-operation are good examples of how museum organisations are able to join forces in making museums matter, including collections in the process. Sharing information, offering participation and taking part actively in peer support are all elements of signification. As stated earlier, it will not suffice if museum professionals only agree among themselves on making museums matter. This kind of co-operation of smaller groups and individuals must be placed into a larger context, as suggested by Doughnut Economics, for it to have longer-lasting effects on society.

Intangible Object Energy as Evidence of Sustainable Action

Kate Raworth writes about the flourishing web of life. This description can be understood in a manner that our existence adds up to something larger than just the sum of its parts. In the museum context we use terms such as immeasurable and rare or give some objects uncontested key status. Very rarely do these terms

relate to monetary value of the chosen objects, but are the result of centuries of value generation that is based on something other than just numbers. In the following paragraphs I am using the term object energy to describe this process.

Objects and material culture have always been at the core of museum operations. To collect, display and catalogue collections have been signs of professionalism since the cabinets of curiosities (Pearce 1994). Austrian writer and professor Alma Wittlin (1899–1992) wrote about object-concreteness and the possibility to see original items from the past being a unique character of museums (Wittlin 2004, p. 46). Janne Vilkuna mentions a museum collection's ability to transmit object energy as a differentiating factor to many other institutions. "The tales of the museums differ from many other tales because they are based on the evidence that objects include, and are transmitting, object-energy" (Vilkuna 1997, p. 57). Object-concreteness and object energy are critical concepts when the impact of museums is under scrutiny. Vilkuna connects object energy to this context, but one can contemplate it through a more intrinsic point of view as well. With the term object energy is meant that the original museum item includes properties that exceed its knowledge-based values. This object energy is comprised of an object's originality, form and the history of its existence, but ultimately is something more than the sum of these parts. This energy is not present in copies. The thought of object energy relates to philosopher Walter Benjamin's (1882–1940) thinking that there is something in the character of an original object that neither science nor the intellect can explain. Benjamin talks about an aura and wrote about it in his 1936 essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility (Mechanical Reproduction)*. He relates the concept of aura with the reproducibility of photographs and films, especially at the time when these two art forms were coming into their own. "What withers in the age of technological reproducibility of the work of art is the … aura." (Benjamin 2008, p. 22). For Benjamin, aura is an abstract quality that is embedded in unique and authentic artworks. This quality is accumulated by the existence of the artwork throughout history: "By replicating the work many times over, it substitutes a mass existence for a unique existence" (Benjamin 2008, p. 22). Time has passed since the early days of photography and moving pictures. The idea of reproduction has entered the art scene and is no longer seen as problematic. There is an aspect in Benjamin's writings that has held up over time, however, namely the concept of aura, the feeling of seeing something original and authentic that bears all the stories and physical marks of its care throughout history. To conclude, in addition to the needed context information of an impact-full museum item, the intrinsic value and object energy it transmits have to also be considered. Finnish art historian Anne Aurasmaa writes how the memory of the museum consists of facts and evidence, but also builds upon something deeper.

> It is evident that even though factual knowledge is a crucial part of educational programs in museums, we need to include the sensuous aspect of objects as well, in order to fully understand the depth of impact, relations and values. (Aurasmaa 2005, p. 22, translated by the author)

In Aurasmaa's text one should relate the aspect of sensuousness to Walter Benjamin's concept of the aura of the original item, which in turn is heavily connected to object energy. This line of thought gives us perspective on the intrinsic value of museum collections and maybe the thought of museum items having intrinsic qualities will not be seen as so remote any longer. Sensuous object-concreteness, aura and object-energy are concepts that not very many institutions can be guardians of. This responsibility should not be taken lightly, nor should it be ignored by saying that museum objects are merely props (Anderson 2004, p. 4, p. 271).

In addition, one should regard individual museum objects that bear an aura and various collections within and outside museum care as unifying factors, regardless of who might be the caretaker during any given generation or era. Especially in countries such as Finland, where the "cultural layer" is relatively young and thin, one should look at the bigger picture. The totality of Finnish culturally significant items, places or memories all conform to Kenneth Hudson's idea of the Great Museum. Some of them are housed and cared for in museums, some privately owned and some owned by corporations or other institutions. Regardless of their current ownership and legal status, one can argue that their aura and significance will remain past that ownership. To see the whole picture, not just from one institution's or generation's perspective, but from an entire society's perspective, is to intensify the impact of culturally significant sectors of society. This process falls easily into the concept of the Doughnut.

The Need to Self-direct Ourselves in the Systems Thinking Way

As stated earlier in my text, museum professionals have voiced their need for practice in order to fully engage themselves in value discussions. This paragraph will introduce two concepts that help to address this need. The concept of self-directing offers a good point of departure. The contemporary working environment is all about completing projects, meeting deadlines and being able to contribute your daily working hours outside of the traditional office. After their academic years, students enter a relatively different working environment than was the case few decades ago. Studies show that any vital and effective organisation has three properties: a healthy hierarchy, self-organisation and resilience (Raworth 2017, p. 159). The people in these organisations need to be able to self-direct themselves in order to make all these aspects work. Especially in organisations that consist of highly educated and expert-based work, the ability to self-direct one's day becomes vital. A study made in 2011 by the Institute for the Future listed skills that will be needed in order to cope in the working environment in the future (Davies, Fidler & Gorbis 2011). The study calls them the key work skills that will become essential in the next ten years, namely sense making, social intelligence, novel and adaptive thinking, cross-cultural competency, computational thinking, new-media literacy, transdisciplinarity, design mindset, cognitive load management and virtual collaboration. All of these skills are

properties that an individual will need in order to be able to navigate and make sense in the world of a cross-cultural fast track.

In an edited volume *Itseohjautuvuus – Miten organisoitua tulevaisuudessa?* (Self-directing – How to get organized in the future 2017), Finnish philosophers Frank Martela and Karoliina Jarenko point out why the ability of self-directing will become a basic requirement in the future. By self-directing they mean a person's ability to function without the need for outside supervision or control. In order for people to be able to self-direct themselves, they must possess three properties: motivation, initiative and skills. They must have initiative to do things without outside force or traditional management supervision. They must have a clear goal toward which they are focusing their self-directing actions. Finally, they must possess the required skills in order to reach set goals. If these skills are lacking, the person will need extensive supervision and guidance, and the idea of self-directing will not be fulfilled. In addition to the technical skills needed for the work process at hand, the required skills for self-directing will include properties such as time management, resource control and prioritising, all of which could have previously been outsourced to one's supervisors (Martela & Jarenko 2017, p. 12, p. 14). The importance of self-directing is connected with the need to be able to react fast and to be flexible in a society that is under constant change. There are three reasons as to why self-directing will be more and more important in the future. The first is that the reaction time to address change in contemporary society is much shorter than a few decades ago. The second is the fast replacement of human labour by technological solutions and applications in various fields. In turn, creative expertise remains a sector that will be more difficult to replace by these technologies, thus intensifying its role. The third is the democratising effect of information technologies, in which hierarchical structures are no longer so needed, because information has an ability to flow fast and openly within any given organisation (Martela & Jarenko 2017, pp. 18–25). These changes require a flexible organisation in which strategies are created in co-operation with participants and non-functioning structures can be abandoned without heavy decision-making processes. More and more contemporary companies are transforming their operations according to these more flexible and cooperative methods (Martela & Jarenko 2017, p. 15).

With the help of new economic thinking and the methods of self-directing it will be possible to join efforts in the field of cultural heritage with ideas of economic sustainability. These viewpoints come from the Systems Thinking perspective, where things in the world are interconnected and one cannot expect either singular or linear answers to complex questions (Meadows 2008). According to SearchCIO (an online platform for IT management strategies) "systems thinking is a holistic approach to analysis that focuses on the way that a system's constituent parts interrelate and how systems work over time and within the context of larger systems". This means that we need to acknowledge the complexity of the world and face this fact with a set of tools that contains elements from outside our own box.

The doughnut is about sustainability and understanding the big picture. It talks about finding a balance between the earth's resources and our need to consume them, so that the distribution of consumption can be in balance among all the earth's inhabitants. It also talks about how we need to include other layers in our economic identities than just our identity as a consumer, worker or capital owner. These layers can be summed up as constituting a great deal of our daily lives. The economist Neva Goodwin calls them the core economy, which "comes first every day, sustaining the essentials of family and social life with universal human resources of time, knowledge, skill, care, empathy, teaching and reciprocity" (Coote & Goodwin 2010, p. 3).

How to reach global sustainability is the core question of our lifetime. The magnitude of the question goes beyond one individual's capacity, and shared wisdom is needed. Raworth talks about the need for shifting our attitudes. We need fluid values to be able to act in a more interdependent and reciprocating way. We need to see our role towards others as dependent partners, and take approximation instead of calculation as a tool in navigating through global issues (Raworth 2017, pp. 103–116). In this process, the capability of heritage sciences to see connections between the core issues of different historical eras will be essential. This insight will help give a perspective for present and future decision-making. To gain knowledge of things in the past and to learn how these things connect to our contemporary everyday are fundamental for understanding one's own identity. Furthermore, they are building blocks for identity within any given community. This is precisely one of the points where the humanities, especially museums, will have a substantial role in carving out our sustainable future. As historian Tuomas Heikkilä and philosopher Ilkka Niiniluoto wrote in their book *The Value of Humanistic Study*, it is time to break the myth of humanistic study belonging to the margins of contemporary achievements and consider humanists to be key players in creating sustainable environments (Heikkilä & Niiniluoto 2016, p. 104). On an individual level this challenge becomes more manageable if one holds the required skills for self-directing.

There are three levels of operators at the core of the Doughnut concept: personal impact on planetary boundaries, business branding according to Doughnut principles and a new design of the global financial system (Raworth 2017, p. 56). From the sustainable heritage point of view, it is easy to fulfil the demands of the first two. To preserve and to educate have always been at the core of museum operations. For the third level, museum operations will offer one way of sustainable thinking, a broader context than monetary metrics has been able to offer. Again, this is not a new idea, but on a global level the search for more sustainable ways to think of the globe's economic growth has already started (Jackson 1996; Holden 2006; Scott 2013). Museums as tradition-bearing institutions have the ability and know-how to guide this new kind of thinking in society. In Robert Putnam's terms all this is strong social capital (Putnam 2000, p. 290). The scenario drawn with the help of the Doughnut helps us to understand the bigger economic picture and guide us to include sustainable heritage into the Doughnut way of thinking. It gives us a global perspective, but

that alone does not suffice. The adaptability of any given change depends on the individual's ability to guide themselves through the change. In general, any argumentation to move towards solution-seeking methods is more rewarding than discussions that merely state the fact that something would need to be done. As we have seen, museum professionals have lived up to this challenge and continue working toward a sustainable society.

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Critical Museology, Social Museology, Practical Museology or What? – International museologies and Scandinavia

Kerstin Smeds

Abstract

Museology in most parts of the world has been, and still is, perceived as a theory of the museum institution itself – the museum as social phenomenon, the museum's role in society and learning, museum collections and management, etc. Parallel to this, particularly in Eastern European and Nordic countries, the concept has grown larger and has included other institutions and activities in the field of heritage. Today, the concept of museology might cover almost everything that has to do with humanity's dealing with time, history, immaterial and material heritage, from large geographical eco-museums and heritage sites to the smallest private enterprises. The only chair of museology in Sweden (at Umeå University), defines museology in this very broad sense. There, the theoretical standpoint is also analytical and critical, and can be seen as a parallel to the rapidly growing field of critical heritage studies.

In this chapter, I briefly explore the development of museology in Scandinavia and its early influences from Eastern Europe and France, as well as the different schools of museology. In conclusion, I draw up some lines for the development of museology in order to create theoretical resources for museums and heritage enterprises, which would help them in their work for a more sustainable future.

Keywords: museology, museology definitions, museum definitions, Scandinavian museology

Concepts and Early Education

What is museology? First of all, we must make a conceptual distinction. The concept of museum research (Swedish *museiforskning*, Finnish *museotutkimus*) adopted by the museum world refers generally to the research, or rather documentation, that is carried out in museums and their collections. It is conducted within the context of the classic museum disciplines of art, archaeology, ethnology and cultural anthropology. Museum science, museum knowledge or museum studies (German *Museumskunde*) in a traditional sense, refer to teaching about the museum institution, the museum's practical functions and its activities. Another term for this was museum techniques. Around the turn

of the 20th century, the concept of museum science appeared in Swedish in the Nordic Encyclopaedia (Ekström 2000, p. 31). At the time, the word referred to the acquisition of objects, their preservation and cataloguing. Later the terminology has changed not only in Sweden but all over the world, but unfortunately not in the same way and at the same pace. The German Museum Science (e.g., the Institut für Museumskunde in Berlin) only around 15 years ago changed to museum research (*Museumsforschung)*, while in France and in many other countries the term museology has been used for more than a century. In Sweden, the term museology was adopted in the 1970s in line with the international development of the discipline.

Over time, the subject has expanded to cover not only research in the museum, but also research on the museum – the museum as a political, philosophical and social phenomenon. "The 'museum-ness' of museums, then, is a subject that needs to be addressed and theorized in its own right" (Fyfe & Macdonald 1996, p. 6). They continue:

> Museums are a fertile theoretical field precisely because they can be tackled from a range of theoretical perspectives which cross many of the established divisions of the disciplines (e.g., production and consumption, knowledge and practice, sacred and secular). They are like a kind of theoretical thoroughfare; a place where unexpected meetings and alignments may take place.

The shift in perspective and the depth of the subject largely follow the changes that took place in the museum's social role and position. However, research on museums is as complex and difficult as the museum's social and political role in society. There is a fairly large paradigmatic and terminological confusion regarding definitions, contents and research objectives in the field. In fact, much of the theoretical debate on museology's objectives since the 1970s has been about the question of what museology is, and this has by no means been resolved.

The development of museology can be tracked from the museum science/museum knowledge of the 19th century through many phases, all the way to a philosophy of museums (Deloche 1999), which theoretically discusses not only the museum's institutional whereabouts and the realisation of museums as phenomena and ideology, but also our existential relationship to time and material heritage. Compared to modern historiography, which started more than 200 years ago, museology is much younger, 80–100 years, depending on how you measure it. If you count from the first statements of *Museumskunde* in Germany, the subject is almost 120 years old, but if you start from the coinage of the term museology, we end up in the 1920s.

The oldest museological school in the world is, as far as I know, the École du Louvre, founded in 1882 and still operating (Maroevic 1998, p. 93; van Mensch 1992, p. 89). The training was at the beginning of a practical nature, focused on the skills needed for working in a museum. In the case of the Louvre this

mainly concerned art museums. Today it is a discipline characterised by a broad definition of both theoretical and practical museology.

In the early 1900s, debates about museums and the need for education and research in the area were going on in various parts of Europe. The German magazine *Zeitschrift für Museumskunde* was founded in 1905 to promote and discuss museological issues, and in its first years called for university-level courses (Leisching 1905, pp. 91–96; Kniescheck 1998, p. 71). Between 1909 and 1912 such courses took place in Saxony. These dealt with museum discourse in general, but also with technical, conservation and scientific issues, as well as museum didactics and pedagogy. As early as 1903, talk of the museum as a popular educational institution was well established in Germany, and in 1920 the *Museumskunde* was established to teach, among other things, museum pedagogy as an academic discipline at the University of Bonn (Kniescheck 1998, p. 72).

In the years around 1920, a lot happened in this area. In 1921, an academic course in museology was given at Harvard University under the title Museum Work and Museum Problems, which some, incorrectly, have counted as the world's first museology course (Gob & Drouget 2003, p. 13). The first professorship in museum science was established at the University of Brno in 1922 and served with some interruptions until 1948. The same chair was then revived in 1963 by Jiri Neustupný, and has remained as one of the leading museological centres to this day.

In England, the British Museum Association has organised museological, or rather museographical courses since 1932 (Maroevic 1998, pp. 93–94). During the first quarter of the 20th century, the first scientific studies were made on the museum, its functions, collections and preservation principles. There were also smaller studies on, for example, the difference between museums' identities and functions (Lauffer 1907). In 1934, the first international museological conference took place in Madrid, organised by the L'Office international des Musées, the predecessor of the ICOM, International Council of Museums. The topic was museum architecture and what today is called museum management (Gob & Drouget 2003, pp. 11–12).

In England, where Museum Studies in the University of Leicester, founded in 1966, is the leading museological centre, the focus of interest has remained on the museum's role as a knowledge bank and intermediary of research. The emphasis is therefore put on visitors, exhibitions and pedagogy. The same situation can be seen in the USA, with the Smithsonian Institution at the forefront. In the German- and French-speaking areas, however, research has increasingly shifted to theoretical and philosophical studies of the museum as a social phenomenon, its historical and narrative relevance and the exhibition medium itself.

Is there any agreement, on an international level, as to what kind of museology there is at different institutions, and whether museology is considered a science or not? Just as the historiography of the 19th century debated whether history was a science or an art, and in the end reluctantly acknowledged it as a science

with scientific methods, many researchers and professionals in the museum and heritage field question today whether museology is a science at all, and what its real value might be.

So, What is Museology, Really?

> If anyone talked or wrote about museology as a science thirty or twenty years ago, he would be met with a pitying, disdainful smile from many persons. Today, the situation is quite different. (Sofka 1992)[1]

This sounds somehow familiar, doesn't it? The quotation above is from an article on museology called *Die Museologie als Fachwissenschaft* (Museology as a Branch Science), written by a renowned German scholar. There is nothing special about this, only the fact that it was written one hundred and thirty-eight years ago, more exactly in 1883. Today, one may ask: have we progressed from this statement?

Many academic museologists have adopted a strangely defensive attitude when speaking about the need for museology in the professional field of museums and heritage. The situation has been improving in the last couple of decades, but many museum conservatives still keep asking why they would need museology. The reasons for this peculiar situation are an intriguing epistemological question indeed. After all, almost every other cultural institution or cultural field has, at an early stage, developed its own scholarly discipline, such as archival and library sciences, media science, film science, theatre studies, literary science (or studies), musicology, etc. with their own theoretical apparatuses. Each of these field is subject to deep scientific research and teaching, often at their own colleges or academies. To get a job, e.g., in a library or an archive, requires a degree in that particular discipline. Only museums have been overlooked – again, at least in Scandinavia. In Finland, the situation is a bit different. It is interesting to turn the tables and ask why there has been, and still often is, some opposition to museology within academies and museums, and why museology still generates some mistrust within the branch. Just listen to the verdict of a Norwegian professor (historian) in 1994:

> I want to state, here and now, that museology offers training for a practical job. It is a misunderstanding to believe that it should be possible to be a "museologist", one who studies museums in their abstraction without having a basis and anchorage in the real disciplines which are the genuine roots of museums, the reason for their existence. It is unrealistic, thoughtless and naïve (Gjestrum 1995, p. 5).

This harsh statement is, however, very specific, and does not concur with the entire field, or with employment practice in the very country where this state-

1. Dr. T. H. Th Graesse from Dresden published this in the *Zeitschrift für Museologie und Antiquitätenkunde*. Quoted by Sofka in 1992.

ment was made (Norway). In fact, opinions are divided. One fraction of museum professionals has, since the 1970s, enthusiastically thrown themselves into *de facto* museological development according to new international, social and museological trends, whether they are aware of it themselves or not (Hofrén et al. 1970; Näsman 2014). But many museum professionals are still so stuck in everyday matters – running the museum, taking care of their collections and perhaps jealously watching their own particular academic field, that there is no time or energy to start analysing, let alone letting anybody else in to analyse, their museum's doings from a broader, politically-, philosophically- or museologically-relevant point of view.

Deeper reasons for this tacit, and sometimes very loudly outspoken resistance to museology and museological research can partly be deduced from the Marxist roots of museology, and the fact that it was in the socialist countries that the theoretical development started in the 1960s, paired with French critical intellectualism (Neustupný 1968; Maroevic 1998; Desvallées 1989; Desvallées 1991). As late as 2001, one of the fathers of modern museology, Zbynek Stránský, felt the need to defend museology against conservative detractors in an article entitled *Ist Museologie eine kommunistische Wissenschaft?* (Is museology a communist science? Stránský, 2001, pp. 2758–2761). The museums of the socialist countries were early regarded not only as collecting and research centres, but also as socio-cultural arenas with strong educational, public and democratic objectives. Indirectly, perhaps originally, it all started in Soviet Russia. Here, the museums were already after the Russian Revolution incorporated into the socialist ideologies and ideals of the state, thus gaining an importance as a tool for socialist cultural policy and propaganda (Ananiev 2016). Museums shifted focus to visitors, teaching and learning, all in line with the socialist ideology of offering education to the masses. Hence, the museums' political and ideological role and importance in society also started to be problematised and, in a Soviet manner, scientified. Already in the post-revolutionary period of the 1920s, there was a lot of activity among Russian scholars and cultural departments, with the aim of starting up research not only in museums, but also on museums (Ananiev 2016, pp. 173–175). Whether the museums in, for example, the Soviet Union really went in for a social dialogue can be debated, but these ambitions have, I think, repercussions in the activities of the museums today all over the world. However, this early history is only one line of development, and maybe not even a very strong argument against the need for museology, since not many in the West are even aware of these historical socialist roots.

So, where does museology stand today and why are we where we are? What results has the International Committee for Museology (ICOFOM) achieved during its first forty years of existence and of a theoretical museological discussion? In what way has this debate had an impact on how we, in Scandinavia and Finland, conceive museology? Has ICOFOM solved the question of what museology is? A great deal of books and studies (for example, ISS and the ICOFOM Study Series) have dealt with the substance of museology, the foundations and definitions of museology and museums. But before we start scrutinising the schools of

museology in the Nordic countries, let us trace a bit of the history of defining museological education and research. What do we conceive of as our object of study and research? In order to give a background to the statements in Sweden, I have chosen to mention a couple of international definitions.

Between 1979 and 1989 the foundations of museum theory or museology were laid in an intense international collaboration (most significantly within ICOFOM). Today, although the discussion goes on, there is some kind of an agreement that museology is defined differently and addresses different types of problems in different parts of the world. Many still focus on the museum as a social and political phenomenon and institution, while others go for the broader definition encompassing the totality of heritage and museality, a term used by Zbynek Stránský. Hence, the object study of museology today could be extended, as Thereza Scheiner states, to encompass "the global museum as the planet Earth, the little spaceship on which we live" (Scheiner 2010, p. 98). This would be transcribed to addressing not only objects and collections, museums and their communications, but also nature/ecology (eco-museums and nature reserves), landscapes, the built environment, etc. In short, I would define museology of today as a philosophy of our existential relationship to material and immaterial heritage.

The definition of museology varies from country to country, and from university to university, even within the same country. In France, the concept of the term has probably been most profoundly scrutinised (Desvallées 1992; Gob & Drouguet 2003; Desvallées & Mairesse 2011). There, one still distinguishes between on the one hand *museographie*, which is the same as applied, practical museum knowledge, and on the other hand *museologie*, which includes a more theoretical-analytical approach. Museology in the latter sense examines what is called museality or the *relation spécifique* that exists between man and material reality. However, Gob & Drouget (2003, p. 13) interpret museality as equivalent to the French concept of *patrimoine*, *patrimoine culturel* or *patrimonialité*. This, in turn, comes closest to the English term national heritage, or the Swedish cultural heritage.

In Central Europe, as in Eastern Europe, a distinction is made between practical or applied museology (museography, museum technology) and theoretical museology. The object of museological study here is not only the museum, but the aforementioned museum spectrum in the broad sense, that is, the entire cultural heritage. Tomislav Šola, professor emeritus of museology in Zagreb, has questioned the usefulness of the word museology. Instead, he introduced a new international term, heritology or mnemosophy, i.e., heritage science or memory science. He defines it as a kind of cybernetics of cultural heritage (Šola 1997, p. 26, p. 232). Thus, it was mainly in Eastern Europe and France that the concept of museology came to cover cultural heritage in its totality. In the USA, the UK and most of Western Europe, the subject is still defined as museum studies.

The most interesting, and in the long-term, most capable definitions of the museum's object of study were presented long ago by Zbynek Stránský (1974,

1980) and Anna Gregorová (1980). In their footsteps Friedrich Waidacher, who in his 800-page handbook, *Handbuch der Allgemeinen Museologie* (1993), tries to settle the definitions once and for all. Many other theological theorists, such as Peter van Mensch (1992), Eileen Hooper-Greenhill (1992) and Susan Pearce (1992) at the University of Leicester follow along these same lines.

Anna Gregorová is perhaps the one who expresses it most distinctively. She first defines the museum: "A museum is an institute in which the specific relation of man to reality is naturally applied and realized." And then museology:

> Museology is a science studying the specific relation of man to reality, consisting of purposeful and systematic collecting and conservation of selected inanimate, material, mobile, and mainly three-dimensional objects documenting the development of nature and society, and making a thorough scientific and cultural-educational use of them (Gregorová 1980, p. 20).

Gregorová finds three problem areas to study:

- The museum's relation to reality and time (existential and semiotic dimension)
- The museum's relation to society (political and cultural dimension)
- The museum's practical functions (including the museum's organisation and aims).

All three are considered as optional fields of research for museology. Museology belongs to the humanities, it is a social-scientific discipline, not a discipline dealing only with practical matters (like classical museography and museum techniques), Gregorová states. She concludes that there are two main focus fields for museological studies: the historical sense of man, and material documents regarding the development of nature and society (Gregorová 1980, p. 20).
The French sociologist and museologist Bernard Deloche complemented some of Gregorová's definitions when speaking about museology as our *relation spécifique* to reality (Deloche 1999). What narrations do we weave into the concept and what actions do we take in this museal reality for communicative, social, political and ideological purposes? Museums are processes, with the aim of making man's multifaceted relation to reality and history visible. Deloche ends up in stating that museology is a *philosophie du muséal* (philosophy of the museality), which can be compared with such disciplines as the philosophy of law or political philosophy. As such, it is a metatheory and not a science. In this way museology is, according to Deloche, also *contractuelle*, a question of agreement among stakeholders on its objectives (Deloche 1999).

The great influence in Scandinavia regarding definitions and demarcation lines was discussed in the initial volumes of two publications series, firstly *Museological Working Papers 1* (MUWOP 1, 1980), the result of a conference in Stockholm with Czech museologist Vinoš Sofka as driving force, and secondly *Papers in*

Museology 1, published at Umeå University with the pioneer of Swedish museology, Per-Uno Ågren as a driving force (Råberg 1992). Ågren, the founder of museological courses at Umeå University (in 1981), presents a definition that covers musealising processes, the heritagisation of built and natural environments and history:

> Museology studies how the museum object is constituted, what values and decisions guide the museum process from selection and collection to viewing and mediation and thus what historical image, cultural perception and natural vision are projected into protected objects and environments: thus man's relationship to both his physical environment as its history (Ågren 1993, p. 63).

Museology in Umeå was rooted in the critical French tradition, where it has since remained. Museology today, in Umeå University's definition, is called cultural heritage science. However, the task of museology may be even wider. In Friedrich Waidacher's opinion, museology would be to determine the laws governing man's relation to reality and uncover the bearers of museality (*die Träger de Musealität*), i.e., to reveal the secrets between man and his (mainly physical) reality. Waidacher would not have defined museology as a science, but rather as a *methodologisch-aktionale Betrachtung*. If it is necessary to call museology a science, then, he says, it is a science that seeks to understand man and can contribute to the solution of humanity's contemporary crisis and participate in shaping a future for a more humane society (Waidacher 1993). This is a formulation very close to the definition of what philosophy is, which, in turn, brings the objectives of museology perhaps a bit too far.

In my understanding, the definition of museology is a global-diversity problem that cannot be resolved. There are simply different conceptions and ideas of museology in different parts of the world. The only thing we globally have in common is that we all, in one way or another, deal with museums, musealisation and heritage, and scrutinise the role of all this in society. That should be enough, as far as definitions are concerned.

New Museology

The path of development of the discipline is, internationally, paved with a peculiar cyclic amnesia. It seems to me that every generation of museum professionals and theorists believe that they invent the wheel, implement a paradigm shift, create something new, develop a dialogue with society or are more integrative, mostly being unaware that these things were indeed said and done before. The cycles span about 15–30 years. In spite of this lively theoretical and critical debate, not much profound change has actually taken place in museums themselves, if you exclude the truly dynamic 1970s. For example, the term new museology (*neue Museologie*, *museologie nouvelle*), has been coined at least three times in the last hundred years. The first time this concept emerged was in the 1920s in Paris, where museological courses started with a series of lectures on the

theme *Conversation à la religion des musées* (On the religion of museums) at the Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro in Paris (Gob & Drouguet 2003, p. 12; Rivière 1989). The father of modern museology, Georg Henri Rivière (1897–1985) implemented in Paris very early a critical approach, focusing on the museum's ideology and societal role, as well as its ability to contribute to public education. This first new museology was created parallel to the democratisation and modernisation of Western society during the first decades of the 20th century, when museums were opened to a wider audience. Suddenly, these rather closed, learned institutions had to relate to society and the public. As a result, museology also took on educational and communicative tasks and questions.

The second time the concept of new museology was coined was in the mid-70s, when an intense debate on the museums' role and social responsibility took place in Eastern Europe and France. Museological research had by now begun to encompass increasingly larger parts of the material cultural heritage from a critical societal perspective. This movement was based on the fact that cultural heritage is a phenomenon that permeates and is governed by society and its history culture. The museum was no longer primarily perceived as a scientific institution, but also as a social institution.

The paradigm shift that occurred in the 1970s can be linked to the new critical discourse in historiography, which earlier had been addressing national political and economic history, nationhood and the nation's cultures of representation. Hermeneutics experienced a renaissance, history research was broken up into a variety of sub-areas, microhistory and other approaches. The rejection of the positivist objective criteria of truth led to the problematisation of science and of the research process itself. Behind the second wave of the new museology lurked the eco-museum idea, with the understanding that cultural heritage and the museum can exist anywhere (museum without walls), and that this constitutes a dynamic source of power for society. In France, the association MNES (*Museologie Nouvelle et Experimentation Sociale*) emerged in 1982, and in 1985 MINOM (*Movement International pour la Museologie Nouvelle*) was formed (van Mensch 1992, pp. 27–28). The MINOM Rio Declaration (Sociomuseology in Movement) has, particularly in South America, Spain and Portugal, been a powerful tool for implementing social responsibilities and integration in the museum field (Chagas, Assuncão dos Santos & Glas 2014). At the core of sociomuseology is the idea of very close collaboration between museums and other heritage institutions in order to promote local initiatives and entrepreneurs and to create sustainable environments and activities, especially for small communities.[2]

2. See MINOM homepage http://www.minom-icom.net/ Based broadly on a concern for social and cultural change, MINOM brings together individuals who are dedicated to active and interactive museology. It is open to aIl approaches that make the museum an instrument for identity building and development within the community. MINOM favours cooperative relationships between users and professionals, as well as intercultural collaboration. MINOM is an international organization affiliated with ICOM (International Council of Museums) and still an active forum for discussions and museum development.

It is interesting to note that in spite of the fact that a very large body of work in museology has existed since the 1960s, covering a long period of time and many countries, this corpus seems to be unknown to many people practically and theoretically engaged in museum work. It is also well known among museologists that few, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, give references to earlier, European museological and theoretical works in the field, and nothing seems to prevent a repetitive re-invention of the wheel. One striking example is the book *The New Museology* edited by Peter Vergo (1989). This was the third time "new museology" entered the global scene. A group of mainly British and American researchers thought that a paradigm shift was needed, apparently ignorant of the intense debate going on in Europe since the 1970s. The editors thought to come up with new ideas: "a radical re-examination of the role of museums" (Vergo 1989, p. 6) and present a break with the classic collection- and documentation-based museum research. The book is, however, an involuntary summary of the European museological debate and discourse development in the 1970s and early 1980s, to which very little reference is made (Smeds 2007). The book says it is neo-critical, and wants to analyse the museum phenomenon from a socio-cultural and societal perspective (see my discussion above on MINOM), as if this was something entirely new in 1989.

Even more striking is that this very book, The New Museology, somehow raised itself to the position of great authority; if any reference to new museology has been made in other books on museums the last couple of decades (at least in Scandinavia), it is to this. The peculiar gap between references and academic cultures in different parts of the world is notable when one looks more closely at museological studies in the Anglo-American versus German-French-Spanish-speaking worlds. Firstly, I have noted that both camps rarely refer to theoretical publications under the auspices of ICOFOM, the International Committee for Museology (ISS ICOFOM Study Series and monographs), which makes it obvious that ICOFOM publications are, for some reason, not read, although they are freely accessible on the ICOFOM home page.[3] Secondly, I have noted, without having made any deeper survey, that neither camp refers to the other, almost like an iron curtain was drawn between them. This goes especially for the Anglo-American writings, where German or French references can very rarely be found. Whether this is due to cultural reasons or language difficulties is hard to tell, but it is a pity when this affects the development and implementation of museological theory and thought.

During the first museological boom in Scandinavia in the 70s and 80s, there was some significant museological co-operation across the language borders between the English, French and German speaking worlds (as you can see below). Then it seems to have disappeared, and museum studies in the Anglo-Saxon world

3. See also Mairesse, Francois, La belle histoire, aux origines de la nouvelle muséologie, *Culture & Musées* 17–18/ 2000, pp. 33–56; Mairesse, F, Desvallées, A (eds.) 2007 *Vers une redéfinition du musée* Paris: L'Harmattan; Desvallées, A 1992 *Vagues: une anthologie de la nouvelle muséologie*, vol. 1, Lyon: PUL.

went ahead on its own, with Leicester taking the lead. Nevertheless, museology and heritage studies are rapidly growing fields of research in Scandinavia and elsewhere. But as I said, sources other than those in English are rarely referred to. The great bulk of this research in Scandinavia is also done in disciplines other than museology, such as archaeology, ethnology, art history and sociology. This, of course, is one of the reasons for the widespread suspicion against museology as a discipline of its own.

As for languages, it really does make a difference in what language sphere research is done and a book is written, since every country seems to have its own academic culture and traditions. If today you want to make a really interesting reading of critical museum research, of museum realisations and the exhibition medium as phenomena in modern society, then you should, in addition to reading major works in English, refer to the German- and French-speaking research, and to some extent Spanish. For our purposes here I will mention just a few: Déotte 1994; Davallon 2000; Deloche 1999; Desvallées & Mairesse 2011; Fehr 1988; Fliedl 1992, 1995; Gesser, Handschin, Jannelli 2012; Gob & Drouguet 2003; Gonseth, Hainard & Kehr 2002; Heinisch 1987; Jannelli 2012; Lichtensteiger 2012; Mairesse 2000, 2010; Muttenthaler & Wonisch 2006; Schärer 2006; Vieregg 2006; Waidacher 1993.

Today, museological research covers the entire cultural heritage and conservation field, comprising in Scandinavia the popular history use (Swedish *historiebruk*), as well as heritagisation, national conservation and disposal strategies. This also includes the museum and museality as phenomena in modernity, as existential, cultural, political and social problems, as well as the processes and normative choices that lead to musealisation. Even the more philosophical concepts such as forgetting, including and excluding are scrutinised themes. We should remember that the museum, with its collection and representational policy, also constitutes an ideological and political tool for exclusion (Déotte 1994).

Intangible heritage is of course also highly relevant. Museology examines intangible heritage, for instance when one questions what strategies are used for preserving, say, certain traditions, customs or storytelling that a society has made up, or failed to create. Museology also examines the idea-historical heritage we carry and other foundations for the entire modern conservation bluster and our view of history as a whole (see Pettersson 2001; Molin 2003; Widenberg 2006). Museology can and should also naturally scrutinise the normative values (Pettersson 2003) that govern the choices made when collecting stories, contexts and object biographies, as well as the choices of classification systems and taxonomies, or the paradigmatic, personal and other networks that can exist between museums and academies or other institutions. Museology in Umeå covers the whole field and encompasses everything from the museum as an institution to the philosophy of the museum.

Museology in Scandinavia

I have dwelt on these definitions and history for a while, in order to present the setting and the context in which the museological school in Sweden and particularly at Umeå University developed. Museology at Umeå was founded in 1981 by Per-Uno Ågren, with the support of Vinoš Sofka, Erik Hofrén and many others who, in the late 1970s, had started promoting the development of museology in Sweden. Ågren integrated museological theory and thinking in his courses on cultural analysis. For some time, he had been closely collaborating with leading theorists within ICOFOM and with European museologists and related museum professionals, among them Anna Gregorová, Friedrich Waidacher, Zbynek Stránský, Georges-Henri Rivière, Gaynor Kavanagh, Kenneth Hudson and Vinoš Sofka, who had come to Sweden as a refugee from Czechoslovakia in 1968.[4] The eco-museum movement of the 1970s and 80s, helped along by the founder of the concept, Hugues de Varine (Varine 1978)[5] and others, was in Scandinavia very relevant and influential in this development (Hudson 1996; Davis 1999; Varine 2017). Inspired by this international movement, a feverish activity of museum development started in different parts of Scandinavia. At that turbulent time, museums were conceived not only as the guardians of our heritage, but also as social actors with a responsibility to engage ordinary people on the regional level in museum activities, promoting a collective memory (Näsman 2014).

Of high importance for the Scandinavian development were also several international conferences held in Sweden, the first of which, The Role of the Museum in a Decentralized Cultural Policy, was arranged in 1976 in Umeå by Ågren, under the umbrella of ICOM/CECA (International Committee for Education and Cultural Action). This was the first major ICOM conference held in Sweden since the General Assembly of 1959 (Maure 2004). In this same context, an encouraging sign of museological awakening in Sweden was the publication of a handbook called *Museiteknik* (Museum Techniques) for courses at Uppsala University. Here, Vinoš Sofka wrote an article about museology from an international perspective (Sofka 1976, pp. 149–153). The year after, ICOFOM was founded in Moscow, where both Sofka and Ågren participated. Then, in 1980 and 1981, two ICOFOM symposia were arranged as a co-operation between Ågren and Sofka at the National Museum of Antiquities in Stockholm. These workshops resulted in the aforementioned publication series, MUWOP/*Museological Working Papers: A debate journal on fundamental museological problems* (1980, 1981), in which almost all the leading museologists from Europe published a short paper. MUWOP was, however, short-lived, and only those two issues ever appeared. It was then incorporated into ISS, the ICOFOM Study Series. On the other hand, the book series founded a few years later at Umeå, *Papers in Museology*, survives to this day, mainly publishing museological PhD theses. *Papers in Museology* emanated from the next two important museology symposia (after MUWOP 1980–81) arranged by Ågren in Umeå in 1988 and 1989, concurrently

4. He started his career as a curator at the Museum of National Antiquities in Stockholm.
5. One of the creators of the first eco-museum in the world, Le Creusot in France in 1971 (1974).

with the foundation of the Department of Museology (1988). The themes of the symposiums were "What is museology" and "Local and global – two aspects of museum communication". Here, again, leading international museologists (and a few leading practitioners) took part: Tomislav Sôla, Vinoš Sofka, André Desvallées, Hugues de Varine, Peter van Mensch, Gaynor Kavanagh, Per-Uno Ågren, Kenneth Hudson and Donald Horne, among others (Råberg & Ågren 1992). The report from these two workshops, with short articles by all the participants, became very important for the development of museological teaching at Umeå and elsewhere Scandinavia.[6] Those two symposia were also a result of intense work and collaboration during the late 1970s and late 80s to develop Swedish museums towards more socially inclusive institutions. This movement was led by energetic museologists such as Sofka and Ågren, together with museum professionals such as Erik Hofrén, Bo Lagerkrantz, Eva Persson, Margareta Ekarv, Ulla Arnell, Harald Hvarfner and Sten Rentzhog, among others. The two symposia were also a result of collaboration between museology and the History of Ideas at Umeå University, with professors Ronny Ambjörnsson and Sverker Sörlin as the leading figures (Bäckström 2014). Together they had created a very fruitful and inspiring intellectual milieu where heritage, museums, society, territories, nature and ecology all came together. Already then, one had incorporated the protection and preservation of nature into the concept of culture. Ambjörnsson and Sörlin, as well as many ethnologists and others representing the humanities, wrote their part of the workshop report. In museological courses, human ecology, and to some extent, human geography, were introduced.

In 1993, Scandinavian museology took a big step forward – coincidentally (or not) at the same time as Friedrich Waidacher's extensive *Handbuch der Allgemeinen Museologie* appeared. First, the Danish National Museum in Copenhagen arranged (curated by Annesofie Becker) a major and very influential exhibition named *Museum Europa*, which museologically, and with a very philosophical eye, scrutinised the history of museums and collecting. That same year, three theoretically oriented museum practitioners, Ågren, John Aage Gjestrum and Ole Strandgaard, from Sweden, Norway and Denmark respectively, arranged a series of lectures at the Danish Museumshojskolen (Museum Academy) on the initiative of Strandgaard, the leader of this Academy. The topic of the series was "The museum in its time – on the trail of Danish museology" (Ågren 1993). I do not know whether any museologists from Iceland attended to give a lecture, but from Finland, the future professor of museology (from 1997 on), Janne Vilkuna, took part. Thus, four Nordic countries set the scene for museological development. The outcome of these lectures was the foundation of the well-known journal *Nordisk Museologi* – in both Scandinavian languages and English, the first issue of which appeared in Umeå a few months later, in 1993, with Ågren as the editor. The ambition of the journal was to constitute a link between the universities and the practical museum field, and to promote critical

6. *Papers in Museology 1. WHAT IS MUSEOLOGY? (1988) and LOCAL AND GLOBAL – Two aspects of museum communication (1989)*. Report from two symposia at the Department of museology, Umeå University. Acta Universitatis Umensis. Umeå Studies in the Humanities 108/1992.

analysis of the phenomenon called museum. Another ambition was to convey museologically interesting texts from other countries and languages, particularly from Germany and France (also in translation), and the other way around, to make the Nordic museological discussion known in other countries, by means of English summaries of Scandinavian texts.

At this point, it was already clear that museology should not deal with the museum only, but also with ideas and values concerning the broader field. In the following years, there was intense co-operation between these above-mentioned close friends and other museological actors in Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Norway, with the Museum Academy in Denmark and Umeå University as centres of activity. Very important were the International Museum Days, arranged for some time nearly every year by Ågren, Strandgaard and Gjestrum, mostly in Umeå, but also in Copenhagen and elsewhere. Many international museologists and museum directors participated and presented papers and ideas on museum development. Those Museum Days were highly appreciated among professionals and practitioners as a deep source of inspiration.

Apart from the international influences and collaborations, the broader definition of museology in Sweden has national roots.[7] In Sweden, there is an established tradition of seeing museums, their collections, etc., as closely interwoven with material and cultural heritage in general, forming a total heritage. The material remains of history, whether ancient relics, buildings or objects, are perceived as intertwined, from a preservation perspective; heritage is coherent and undivided, as Ågren would say (Ågren 1992, p. 111). The term environmental heritage (also used by Vilkuna in Finland) embraces it all, and museology will cover it all. The concept is social- and value-based, says Ågren, and he continues:

> Museology studies the apprehension of nature and the view of culture and history projected by that legacy: the relationship of man to his surroundings as life environment and history. What in material culture has been imbued with so much meaning that it has been selected as an environmental heritage, protected by society … ? What have the criteria been … ? What role has nature, cultural heritage and history played in different eras? (Ågren 1992, p.111)

My own conception comes close to Ågren's. This is my short definition as head of museological research at Umeå:

> Museology is a theoretical platform for our exploration of industrial man's (traumatic) relationship to time and the material world, and how this is expressed in musealisation and the preservation of objects, environments, the material and the immaterial, and calling it heritage. The task of museology is to explore what kind of phenomena the museum and

7. Here it is important to note that not all universities in Sweden that offer museological courses necessarily share these definitions.

> heritage are in modernity; what are we actually doing, and why, when preserving reality?[8]

Furthermore, Ågren underlines that in order to understand the meaning and significance of heritage, we (museologists) must also study the world and social views that determine social values. Museology is, thus, a kind of philosophy and sociology of museums. Hence, he views museology from three main perspectives:

- A historical perspective, which seeks to describe and understand the environmental heritage of a certain era and a certain place
- A sociological perspective, which studies the institutions and activities which have come into being as the result of a notion of cultural and natural heritage
- A communicative perspective, which applies to the attempts to mediate the environmental heritage in time and space (e.g., exhibitions). (Ågren 1992, p.112)

Here, Ågren reveals his close connections and collaboration with the international museological community. The introduction of museology as a specific discipline elsewhere (other than at Umeå and Jyväskylä) was a slow process, no matter how early and intensely the aforementioned actors of the 1970s and 80s acted as missionaries. Sweden and Finland were, for a long time, the only Nordic countries where professorships in museology were founded (in 1997) and museological education has been going on since the early 1980s. By contrast, in Norway a professorship was established only in 2011, in Iceland in 2009 and Denmark there still isn't one.

The University of Iceland offers, as Umeå has done since the 1990s, a course package from undergraduate to the PhD level in museology. Iceland boarded the train of museology quite late; master's and PhD programmes started in Reykjavik in 2009. Icelandic museology defines its object of study in the narrower sense – it is strictly about museums – but, as professor Sigurjón Baldur Hafsteinsson remarks: "It is of course inevitable that heritage comes in the picture, e.g., via other courses that our students take in archaeology or folklore (as part of their choices)".[9]

In Denmark, research in museology started in the mid-70s. When it comes to the rate of completed projects and published books with purely museological titles, Denmark stands at the forefront in Scandinavia, and always has. In fact, during the first years of the journal Nordisk Museologi, the bulk of published articles came from Denmark. The same goes for other museological research and publications today (depending, of course, on how museology is conceived, whether it embraces other heritage matters or only museums). There is no professorship of

8. This definition is not published. I have presented it in my papers at conferences and in my teaching for first-year students at Umeå University.

9. Information e-mail to the author 12.07.2016.

museology in Denmark, but teaching is conducted at many universities: Aarhus, Copenhagen, Roskilde and Aalborg, to mention a few. For a long time now, the main centre for studies and research has been the Department of Art History, Aesthetics & Culture & Museology at Aarhus University. There, museology is, at least in principle, defined in the same large sense as in Sweden and Finland:

> Museology is a broad, cross-disciplinary field of study comprising research into theoretical and practical questions about cultural heritage, natural heritage and art and their institutions, particularly museums and their significance and role in society. The museological research environment at Aarhus University explores processes of musealisation, which means the way in which a society selects, exhibits, interprets and administers the tangible and intangible products of culture with a view to preserving them for posterity.[10]

At Århus University, there is a so-called supplementary course and a master's course in museology – the Supplementary course requires Bachelor studies in some other subject.[11] The study of museology is structured around five perspectives that come very close to those of Ågren, and are probably influenced by him and the Strandgaard school of museology at the Danish Museum Academy (Museumshojskolen). Museology, they say, has the following:

- A historical-institutional perspective, including research into the history, collections, exhibitions and artefact concepts of Danish museums
- A didactic perspective, focusing on young people and communication at museums, among other things
- A communicative perspective, with a strong profile with regard to strategic communication in the museum world
- A social-economic perspective, including research into museum economy and cultural heritage as policy
- A technological perspective, with years of research into digital museology.[12]

In Norway, museology had faced a constant uphill struggle until just about a decade ago (despite the efforts by the Norwegian driving spirit of museology, the late John Aage Gjestrum). The implementation of museological education and research has been much slower than in other Scandinavian countries – to my understanding mainly due to a conservative attitude in the museum field itself and among professionals in related disciplines. Still, some museological

10. Available at http://cc.au.dk/en/about-the-school/subjects/museology/ [Last accessed 8 October 2019]

11. See the program for Supplementary course in Museology http://bachelor.au.dk/en/supplementary-subject/museological-studies/?amp%3BorgUrl=http%3A%2F%2Ftilvalg.au.dk%2Fmuseologiske-studier%2F [Last accessed 8 October 2019]

12. As for Norway https://www.hf.uio.no/ikos/english/research/center/museum-studies/about/ [Last accessed 8 October 2019]

short courses have been, since the 80s, offered at various universities scattered throughout the country. One of the first was given at the University of Bergen, taught by Anders Johansen and others, as well as some ground-level courses in Oslo and Tromsø. These were shorter museological courses from around 1995 onwards. During the last fifteen years, the situation has improved considerably.

Today, the negative attitude towards museology has faded away, particularly in the museum field itself, where people with a degree in museology are direly needed and employed. Today, the heart of museology is located at the University of Oslo in the Department of Cultural Studies & Oriental Languages, where teaching at advanced levels began in 2008 and a Professor of Museology was appointed in 2011, a position still held by Brita Brenna. The ambition of critical museology in Norway is to incorporate and strengthen the critical heritage aspect in teaching as well as research (Brenna 2015). However, what in the critical aspect would be more critical than the general theoretical museological perspective, has not been clarified.

Research in Scandinavia – Some concluding notes

Are there any special trends or common fields of research in the Nordic countries? In spite of the many definitions of museology encompassing the heritage total, natural heritage and whatever else, research in the discipline of museology focuses to an astonishing degree purely on museums, their collections, collecting, management, exhibitions and visitor studies. In other words, it focuses on traditional topics, and leaves the other part, heritage in general, not to mention natural heritage, to other disciplines, such as sociology, archaeology, history, ethnology, art history, etc. Together they form a common platform for museum/heritage studies. Generally, some confusion still prevails as to the objectives of museology. Other disciplines seem to carry on their business with heritage and museums and do not really bother about what the science of museology really is, or does, or has done. References to monographs and articles in French, German or Spanish are, as I noted earlier, extremely rare (in Scandinavia and Finland). Still, more and more research has been conducted in the field, parallel to the immense growth of the museum/heritage field itself. In my view, there would now be an opportunity to join forces and establish some intercommunication between different international schools and research groups. Museology could perfectly well be the umbrella discipline for all of these entities.

These developments include the centres I have mentioned. One of them is the Nordic Centre of Heritage Learning and Creativity (Nordiskt centrum för kulturarvspedagogik, NCK) in Östersund, Sweden, a Nordic-Baltic centre for learning through cultural heritage, which also conducts research in the field. For NCK heritage is seen as a resource in the work towards a sustainable and inclusive society, where learning is a life-long process.[13] Their research aims

13. Available at http://cultureactioneurope.org/member/the-nordic-centre-of-heritage-learning-creativity/ [Last accessed autumn 2019]

at understanding how cultural heritage can be utilised for social purposes and development. They also combine cultural heritage pedagogy with the outlining of a vision for the future and for engaging the ageing population. This, in my opinion, is a very important statement.

I would also like to mention two important research centres, the Danish Centre for Museum Research (2009, University of Copenhagen), a kind of umbrella organisation for Danish museological research,[14] and the Norwegian Centre for Museum Studies (2011, University of Oslo).[15] It was at Århus University, in the Department of Arts and Museology, where the very first official Danish Museology Research Programme was inaugurated in the autumn of 2016.[16] Danish museum and museological research has always been vivid. It is worth noting that one third of the projects in Denmark (not only at this centre) have dealt with visitors, pedagogy or communication and only one quarter with collecting, preservation and other tacit parts of museum work. And (only) seven were part of some international project (Gransgaard, Jensen, & Hejlskov Larsen 2014, p. 7).

The Norwegian Centre's mission is also interdisciplinary, and it "wants to establish a network between institutions and departments and start negotiating and opening up the boundaries between art and natural sciences, ethnology and anthropology".[17]

Coda

My ambition in this paper has been not only to tell the (brief) history of museology and the development of museological education and research in the Nordic countries, but also to emphasise that museology, today, should be conceived of and defined in a much broader sense than before. I would conclude – and this is my personal conclusion based on exploring a variety of museums, museological and heritage study centres – that museology, heritology, museum studies and critical heritage studies all have a joint scope of research which encompasses museums, the concept of museality, material studies, cultural heritage, heritage total and preservation strategies.

Heritage institutions will, I think, be more and more at the core of the action, trying to change things and make an impact in society when needed. Museums, as the preservation strategies and institutions of society, can no longer go on just collecting the leftovers of our destructive society, without participating in the reasons for this destruction. Cultural heritage (as ICOM states) and critical

14. Available at https://museumsforskning.dk/ [Last accessed autumn 2019]

15. Available at http://www.uio.no/studier/program/kulturhistorie-master/studieretninger/museologi/ [Last accessed spring 2016]. Since then, the text has been slightly changed on their web site.

16. See the program for Supplementary course in Museology http://bachelor.au.dk/en/supplementary-subject/museological-studies/?amp%3BorgUrl=http%3A%2F%2Ftilvalg.au.dk%2Fmuseologiske-studier%2F

17. http://www.uio.no/studier/program/kulturhistorie-master/studieretninger/museologi/ [Last accessed autumn 2019]

museology should be a key element in a new model of sustainable development that sees heritage, within or outside museums, as important in the fight against poverty, in the protection of the environment and a source of capital for local populations, as well as a source of pride, social cohesion and collective identity.

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The Genesis of Finnish Museology

Janne Vilkuna

Abstract

My chapter describes the history of Finnish museology. I use an archival approach to show how museology became a university discipline, as well as to show the efforts made to enhance professionalism in this area. Museology is a young science in Finland, and its development stems from a knowledge of collection care. I introduce the role of such terms as museography, museology and heritology as part of the Finnish museology field.

Keywords: museology, heritage, university education, museography, heritology

Introduction

In Sweden, those in the field were very knowledgeable about museum sciences already at the beginning of the 20th century. In Finland, the Archaeological Commission was established in 1883 and the Finnish Museums Association was established, in connection with this commission, in 1923. These two institutions have had a major impact on the development of museum sciences in this country. The Finnish Museums Association organised the first courses for part-time museum directors in the 1920s and the first university-based course on technical aspects of museum work for University of Helsinki students in 1964. Internationally, two organisations have had a strong effect on the development of museology – ICOM's Personnel Training Committee (ICTOP), established in 1968, and the Committee for Museology (ICOFOM), established in 1976.

In Finland, the Ministry of Education started to develop the museum field in the 1970s. The Regional Museum Committee stated in 1973, "All questions relating to professional training in the field of museums have to be clarified without delay" (Report of the Regional committee of the Museums Branch 1973, p. 92).[1] The Finnish Museums Association concurred with this sentiment, since the number and variety of professions in museums was increasing at the time. The state subsidy system started in Finland in 1979, which required at least two professionally-trained workers to work in all regional cultural and art museums. The Ministry of Education urged the Higher Education Council to ascertain the specific needs for education in the museum field in 1981. They submitted their study in May 1983, which included a recommendation for basic-level studies in museology. The official degree programme of museology, as outlined in the study, started in autumn 1983, with the first post related to it being established

1. All quotations that appear in Finnish in the original sources are translated into English by Nina Robbins.

in 1989. The Museums Decree, adopted in 2005, declared that basic-level studies in museology officially qualify students completing them to work in the field.

When museology first became a university discipline, there was already a division into practical and theoretical lines of thinking. The practical line attempted to answer the question: How is museum work done? It sought various concrete methods to accomplish this. The theoretical line looked for answers to questions such as: Why do we do museum work in first place? Why do individuals collect artefacts? Why do communities establish museums and pass legislation to protect our cultural heritage? The latest development in this line of thinking is known as the concept of heritology. This concept covers all of the various memory organisations, along with their duties, processes and unifying heritological theories.[2]

The Roots of Finnish Museology

The roots of practical museology, i.e., museography, can be traced back to the time of the Renaissance, the cabinets of curiosities and the great courts of the 17th century. Early thoughts on collecting, documenting, preserving and displaying were recorded and published in the encyclopedias of the time. Through museography, one understood the practical know-how that aims to answer questions such as: How can museum work be done? What are the safest, most efficient and most economical methods to implement it? This is different from modern, theoretical museology, which aims more to find answers to the question: Why is museum work done? Already in 1913, the curator of the Swedish Nordic Museum, Sune Ambrosiani (1874–1950), wrote an article *Museum* in the *Nordisk Familjebok* and distinguished the area of museum science (*museivetenskap*) from that of museum techniques (*museiteknik*).

In Finland they were very knowledgeable of the same developments; this became obvious in the definition of museology made by the curator of the ethnographic collection of the National Museum, U.T. Sirelius[3] (1872–1929). This was stated in the Finnish Encyclopedia in 1914 as follows: "Museum science and research aims to discover the best methods for cleaning, preserving, cataloging and displaying, as well as the most practical display structures" (Vilkuna 2003).

The Finnish Museums Association was established in 1923 as an aid organisation to the Archaeological Commission, which name was changed to the National Board of Antiquities (NBA) in 1972 and subsequently to The Finnish Heritage Agency in 2018 (Vilkuna 1998). The regulations of the association confirmed courses and counselling as the best methods for educating new professionals. National Museum Days (educational seminars for museum professionals) were started already in 1923. Furthermore, the Museums Association organised three practical courses for part-time museum directors in the National Museum 1928–

2. See Desvallées & Mairesse 2010 on concepts of museography and museology.

3. Sirelius later became a senior curator and department director. From 1921 onward, he was the first professor of Finno-Ugric ethnography at the University of Helsinki.

1930. The unified programme of the courses strengthened the coherent line of thinking among those working within the field of cultural heritage. This certainly was an asset, which later developed into a unified museum profession in Finland.[4]

The Start of Museology Elsewhere in Europe

After the Second World War, there was a focus on the societal meaning of museums. There was a lecturer post in Czechoslovakia already before the war. In addition, the director of the Brno Moravian Museum, Jan Jelinek (1926–2004), established a museological department in his museum in 1962 and one at Brno University the following year. He was in charge of teaching until Zbynek Stránský (1926–2016) started as a lecturer.[5] In addition, in 1950 Czech museologist Jiri Neustupný (1905–1981) defended his doctoral thesis on contemporary issues in museology. In 1968, he was the first to write about museological theory in his book *Museum and Research*.

In England, a museum studies programme was started at the University of Leicester in 1966 and extended to a master's level programme in 1975. Around the same time, in 1976, courses on museology started to be organised in the Netherlands by the Reinwardt Academy.

Museums worked actively to become more visitor-, society- and environmentally-oriented institutions; this created a demand for new professional skills.[6] ICOM's sixth General Assembly, organised in the USA in 1965, was the first to have the theme Training of Museum Personnel. Two years later an expert meeting was organised in Brno. This meeting aimed to achieve museology as a university discipline. Eventually the 1965 General Assembly resulted in the founding of ICTOP in 1968.

Jan Jelinek was selected as the president of ICOM in 1971, and after his term, he worked actively towards the founding of a museological committee. ICOFOM was founded in 1976, and Jelinek was selected as the first chair. During his term he started the discussion about theoretical museology, with the aim of making it a university discipline (van Mensch 1992).

In the 1970s, museum-centred museology advanced in a relatively speedy manner, encompassing the entire cultural environment. Museologists Peter van Mensch, Piet Pouw and Frans Schouten (1983, p. 81), who worked at the Reinwardt Academy, defined museology as follows: "Museology encompasses the whole complex of theory and practice, involving the caring for and the using of cultural and natural heritage." The same development can be seen in relation to museum objects. These were no longer seen as having intrinsic value, but their value was now seen in relation to the contextual information attached to them.

4. In Sweden, these museum courses were first organized only in 1951.
5. Stránský organised the teaching for ICOM's international summer school ISSOM in 1987.
6. These efforts become clear in the theme of the 1971 ICOM General Assembly, *Museum in Service of Man, Today and Tomorrow*.

Following a similar line of thinking, museologist Tomislav Šola formulated a general theory of heritage (Šola 2005, pp. 8–10): "[The concept of] heritage consists of an entirety of principles, theses and theorems used in elucidating the concept of heritage institutions, their practice and their mission, as well as their role in society." According to him, heritology belongs to the discipline of the information sciences, because it is an inclusive, interdisciplinary and society-focused theory, including both our cultural and natural heritages.[7]

Teaching Starts in the Scandinavian Countries

Umeå University in Sweden started courses on cultural studies, which included studies of museology, in the academic year 1981–1982. This expanded into the Department of Museology in 1988. The department received a full professorship in 2003. In addition to Umeå, there are two universities in Sweden that offer studies in museology, but museology can be studied as a major subject only in Umeå. In Uppsala University, museology started at the Institution of ABM (Arkivvetenskap, Biblioteks- och Informationsvetenskap Samt Musei- och Kulturarvsvetenskap) in 1999 and in Göteborg (Gothenburg) University in 2001. In addition to these university courses, there are several institutions in Sweden offering museum studies at lower levels (Smeds 2006; Silvén 2018, pp. 120–122; Ågren 1992, 1993).

In Norway, an MA-programme for museology started in the Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages at the University of Oslo in 2010. This was changed to an MA programme in Museology and Heritage Studies, which at the moment is the only such MA-programme in Norway (Brenna 2018, pp. 117–118). Brita Brenna was nominated for professor of museology in 2011.[8] BA-level studies, which also include museology, started in Denmark at the Århus Centre of Museology in 2001.[9] In addition, there has been the possibility to include studies of museology in a BA degree, but none of the universities offer a full degree (Nørskov 2018, pp. 93–94). BA-level studies of museology have also been offered in Iceland since 2005, and in 2019 it also became possible to conclude MA-level studies and even PhD degrees in museology (Whitehead & Hafsteinsson 2018).

As of 2019, there are no degree programmes of museology in the Baltic countries. Since 2004 there have been summer school activities organised by the Promotional Society of Museology in the Baltics, which is an organisation supported by the Estonian Ministry of Education. These schools have annually invited international lecturers and organised courses on museology.[10]

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7. Professor of Information Sciences from Zagreb University, Ivo Maroeviç, shared Šola's opinion (Maroeviç 1997).

8. See Gjestrum 1995 for developments before 1995.

9. In 2004–2006 it was also possible to complete an MA degree in conjunction with museum work.

10. Assistant Professor Janne Vilkuna held the first museology courses in Estonia in 1994. At that time, the organizers were the Estonian and Finnish Museums Associations; the course had 73 par-

In the autumn of 1989, the first meeting involving all educational institutions in the field of museology in the Nordic countries was organised in Lillehammer, Norway. By the end of the same year, a study on the educational levels and needs in this area was published by the Norwegian Museums Association (Rosander Aarsland & Rosander 1989). As a result of this study, the Cooperative Committee of Nordic Education was established, which started to organise museology course at Nordic universities. Eventually, and because there was a general need for teaching material and for a discussion forum, the scientific journal *Nordisk Museologi* was established in 1993. This journal was to have two issues yearly and was intended to operate as a cooperative vehicle between the Nordic countries.

The Status of Museology Becoming Established in Finland

The first university-based museographical course for students of ethnology from the University of Helsinki was held in the National Museum of Finland, with the help of the Finnish Museums Association, in 1964. The connection to ethnology was evident, because the professor of ethnology, Niilo Valonen (1913–1983), was also at the time the chair of the Finnish Museums Association (1960–1970). The contact person in the association was Jorma Heinonen (1918–1988), who also held lectures on general museology. This was a subject area that he had familiarised himself with during his various travels to museums and universities abroad, as well as in ICOM's General Assemblies. His one-month excursion to the United States in 1965 was especially important for the development of his museological views. In 1973 and 1974, these museological lectures belonged to the programmes of ethnology, art history and archaeology at the University of Helsinki, and in 1974 they were also held at the University of Jyväskylä.

During the 1970s, the word museology started to appear in the conversations of museum professionals. According to the pioneer of university-based museology in Sweden, Per-Uno Ågren (1919–2008), museology first appeared in a published text in Sweden only in 1976 (Ågren 1992, p.105).[11] In relation to this development in Sweden, it is surprising that the word museology appeared relatively early in Finland, even though it had a pre-scientific and pre-Sirelian meaning at the time. The term was used by the state archaeologist, professor Hjalmar Appelgren-Kivalo (1853–1937) in January 1923, when he had the honour of opening the first Museum Days event organised in the National Museum by the Finnish Museums Association. In his opening speech, he stated: "When it comes to all of the questions present these days, it is natural that they will this time focus on special museological issues, but will also focus on such questions, where purely scientific views are determinative."[12] Despite his speech, the term

ticipants from all over Estonia.

11. The word appeared in a collection of articles called *Museiteknik* in an article named *Museologin i internationellt perpektiv* by Vinoš Sofka (1976), who was the department director at the Historical Museum.

12. The first museum days in Helsinki. Report and presentations 1923, 8.

was subsequently forgotten, and only appeared again almost fifty years later. By that time, the meaning of the term had changed substantially.

The Ministry of Education started to develop the museum field in the 1970s. In addition to a reorganizing of the Archaeological Commission, the important question was how to organize the state subsidy system that was in use for libraries, as well as for private and communal museums. One of the offices responsible for organising this was the Regional Museum Committee, established in 1972. Their report was ready in 1973 (Committee Report 1973, p. 13).[13] The report outlined the following duties to be accomplished: "Draft a suggestion of the regional governing system connected to the NBA, draft a suggestion of the state subsidy system directed to private museums and, finally, draft a suggestion of the required statutes." The need for specialty education was well understood. In addition, because the committee report included statutes for the state subsidy system, they also suggested that "All questions relating to professional training in the field of museums have to be clarified without delay" (Committee Report 1973).[14]

The Secretary of Museum Affairs of the Finnish Museums Association, Jorma Heinonen, described in the first editorial of the association's bulletin in 1973 the concept of "museology as a university discipline" and stated:

> The goal in the future should be to ensure that a permanent chair be established for general museology that is related to different humanistic disciplines. In addition, the various departments would finance the needed studies in museology in their own areas. … Based on the great number of museums in our country and general interest towards museum work, it is necessary that we develop the field in the direction of systematic scientific research. This is the only way we can guarantee that museum work is able to keep up with our rapidly-developing and changing society (Heinonen 1973, Editorial).

This current theme was also brought up in a discussion session on educational issues in 1973, when the Finnish Museums Association celebrated its 50th anniversary in Helsinki. Jorma Heinonen was invited as an expert to a committee that aimed to develop the programme for museum studies in 1974. The chair of this committee was Niilo Valonen. All this led to a statement in a museum policy published in 1975 by the Finnish Museums Association, which declared that museological research needs to be considered when drafting any scientific policies, and that it also needs to be included in university programs.

At the University of Turku, students of archaeology organised a Nordic meeting in 1975, where one of the agendas was museum training. Jorma Heinonen drafted a report for the department of cultural studies at the University of Turku of the

13. The chair of the committee was councillor of higher education Markku Linna, from the Ministry of Education.

14. Report of the Regional Committee of the Museums Branch 1973.

content of the training, but matters did not proceed as well as hoped – either in Turku or in Helsinki.

University Studies Commence

A general updating of university curricula started in Finland in the 1970s. This was accelerated by a report made by the University Degree Committee (FYTT 1972). This report aimed for multidisciplinary degrees, which would include general studies and also show connections to the professional and practical needs of society. Previous subjects were now organised into study programmes. This updating took place at University of Jyväskylä in 1980, leading to the establishment of the degree programme of Art and Culture Studies. At the same time, it was noted that many students went on to work in museums, and a committee was established to plan the degree programme for museum studies. This committee included experts from the museum field, as well as from the university.

The short museum courses common to some of the humanities disciplines formed the basis of the planned teaching. These courses covered areas such as collection care, but also introduced historical periods, as well as offering excursions and internships. In addition, the earlier museum courses that had already started in 1974 offered sufficient background information. The continuous expansion of the museum field throughout the 1970s also accelerated the process and ultimately the state subsidy system was implemented in 1979 (State Subsidy 1979).[15] According to this decision, regional museums were granted state subsidies for regional museum work. These museums included both cultural historical museums and art museums. Eventually there were to be 20 regional historical museums and 16 regional art museums. This took place between 1980 and 2008, in the form of 22 regional historical museums and 16 regional art museums.[16] It was required for these museums to have a minimum of two professionals who had completed studies in museology, or who had otherwise gained the required skills. During the term 1980–1981 a museum programme was established, which was connected to the Department of Art and Culture Studies. This programme included general studies (30 cr.), major studies (70 cr.) and two minor subjects (60 cr.), out of which 20 credits could be in museology. A similar option for museology was also offered at the University of Oulu in the Department of History.[17] In Jyväskylä, the major studies and the first minor subject were so-called museum subjects, which included archaeology, ethnology, art history and Finnish history. The first courses based on this new curriculum were held during the summers of 1981 through 1983 in connection with the Jyväskylä Summer University. All participants were either university students or professionals who had been working in the field for a while.

15. Government decision on the basis of state subsidies (404/79).
16. The system was renewed between 2019–2020.
17. Interview with Pentti Koivunen 21.11.2006.



Figure 1. A joint excursion of students from University of Jyväskylä art history and museology to St. Petersburg April 2000 in front the battleship Aurora. Photo: Janne Vilkuna.

The Advisory Board of Museums, the Finnish Museums Association and the Higher Education Council of Ministry of Education are Active

The Advisory Board of Museums pointed out in their letter (21.11.1980) to the Ministry of Education that the museum field had remained somewhat unorganised and recommended that this matter should be looked into. The Advisory Board was initially assembled upon request of the Ministry of Education, and Jorma Heinonen, who was the director of the Lahti Museum at the time, was the board chair. It was noted in the letter that the new curriculum had dispersed traditional museum disciplines under various programmes, and that this would endanger the recruitment of professionals with diverse cultural historical backgrounds. In addition, it was stated that advanced studies in museology would start, even though that matter had not been thoroughly studied. The board estimated that the need for museum professionals would increase by from 200 to 250 people in ten years. This estimate proved to be too conservative, as there were around 200 museum professionals in 1980, but around 600 in 1990, around 850 in 2000 and around 1000 in 2010.

The qualification standards, created by the NBA, were also applied to other museum posts. This led to a situation where one needed one to two years of practical experience in museum work before one could apply for any post. As the field grew, this demand was extremely difficult to fulfil. This is why the Finnish Museums Association argued for the need of a university degree programme.

They explained that more relevant and specific internships, as part of museology studies, could replace the former strenuous internships.[18]

The Ministry did not hesitate, requesting that its own Higher Education Council (1966–1995) investigate "the overall situation and future plans regarding the education of museum professionals in Finnish universities, the need for museology and internships in museums and finally that it carry out the needed actions regarding such education." The Higher Education Council was advised to be in contact with the NBA and the Advisory Board of Museums, but not specifically with the Finnish Museums Association.[19]

The arts and theology sector of the Higher Education Council addressed the Ministry's letter in February 1981.[20] The Secretary of Scientific Affairs from the Ministry of Education, Kari Poutasuo, was invited as an expert to the meeting. He presented the work done by the Regional Museum Committee and the developing network of regional museums. In his report, he stated that the organising of the nation-wide educational and internship needs of museums is an important step in regard to future investments in museums, as well as to the state subsidy system. It was noted in the meeting that an hourly-paid person from the museum field is needed to conduct the investigation further. Professor Kalevi Pöykkö (1933–2016) and the chair, professor Asko Vilkuna (1929–2014), were appointed to search for the right person. The amanuensis of the Department of Art History, Tellervo Helin, was selected, and she was appointed to the post in September 1981.[21] It was clear to all of the members that organising the university degree studies of museology was also a very topical issue at the time in Sweden.

Tellervo Helin had anticipated the task at hand and the report was declared ready at the council's meeting in October 1981. The Finnish Museums Association had worked on their investigation simultaneously, and their report was ready at the

18. In 1986 the Ministry of Education established a working group to study the needed level and scope of internships in museums. Their report was ready the following year, and it stated that museum and museology studies would include a three-month internship and that certain museums would reserve fifty posts for these internships. These internships would be financed by the state and the selected museums. These internships would be included in the study programmes of Helsinki, Turku, Jyväskylä, Oulu, Tampere and Joensuu universities, as well as in the Åbo Akademi. These suggestions did not actualize, and as for now, the financing of these student internships is organized in various ways in Finland.

19. Ministry's letter to the Higher Education Council 21.1.1981. Higher Education Council archives. Ministry of Education, Helsinki.

20. Professor Asko Vilkuna from the University of Jyväskylä was the chair of the Higher Education Council. The chair of the sector of arts and theology was professor Pentti Karkama from the University of Oulu. The members of the sector were professor Karl-Johan Illman from the Åbo Akademi, professor Kalevi Pöykkö from University of Jyväskylä, professor Viljo Rasila from University of Tampere, professor Kaj Wikström from Jouensuu University, licentiate of philosophy Pekka Pesonen from the University of Helsinki, starting in April 1981 professor Alho Alhoniemi from the University of Turku, docent Eero Huovinen from the University of Helsinki and presenter Matti Hänninen from the Ministry of Education (Hosia 2009, p. 319).

21. Ministry of Education. Archive of the Higher Education Council (proceedings 6/81 24.9.1981).

same time. The analysis of the council's report was left on the table, and more time was allowed in order to compare the two reports.[22]

The board of the Finnish Museums Association put together their own working group already in May 1980. The chair of the working group was professor of archaeology Unto Salo from the University of Turku. Other members were director Sven-Erik Krooks from the Pohjanmaa Museum, docent Veijo Saloheimo, Secretary General Jorma Heinonen and Secretary of Museum Affairs Anja-Tuulikki Huovinen from the Finnish Museums Association. Since the association wanted to work in collaboration with the Higher Education Council in such an important matter, they also invited professor Kalevi Pöykkiö as a representative of the art and theology sector in 1982. After investigating the teaching taking place in Finland and abroad, the working group planned a 15-credit basic-level proposal for museology. The proposal was sent in conjunction with a letter to the Higher Education Council. This letter included an invitation to a meeting with the Finnish Museums Association for the art and theology sector to get acquainted with the museum field and museology.[23] After the visit in March, both the sector and the council accepted the report, and it was sent to the Ministry of Education on 26.5.1983.[24]

The report consisted of nine suggestions for action. The first suggestion was to make museology part of the curriculum: "Studies in museology can be included as part of the degree in those educational programmes that give courses on museum subjects. Museology can be included in these programmes as an individual minor subject. Studies in museology can be also concluded after or outside of bachelor's-level studies." The fifth suggestion included the professorship: "After receiving more information as to the teaching of museology, the possibility for an independent professorship should be introduced in one of our universities. The high-level teaching and research of museology could compensate for any shortcomings that the museum field has experienced due to the previous lack of higher theoretical education." Internships were also addressed, as they had become a practical procedure intended to be used to qualify for permanent positions, and this area was one that needed transformation. It was suggested to partially replace these prior internships with studies in museology.[25]

At the beginning of 1983 the Secretary General of the Finnish Museums Association, Jorma Heinonen, educated and prepared the museum field for upcoming

22. Ministry of Education. Archive of the Higher Education Council, arts and theology sector (proceedings 4/81 19.10.1981).

23. Ministry of Education. Archive of the Higher Education Council, arts and theology sector (proceedings 1/83 14.2.1983).

24. Ministry of Education. Archive of the Higher Education Council, arts and theology sector (proceedings 3/83 16.5.1983) and proceedings 4/83 26.5.1983 by the Higher Education Council. This important event in the museum field was relatively small in the entire history of the Council's history (Hosia 2009: 143).

25. Ministry of Education. Archive of the Higher Education Council, arts and theology sector (proceedings 3/83 16.5.1983) and proceedings 4/83 26.5.1983 by the Higher Education Council.

changes in an editorial appearing in the association's journal, *Museology – Is it science or practical skills?* In the text, he emphasised the theoretical nature of museology as follows (Heinonen 1983, Editorial):

> Museology is the only science, in addition to library and information sciences, that is so profoundly connected to an institution. If we consider this connection to museums and to their concrete and current tasks as our only basis to design the teaching in this field, the result will be lacking and detrimental to future developments in our field. If we only are trying to solve the current challenges of the museum field and apply them to the current tasks at hand, we are forcing ourselves into a cul-de-sac in a long run. The museum field needs a theoretical distinction based on its character, duties and methodological development in order to progress. This is why we need a professorship under which postgraduate studies and scientific research will be possible.

The successor to Jorma Heinonen as Secretary Seneral, Anja-Tuulikki Huovinen, also strongly advocated for university-level museology studies, with good results.

The Beginning of Basic-level Studies

Professor Unto Salo, who worked as director at the Satakunta Museum, later transferring to professor of Archaeology in University of Turku, started teaching museology during the academic year 1982–1983. This teaching was arranged as an additional programme, in connection with the Department of Cultural Studies. It was upgraded from hourly-based teaching during this time up to approbatory-level (current basic studies), with the help of financial support from the university. The funds were granted by the university's governing board from the general employment funds, because the faculty did not fund the teaching. The teaching became official[26] during the academic year 1984–1985. The courses were printed in the teaching guidebook and it became possible to include approbatory-level courses as an additional minor subject of the degree (Salo 1982, p. 38).[27]

The Faculty of Arts of University of Jyväskylä accepted the framework for museology studies in spring 1982. This framework was drafted by the Departments of Ethnology and Art History. The final curriculum was accepted in December 1982, with teaching starting in autumn 1983. Five study credits were added at the suggestion of the Finnish Museums Association. These were the Museum as a

26. The teaching in Turku was not mentioned in the 16.5.1983 proceedings of the arts and theology sector of the Higher Education Council. In these proceeding teaching at Jyväskylä was mentioned: "Teaching in museology has been started as part of the so-called museology study module." In addition, the University of Turku arranged a course called Museum Branch as part of employment education during the spring and summer of 1984.

27. Interview with Unto Salo 15.10.2009 (Sirkku Pihlman as the interviewer) and the proceedings (12.10.1982) of University of Jyväskylä, Faculty of Art and, the Planning Committee on Education.

Cultural Institution (1 cr.) and Internship in Museology (4 cr.).[28] Many students complained about the six-week internship, because it was mainly organised on a pro-bono basis. These complaints eventually ended when students noticed that the internship led to part-time jobs and eventually to more permanent positions. In 1991, a course on contemporary documentation was added. This was realised in co-operation with University of Jyväskylä Museum and the Jyväskylä city museums.[29] By the end of September 2019, 827 basic-level modules had been carried out. In addition, 124 had been carried out through the open university and 155 through the courses offered by the Finnish Museums Association.

These were the first steps as to how official degree teaching, according to the suggestions made by the Higher Education Council, started at the Universities of Turku and Jyväskylä. In Turku it was first started in co-operation with Åbo Akademi.[30] The major difference was that museology studies could be included as part of MA studies in Jyväskylä, whereas in Turku they were added only as an additional subject.

The Society of Museum Policy arranged a seminar in the National Museum called Museology – Useless or necessary? in January 1984. In addition to the opening speech, there were nine commentaries. The official opinion of the NBA was not heard, because the Director-General C.J.Gardberg (1926–2010), could not attend the seminar and the commentary of the Board was given by the director of the National Museum, Osmo Vuoristo (1929–2011). It was surprising that Mr. Vuoristo did not share Jorma Heinonen's enthusiastic attitude towards the possibilities of museology, even though the two had worked together for several years. In contrast, he was concerned that practical working experience would be negatively impacted if more theoretical aspects were introduced into the curriculum (Vuoristo 1984, p. 36): "Many of us who seek conundrums, could raise questions, create theorems and drift in their chamber even further from the everyday, dirty museum work. Fewer and fewer would need to clean their fingernails." Behind this attitude could have been the shift in paradigm that was taking place in ethnography, where there was a concern that the focus toward the teaching of object research and folk traditions would shift towards a more theoretical approach. Apparently, many leading officials from the NBA shared Vuoristo's views, and this line of thinking was common among many older museum professionals. The Museum Union representative at the seminar

28. Proceedings of the University of Jyväskylä, Faculty of Arts, Faculty Council 14.12.1982. At the University of Jyväskylä the study units for museology were as follows: MSL. 001 Introduction to Museology (2 cr.), MSL. 002. Organisation and Administration of Museums (1 cr.), MSL. 003. Museum Building (1 cr.), MSL. 004. Collections (2.5 cr.), MSL. 005. Library and Archives (1 cr.), MSL. 006. Museum and Research (2.5 cr.), MSL. 007. Exhibitions (2.5 cr.), MSL. 008. Museum Pedagogy (2.5 cr.), MSL. 009. Museums as Cultural Institutions (1 cr.) and MSL. 010. Internships (4 cr.).

29. In cultural historical museums, the focus had been in history, especially on the history of agriculture. With the new documentation course, the various contemporary issues were brought into focus. In Sweden, the SAMDOK documentation had been already established in 1977.

30. See also Vilkuna 1993a (Museology in Finland at the beginning of the 1990s) and Vilkuna 2018, pp. 98–100.

was the chair of the union and researcher on the NBA, Leena Söyrinki-Harmo, who demanded more vocational education and internships. She also stated that studies in museology should be concentrated on only one or two universities (Söyrinki-Harmo 1984).

The position of museology became stronger when the first ICOFOM meeting was held in Espoo in September 1987. This was the first international meeting of museology in Finland, and it was attended by many internationally recognised museologists. The following spring the Dutch museologist Peter van Mensch gave a three-day course in Helsinki. Students and museum professionals were encouraged to take part in ICOM's international summer school ISSOM, which took place in Brno.

The experienced museum directors Jouko Heinonen (1946–2010) and Markku Lahti advanced museology by writing a book called *Museologian perusteet* (Basic Museology). The book was published by the Finnish Museums Association in 1988 and functioned as a study book. It was updated in 2007 into the reader-type volume *Museologia tänään* (Museology Today), which was edited by Pauliina Kinanen.



Figure 2. Peter van Mensch lecturing at the University of Jyväskylä 5th March 1992. Photo: Janne Vilkuna.

Teaching Becoming Nationwide

After Jyväskylä and Turku, basic studies in museology started in 1992 at University of Helsinki, 1996 at the University of Oulu and 2002 at the University of Tampere. Teaching was expanded to cover subject studies in 1993 at the University of Jyväskylä, 1997 at the University of Turku and 2005 at the University of Helsinki. At the same time, basic studies of museology were opened to all university students in Jyväskylä, not just those studying museum-related subjects at the Faculty of Arts. This was also the case in Helsinki in 2004. Co-operation

with the Open University started in Jyväskylä in 2001. This co-operation made it possible to receive a degree in basic studies in museology through distance learning.[31]

The first permanent posts in the field were established 1988 at the University of Turku (researcher), 1989 at the University of Jyväskylä (assistant professor, transferring into a full professorship in 1999) and 2003 at the University of Helsinki (lecturer). The critical mass of museology was, and still is, rather small. All the appointed docents are trying to compensate for this[32], as are all the postgraduate students and doctorates, as well as the Memornet Research Network (est. 2004), other research schools, activists in the field and various Nordic co-operative projects.

Several Finnish universities reorganised their structures throughout the 2010s, and in many cases, traditional departments were eliminated. In 2019, the study programme of museology at Jyväskylä was transferred to the faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, belonging to the Department of Music, Art and Culture Studies. In Turku, museology was transferred to the Faculty of Humanities, belonging to the School of History, Culture and Arts Studies. In Helsinki, museology was transferred to the Faculty of Arts, belonging to the Department of Cultures. In Oulu, museology was transferred to the Faculty of Humanities, belonging to the Research Unit of History, Culture and Communications. In Tampere, museology was transferred to the Faculty of Education and Culture, belonging to the Degree Programme in History.

At Pori (part of the University of Turku), the Faculty of Humanities, Degree Programme in Cultural Production and Landscape Studies started giving courses in museology in 2003. These were transferred to the Museology Programme in 2009. As a result, there is only one degree programme at the University of Turku, but two separate locations where the courses are held.

At Jyväskylä, the representative of museology was also appointed as deputy director of the University Museum in 1992 and as director the following year.[33] The University Museum was established in 1900. It houses both cultural historical material and material of natural history. The museum functions as a museological laboratory and one location of many for internships. This relationship has been mutually beneficial, which helps keep new museologists grounded in the everyday challenges of museums, and also helps students explore and experience new innovations in the field.

31. MA Anne-Maija Malmisalo-Lensu was hired as the coordinator of the studies; she also gave lectures on museum pedagogy.

32. Adjunct professors of museology in the University of Jyväskylä are: 1996 Janne Vilkuna, 2004 Anne Aurasmaa and Solveig Sjöberg-Pietarinen, 2012 Susanna Pettersson, 2013 Ulla Knuutinen and 2021 Nina Robbins.

33. This post was held 1993–2016. In 2017, with the establishment of the Open Science Centre, which joined the library and the museum, the post was transferred to the Centre.



Figure 3. University Museum personnel after the opening of the new permanent exhibition, *Oi kuvatuksia ja mielijuohteita* at the University Museum in 2013. Photo: Jyväskylä University Museum.

Rights for Major Studies – First MAs and doctors

Museology could be studied as a minor subject at all universities mentioned in the previous section until the turn of the millennium. In summer 2001, the Ministry of Education granted the right for University of Jyväskylä to give advanced and postgraduate studies in museology. This meant that students could major in museology up to the MA and PhD levels. At the University of Jyväskylä, the Faculty of Humanities accepted the degree requirements for advanced studies at their 12.2.2002 meeting. The new major became available for postgraduate studies at the same time. In order to accomplish this, some degree-technical manoeuvring was needed. This was done by Dr. Ossi Päärnilä, who worked as the Chief Student Counsellor at the Faculty of Humanities, and who had a positive attitude toward the new major. This manoeuvring intended to interpret the appendix of the degree statute in a broader context.[34] In general, major-level degrees had been defined in the appendixes of the degree statutes, and new majors could not be established without changing these appendixes. The Ministry of Education was reluctant to change these appendixes in individual cases, but was not opposed to a broader interpretation. This worked in museology's favour, as the 18th clause of the appendix offered a loophole. The appendix was not considered changed if a new major is multidisciplinary, including a major that has already been listed in the appendix. In the appendix all traditional museum branches of the faculty were listed (ethnology, Finnish history, art history) and all these were considered as part of museology. With this interpretation, there

34. Collection of statutes 221/94.

were no hindrances to establishing the new major. These odd divisions into singular or multidisciplinary subjects did not appear in the later degree statutes (Information given by Ossi Päärnilä 5.3.2009).

Despite its status as a major subject, museology remained a minor subject. This was largely due to employment reasons. Only after the turn of the millennium, along with the master's-level programmes, has the subject gained popularity as a major subject.

The popularity of museology in Finland has steadily increased over the years. The Finnish Museums Association has regularly conducted *Museoväki* surveys among museum professionals throughout the first decades of the new millennium.[35] These surveys, among other things, ascertained the number of professionals who had studied museology. In 2003, 26% of professionals had completed the basic studies. In 2008 this percentage was 29%, in 2013 35% and in 2018 already 40%. In 2003, 47% of professionals in the field had not studied museology at all; the equivalent percentage in 2018 was 35%.

The first MA in museology was granted at the University of Jyväskylä in 2004[36] and the first PhD in 2006. The University of Jyväskylä started a multidisciplinary master's-level programme in the management of archival information (AHMO) in 2008. In this programme, museology was one of the subjects offered. In 2014, the master's-level programme Research of Cultural Environment (KUO-MA) was established. By the end of the year 2019, 30 students of museology have graduated, and seven postgraduate students have defended their doctoral theses.[37] The unified degree structure and European-wide Bologna Agreement

35. See also Kallio & Välisalo 2006 about the Museoväki 2003 survey and Diaario survey of employment after the studies of museology.

36. Lonkila, H 2005. *Peilikäs peilinä*. The University of Jyväskylä.

37. Valtonen, H 2006. *Tavallisesta kuriositeetiksi – Kahden Keski-Suomen Ilmailumuseon Messerschmitt Bf 109 -lentokoneen museoarvo* (From Commonplace to Curiosity – The Museum Value of two Messerschmitt Bf 109 Aircraft at the Central Finland Aviation Museum); Kecskeméti, I 2008: *Papyruksesta megabitteihin – Arkisto- ja valokuvakokoelmien konservoinnin prosessin hallinta* (From Papyrus to Megabytes – Conservation management of archival and photographic collections); Knuutinen, U 2009: *Kulttuurihistoriallisten materiaalien menneisyys ja tulevaisuus – Konservoinnin materiaalitutkimuksen heritologiset funktiot* (The Heritological Functions of Materials Research of Conservation); Lonkila, H 2016: *Syvällä sydänmaassa – Yrjö Blomstedtin ja Victor Sucksdorffin Kainuu* (Deep in the Heartland – The Kainuu of Yrjö Blomstedt and Victor Sucksdorff); Robbins, N 2016: *Poisto museokokoelmasta – museologinen arvokeskustelu kokoelmanhallinnan määrittäjänä* (Museum Collection Disposal – Role of museological value discussion in collection management); Laine-Zamojska, M 2017: *The Role of Small, Local History Museums in Creating Digital Heritage: The Finnish Case*; Hannula, L 2019: *Kävijät, kokijat, kokemukset – Museologinen tutkimus Siffin senioriklubista taidemuseon keskiössä* (Visitors and experiences – Museological research concerning the Senior Citizen Club of the Sinebrychoff Art Museum). There are several other dissertations done at other universities where the subject area is close to museology, such as: Auer, T 2000: *Konservointityön professionalisaatio* (Professionalisation of conservation) and Hänninen, K 2010: *Visiosta toimintaan: museoiden ympäristökasvatus sosiokulttuurisena jatkumona, säätelymekanismina ja innovatiivisena viestintänä* (From vision to action: Museum's environmental education as socio-cultural continuum, regulatory mechanism and innovative communication).

was carried out in Finland in 2005. Even though this agreement did not require the so-called pro-seminar thesis to be written as part of one's major studies, the writing of these museologically important theses continued as minor subjects at Jyväskylä and Turku. At the University of Helsinki, museology was granted major status in 2018.

University-educated museum professionals were by no means the only experts working in the field of cultural or natural heritage. Just as important as these were conservators working in the field, who had received their education in Finland or abroad from conservation institutes, or from working as an apprentice. The Ministry of Education wanted to improve the work done within the heritage sector; as a result, the work of conservators also gained attention. The Ministry established a Committee for Conservation Training, which gave their report in 1974 (Km 1974, p. 122). The governing board for vocational education suggested in their 1979 report that conservation training consists of eight specialised sectors. The courses began at the Vantaa Design Institute in 1984. They started as polytechnic-level courses in 1994. In 2000, the institute merged with Espoo-Vantaa Technical Polytechnic (EVTEK) and eventually EVTEK and another polytechnic, Stadia, merged into Metropolia Polytechnic in 2008. During this time, it became possible to conclude advanced polytechnic studies and the four-year, 240-credit degree programme was expanded, with the possibility for an additional two years of study and 60 credits.

In addition to the educational advancements of conservators, the conservation training of museums of natural history was also established in 1987. These courses were arranged according to suggestions made by the governing board for vocational education, and apprentice-based teaching started in 1988. Building conservators were trained at Seinäjoki Polytechnic from 1995 to 2015. A separate restoration programme for building and furniture conservation started at Kymenlaakso Polytechnic in Kouvola in 2001. After 2007, the restauration programme was transferred to the interior restauration programme (Lemmetyinen 2016, p. 24).

The Ministry of Education had interest in developing conservation education towards a university degree programme. This is why the ministry invited the Councillor for Education, Seppo Liljeström, as the investigator. He had to draft an estimate of the development needs of university-level conservation education, research and services. His report was ready in 1993, just when the economic crisis was at its deepest in Finland (Liljeström 1993). Soon it became clear that the suggestions listed in his report as to university degree education for conservators would not be realised. At the same time, the University of Jyväskylä encouraged conservators to start studies in MA-level museology, something that the field welcomed. From the museology perspective, a person who has degrees in both conservation and museology would be a welcomed professional to work with museum collections (Vilkuna 1993b). The first two master's degrees of museology were professionals, trained as conservators. Since conservation cannot be studied at the university level in Finland, and since the field is so tightly connected to

our cultural heritage, by combining the various humanities fields and natural sciences, conservators were encouraged to start postgraduate studies. This is how heritologically-oriented museology studies at the University of Jyväskylä try to create possibilities for a comprehensive heritology, which would also include conservation. Their second and third PhD theses came from the field of conservation and material sciences.

Lucky Start at a Bad Time

The transition of museology into a university degree subject and eventually into a major happened too late from a comprehensive progress point of view. This had a negative impact on timely development regarding the establishment of permanent posts and the planning of research schools.

Before the 1990s, universities in Finland used a budgeting system in which departments suggested new posts for their faculties. These suggestions were evaluated and prioritised, and eventually taken to the Ministry of Education for a decision by the university administration. New posts were granted according to state budget decisions. For a long time, this system worked in favour of such posts. The financial crisis of the 1990s changed all this and led to vast public sector budget cuts. State institutions were given strict fiscal guidelines. During this time, i.e., 1991–1995, universities transferred to a system in which profit and loss were the main considerations. In addition, universities started to more strictly implement various quality systems. At the same time, the old budgeting system changed to one that allowed universities to regulate their own resources and budgets.

The first museology post in Finland was an assistant professorship, which was established at the University of Jyväskylä in 1989, eventually becoming a full professorship in 1999. At the University of Turku a museology researcher post was established in 1998, and a university lecturer position was established in 2003 at the University of Helsinki. These first posts were established at a time when the development of such university posts had already reached somewhat of a plateau. This is why individual universities were left somewhat isolated, with overall too few permanent posts. The poor economic state of the nation did not allow optimum growth at a time when progress was still being made, despite a lack of funding. It was only in 2014 that the University of Jyväskylä got additional teaching resources, with a university lecturer, teaching in the areas of both museology and ethnography.[38]

The status as a major subject was also granted quite late, only in 2002, because the Ministry of Education and Finnish Academy had already started the financing of research schools with salary-based researcher posts in 1995. In this environment, it was practically impossible for a small subject to establish a new research school, either alone or with other potential partners. This had

38. MA Minna Mäkinen.

two outcomes. Firstly, students sometimes had to provide their own financing in order to complete their postgraduate studies. Secondly, various memory organisations (libraries, archives and museums) established co-operative projects to promote postgraduate studies.

The Treasury of Finland produced the first National Information Strategy in 1995. The Ministry of Education added a co-operative project called MUISTI (Memory) to the strategy from 1995 to 1998. The purpose of this was to utilize new technology in order to increase accessibility to cultural heritage. At the same time the Committee of Information Services from the Ministry of Education appointed a working group to investigate and present concrete outcomes, in order to advance joint projects done in the various memory organisations, i.e., libraries, archives and museums. Their report was issued in 1996, and it led to the published report *Kamut-tietorakenne: Kirjastojen, arkistojen ja taide- sekä kulttuurihistoriallisten museoiden yhteiskäyttöiset luettelointitiedot* (Kamut information structure: The joint registration system for libraries, archives, art and cultural historical museums).

The ongoing discussion about memory organisations at the beginning of the 21st century put the focus on higher education and research in the branch. At the University of Tampere a professorship of Library and Information Science[39] had already been established in 1971 and filled in 1977 (Mäkinen 2007a, pp. 36–37, p. 40; 2007b, pp. 157–158, p. 163) and a full professorship of museology in Jyväskylä was granted in 1999. But archival sciences did not have a professorship in Finland, even though memory organisations were aligning theoretical and practical interests at the time. This is why the State Archives, the NBA, the National Library and departments involving higher education in these branches decided at their meeting in the State Archives in 2004 to enhance and advance the establishment of a mutual research school. The Department of Library and Information Science at the University of Tampere took leadership of this initiative.

Various aspects regarding digitalisation were seen as a special challenge, and this is why it became the first theme of the research school. The initiative was named KAMUDI, but later changed to MEMORNET (a research school of the society's memory functions). At the beginning stage the collaborators were the State Archives, the NBA, the University of Helsinki Library, the Universities of Helsinki, Jyväskylä, Tampere, Turku and Oulu, Åbo Akademi and the University of Technology.[40] In the 2005 application process, it was noted that the goals of MEMORNET were to "strengthen the education of researchers by unifying co-operation between universities and memory organisations. This work would also advance basic research. In the research themes, special attention should be

39. The name of the department changed to Information Studies in the 1990s when the word "library" was dropped. Furthermore, in 2001 the Faculty of Social Sciences was changed to the Faculty of Information Sciences. Tampere Research Center for Information and Media (TRIM) works in connection with this faculty.

40. Professor Janne Vilkuna functioned as the representative of the University of Jyväskylä from the outset.

given to various fundamental and practical changes that digitalisation brings in the functions of society's memory organisations."

Despite the societal relevance of this initiative, the research school system, once established, proved to be impenetrable.[41] The application process of 2005 did not lead to funding, nor did it in the following year. This led to a situation where the research school continued as a network for research without outside funding. This network was established in November 2007. Once again, the application process in 2008 did not lead to any funding, but the fourth application process was granted funding for six doctoral candidates for 2012–2015. Out of these six grants, one was awarded to museology, with Magdalena Laine-Zamojska using this to advance her doctoral studies. After this period the Ministry ended the grant system and allocated the funds for universities to use at their discretion. This meant that small subjects had to return to the starting point.

The lack of doctoral schools is one of the reasons why the museology programme at the University of Jyväskylä sought out heritage professionals to start postgraduate studies, and there were other reasons. Firstly, the increase of doctoral schools since the 1990s led to doctoral unemployment at the beginning of the new millennium. To grant heritage professionals the right to start their postgraduate studies minimised this unfortunate situation, both on the individual and societal levels. Secondly, large numbers of heritage professionals were facing retirement at that time, taking a lot of professional know-how with them. It's often the case that there is working life relevance in the doctoral dissertations made by heritage professionals, or even retired professionals. In the best scenario, the knowledge gained throughout decades of working life can be utilized in the fields of these doctoral studies. In addition, there was hope that postgraduate studies and dissertations would lead to a situation where overall appreciation of the field would increase, something that would eventually manifest itself in higher salaries. It is somewhat unusual that the doctoral degree is still not a requirement in museums or at the Finnish Heritage Agency, except at the Natural History Museum, for various permanent posts. Once I, a member of the Museo 2000 Committee, suggested that the doctoral degree be a requirement, at least for director posts, in the various national museums in Finland. One member of the committee was opposed to this suggestion and said: "An experienced MA will always win out over a young PhD." I responded thus: "How about between a young MA and a young PhD?"

The requirement for a doctoral degree was not included in the report or the Museum Act, when these were updated in 2005, or in the updated Museum Act of 2019. In practice, many of the directors of central museums in Finland have, in fact, been PhDs.

41. The research schools were given their funding according to their results. This meant that established research schools, which already had ongoing results to present, were granted funding easier than newcomers, which did not have this, due to a lack of funding.

It is the central duty for museums, archives and libraries to help both society and individuals build their identities. Focusing on these duties had left the histories of these individual institutions somewhat in the dark, without relevant research having been carried out. This situation was addressed and improved during the first two decades of the new millennium. A new publication was published in the field of libraries in 2009, which reflected, with the help of ten authors, upon the history of Finnish public libraries (Mäkinen 2009). In 1998 the Finnish Museums Association published the 75-year history of the association (Vilkuna 1998). In addition, several individual museum histories were published, but an overall history of Finnish museums was still lacking. This is why museology studies at Helsinki, Jyväskylä and Turku Universities, as well as at some main institutions in the museum field, such as the Finnish Museums Association, the Finnish Heritage Agency, the National Gallery and the Natural History Museum, agreed in 2005 to launch a national history project to research and publish the history of Finnish museums. As a result of this work, the Finnish Literature Society published a collection of articles entitled *Finnish Museum History* in 2010 (Pettersson & Kinanen 2010). The history of the management of Finnish antiquities was published in 1984 (Härö 1984) and a continuation of this was published in 2016 (Immonen 2016). This continuation consisted of the time period up to 1972, when the Archaeological Commission was changed to the NBA, later the Finnish Heritage Agency. The history of the State Archives was also published in 2016 (Nuorteva & Happonen 2016).

Seminars and Publications

Even though personnel resources in museology on the national level were scarce, the communal support of the museum branch, the work done by individual activists, Nordic co-operation and especially the work done by active students helped strengthen museology's identity. At Jyväskylä, students of the secondary subject of museology founded in 1994 a student organisation, which was at first called Diaario; it later merged with another three student organisations from the same department and became Corpus. They arranged thematic two-day open-to-all national Museological Days already in 1996, which eventually developed into an annual event. Students at the University of Turku and the Åbo Akademi founded their joint association Museion in 2002. Museion then started to publish its e-journal, Kuriositeettikabinetti.net (Cabinetofcuriosity.net).

The Finnish museology study book, Museologian perusteet was published in 1988 by the Finnish Museums Association. The authors of the volume were museum directors Jouko Heinonen and Markku Lahti. The university programs of museology in Finland agreed already in 1989 that all study material should be jointly published with the help of the Finnish Museums Association. In 1997 the association got the possibility to publish a collection of articles by Croatian museologist Tomislav Šola, *Essays on Museums and Their Theory – Towards a cybernetic museum*. This was due to the approaching crises in the Balkan area. In 2000 the Finnish Association of Ethnologists, Ethnos, published a collection of articles, *Näkökulmia museoihin ja museologiaan* (Perspectives on Museums

and Museology) (Vilkuna 2000a), which functioned as a study book at the time. In 2007 the Finnish Museums Association published the reader Museologia tänään (Museology Today), which consisted of 13 articles and updated the former publication Museologian perusteet (Kinanen 2007).

Parliament Ratifies Museology

Before the year 1979 there were no institutions that could coordinate the development of Finnish museums with sanctions. The regional museum sector that was based on the state subsidy system and created in 1979 was the first step towards increasing state supervision.

After this government decision Parliament ratified the Museums Act on 29.12.1988, i.e. the Act as to the division of state subsidies (1146/1988). A Decree (625/1989) was incorporated into the Act in 1989, defining the duties of regional and specialty museums. There was also a flexible statement about personnel requirements: "Museums should have a required amount of permanent and full-time museum professionals who meet the qualifications stated in this decree." The Decree also declared the requirements for museum directors, curators and researchers as follows: "An applicable academic degree is required for the post."

At this stage the state subsidy system was only applied to regional museums, in both the art and cultural history areas. There were altogether 35 of them. The Museums Act also mentioned national specialty museums, although none had been approved at that time. The entire state subsidy system was renewed in 1992, and the Museums Act and Decree also went through revisions. After this renewal, the state subsidy system covered all museums that had at least one permanent post. This meant that the system expanded to cover over 100 museums, instead of just 35.

The Parliament Committee for the Advancement of Civilization stated in fall 1993, while focusing on the cultural policy report: "The funding of museums has been regulated by the Museums Act, but the law does not regulate the status of museums in society in general, nor does it regulate their partial responsibility for society's information services, together with such institutions as archives and libraries. The lack of a law that would regulate museum functions hinders co-operation regarding information among these institutions" (Policy Report 1993, p. 2822). The Parliament Committee for the Advancement of Civilization ordered a report in December 1993 from the Ministry of Education, the latter of which established a working group, Lex Museorum, to investigate renewal of the Museums Act; their report was ready in 1994. The working group came to the conclusion that the speediest way to expedite matters was to update the current Museums Act and rely on the recently-written Museums Act regarding changes to the Finnish constitution, especially Clause 14a. Parliament ratified this change of the Museums Act, in accordance with the working group's report. This new Museums Act was implemented at the beginning of the following year. The first clause of the new Act spelled out the societal duties of museums, hoping to

achieve the following: "The aim of museum functions is to sustain and advance people's understanding of their culture, history and environment. Museums need to practice and advance research in the field, education and the transmission of information by documenting, researching, preserving and displaying objects and other specimens of humans and their environment" (Vilkuna 2010, p. 43). The 1992 Museums Act required at least one permanent post in order to qualify for a state subsidy, but this post was not specifically defined. This is why the new Act defined in its updated Clause Two, Paragraph Four: "There has to be at least one permanent post in a museum, and this post requires a professional background from the field of museums" (Vilkuna 2010, p. 43).

This meant that traditional museum subjects were not by themselves relevant, because the needed professional requirements were up to the research and preservation responsibilities of the individual museum. Museology became *de facto* the unifying subject common to all traditional museum subjects and all professionals in the field, although this was not yet recognised in the Museums Decree.

The Higher Education Council stated already in 1983, in their report to the Ministry of Education, that "Some one- to two-year internships should be replaced by studies in museology. A degree in museology has to be set as the qualification requirement for permanent posts in the museum field, after museology studies have been organised on a national level." The Ministry of Education established a Committee for Museum Policy in November 1998, which named itself Museum 2000. One of the duties of the committee was (1999, p. 4): "to observe the research relationship between museums and universities and make suggestions as to the organisation of basic and advanced studies in the field." Their report from 1999 stated the following (1999, p. 72):

> The qualification requirements demand a specialised education in the museum field. The Museums Decree should reflect this and demand that, in the future and after a transition period, studies in museology, as well as in other related subjects, are a basic requirement in the field. Those chosen for posts such as museum director, senior curator, researcher, curator or pedagogue should have accomplished basic studies in museology. Others should have studies in museology, if applicable.

The Museums Act was updated in 2005 and requirements regarding state subsidies on education in the decree of the Museums Act were updated as well:

> 1§ Requirements for State Subsidy: In addition to what has been stated in the Museums Act (729/1992), section 2§, the requirements for state subsidy are as follows: … 2) Every Museum needs to have a director and at least one full-time employee. One of these two has to have a higher academic degree, and one an academic degree, a polytechnic degree or the equivalent of the previous vocational-college level degrees. In addition, both the director and the employee are required to have an adequate level of knowledge in the field that the museum represents, as well as basic studies in museology or working experience in museums.

The new Museums Act and Museums Decree came into effect on 1.1.2006, and Finland became one of the first countries where museology was given official status as a professionally qualified subject. Rarely do university subjects have such a mandate from the state. Tomislav Šola had stated already in 1997 the following: "The museological profession is probably one of the last to be recognised by legislation." (Šola 1997, p. 290). This was not the case in Finland. The Museums Decree was further revised in 2013, and this time the entire basic studies of museology were set as the requirement. The vague expression referring to just some studies of museology was taken out the decree.

Museum director Kalle Kallio wrote in the Finnish Museums Association's blog post about the status of museology being standardised:

> The status and future of museology were analysed when the new museum policy and Museums Act were under consideration. The strengthening of professional knowledge and the growing popularity of museology have been acknowledged as factors behind the success of museums. In the proposed new Museums Act, it is written that in order for museums to receive state subsidies they have to have at least two employees who have done basic studies in museology. These studies could no longer be replaced with working experience, but such studies would not be required for the museum director. … Museology has become the new normal, a basic requirement for our profession. (Kallio 2018)

His post *More Educated than Ever* was published on 18.9.2018 under the featured section. In his post he was reflecting on the new museum policy *Mahdollisuuksien museo – Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriön museopoliittinen ohjelma 2030* (Museum of Possibilities – Museum Policy 2030 by the Ministry of Education) that had been published that spring.

From a museological point of view a backlash was experienced with the new Museum Act 2019, since it did not demand any more basic studies in museology of the museum director.

The Finnish Museums Association also wanted to ensure a path to museological thinking for those professionals who had not studied museology. This was done by establishing the web-course *Verso* in 2005. The Association produced and administered the course; it consisted of ten credits that were also accepted by universities. The *Verso 2.0* course was started in 2007. This added another 15 credits, in order to advance the basic studies up to the universities' 25 credit level. The last Verso courses were held in 2016, by which time 155 museum professionals had passed the course.

The effect of museology in the field of cultural heritage has happened and will continue to happen in four ways. These are classified as follows:

1. research done by the representatives of the study branch
2. basic, post and supplementary education, based on research outcomes

3. professionals conducting expert and entrusted duties[42]
4. raising discussion about important and current matters.
(Vilkuna 2000b, 2000c).

Toward Heritology

In order for museology to be granted status as a major subject at the University of Jyväskylä, a definition of museology was required, and I was asked to rely on internationally accepted definitions. Luckily, no official definition of museology existed then, nor is there one now. Other disciplines do not favour these kinds of official definitions either, because they would only produce consensus, and therefore hinder the dialogue and debate that is necessary for research. This is why I, as a professor of museology, wrote a heritological definition according to the principles of new museology, as follows: "Museology (heritology) is a science that explores the way the individual and the community perceive and control the temporal and regional environment, by taking into possession pieces of evidence from the past and the present." The concept of environment includes both the tangible and intangible, i.e., spiritual environment. These pieces of evidence are taken into possession by selecting and demarcating areas of reality and incorporating them as cultural reality.

This definition was left on the table at the faculty meeting in August 1999, because the representatives of other, more traditional museum disciplines did not understand such a heritologically-oriented and museumless perspective. The professor did not change the definition, and it was eventually accepted at the next faculty meeting.

The museological views that were incorporated into the teaching of the University of Jyväskylä were influenced by four museologists: the Czech Zbynek Stránský, the Swede Per-Uno Ågren, the Croat Tomislav Šola and the Dutch Peter van Mensch. Museologists from Leicester University, Susan Pearce and Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, had an influence through their literature. In addition, Kenneth Hudson's concept of the Great Museum had a large impact.

The heritological aspect of the University of Jyväskylä museology was strengthened in 1993 when the discipline's representative took part in the international symposium *Till museets genealogi* in Copenhagen, which was organised by the National Museum of Denmark and Umeå University. One of the speakers was the British museologist Kenneth Hudson, who in his presentation *The Great*

42. Professor Janne Vilkuna has been elected twice to the board of the Museums Association (1988–1994 and 2009–2014). In addition, he served for one year as the temporary chair in 2015. Professor Vilkuna has held memberships in various committees organised by the Ministry of Education: Lex Museorum (1993), Museo 2000 (1998), the Finnish representative in the EU expert group in Strasbourg for preparation of the Faro Agreement (Faro 2005), the Development Committee for Local Museums (2014–2018), the Expert Group of Intangible Heritage (2015–2017) and the Working Group for Museum Policy (2015–2017). He is also since 2013 the chair of the Finnish Local Heritage Federation, which, e.g., promotes the non-professionally run local history museums.

European Museum presented a comprehensive pedagogical view called the Great Museum. According to this view, the entire cultural and natural environment is seen as a great museum. The duty of museums is to look outward, not inward, and to explain the traces of time that are present in our environment.[43]

The basis for this new, museumless museology was that the museum is just a tool with which we observe our environment. Museology is interested in this process. This means that the so-called end-product of the museum is not the museum itself, but rather using the museum as a tool for expression by individuals and society regarding their views about heritage. The old or practical museology, i.e., museography, aimed to answer the question How? The new theoretical museology aims to answer the question Why? This attempts to ascertain the following: Why do we collect? Why do we establish museums and other heritage institutions? Why do we legislate our heritage? As a starting point, there is an assumption that the selection process in the field of heritage is based on a cultural interpretation of the object, and not on the object itself. Because we cannot preserve or remember everything, we must relegate some things to oblivion, and even allow some of them to be destroyed. This is why our conception of our past, and the heritage that we have created, are both results of our own choices. The interpretation that is the result of this selection can be called museality. It is only after such a selection that, in accepted cases, the musealisation process will take place. To analyse these processes that accumulate our heritage is one of the main research focuses of theoretical museology.

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43. Vilkuna 2010, p. 73: "Europe is one large museum, where every building, every field and every river and railway contains clues to the past and present of the country concerned, provided the onlooker has the information to understand what he is looking at. Scattered across the Great Museum are the institutions, which we call museums. Their main function is to help people to understand the Great Museum. They justify themselves by looking outwards, not inwards."

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Museum Leadership – New competencies and the cycle of change

Susanna Pettersson

Abstract

Museums of today are more proactive, more dynamic and more courageous than ever before. They have changed from monolithic institutions to masters of several plays and have changed from keepers to doers. They are also facing economic, political, social, technological and legal challenges that are very diverse and complicated. Consequently, this requires new leadership and new competencies. What lies behind the change, how can that be analysed and how can we respond to the future needs of museums? How have museums responded to the requirements of change in leadership from a historic perspective? How should organisations be led from today's point of view, and how should they be further developed?

Key words: history, future, collections, competencies, society, a way forward

Introduction

This chapter looks into the development of the museum profession from a leadership perspective and demonstrates how museum professionals have adapted to the changing environment, from the 19th to the 21st century. It also sheds some light on the key changes and critiques that have concerned art museums the most. Even though the examples are mostly derived from the art museum context, leadership issues can be implemented into a wider range of cultural institutions.

My questions include how museums have responded to the requirements of change in leadership from a historical perspective, how organisations should be led from today's point of view, and how they should be developed further.

One of my arguments is, that in order to succeed, a museum needs a leader with strong understanding and experience regarding content, and an ambition to develop competitive business plans for culture industries. When using the voice of the museum, the director needs to have content-related credibility and a clear-headed understanding of the financing models and their potential. This is challenging the alternative leadership view, according to which a professional leader, a generalist, can take over almost any institution and make it flourish. In order to develop the organisation and its practises further, the director should be open for new competencies and changes.

To write about leadership in museums we can use several different methods. It can be a theoretical exercise with examples from different organisations or an

analysis related to the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It can also be a profound look at the fields that have the greatest impact on a museum's actions regarding good and bad, high and low (using, for example, the PESTLE method, which looks into political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental changes). Explorations of future trends, black swans and risk scenarios belong to the same toolkit. Writing about museum leadership can also be a self-critical journey through one's own career with real-life examples from both failures to success and the other way around. I have decided to use a combination of both.

I have grown into a museum professional over three decades, from guard to director. I have also been privileged to work in three different countries, Finland, the United Kingdom and Sweden. These decades have included a massive transformation from a landline and typewriter dominated environment to a 24/7 society that reacts with speed and navigates a constant flow of information. The professional museum landscape has changed from a community of art historians to a combination of diverse professions.

The Formation of the Profession

Today's museum professionals have education and experience that is simultaneously deep and broad. A curator can be a specialist in 18th century European furniture and an IT-wizard. A social media communicator knows target audiences and masters art historical texts relating to the social media environment. The head of department is an expert in his or her field, but is expected to also show competence in budgeting, human resources, negotiation skills and much more. Especially in smaller museums, one has to cover several areas. In order to understand where we stand today and how have we ended up here, it is good to have a short look at history.

In Europe, the majority of museums were founded in the 19th century. The first museums (as we understand them today) had been opened to the public during the 18th century, the opening of the Louvre in 1793 being the most famous example of this. The collections were catalogued, displayed, researched and conserved, and the museum profession was under development. The first museum professionals came typically from the upper class; they had a scholarly orientation and clear visions of what museums could do in society, not least thanks to the ideas of the Enlightenment. They were pioneers who created the grounds for the professional requirements, as we know them today.

The first museum men were academics who acted in many roles: they taught at universities, wrote books and ran the first museums, with the expectation of being able to cope with everything, since the size of staff tended to be very limited. Names such as Gustav Friedrich Waagen at the Altes Museum in Berlin or Sir Henry Cole at the South Kensington Museum in London were known throughout Europe. They arranged classical art history into a three-dimensional format: to collection displays and narratives. Art was presented according to

geographical areas (schools) such as Italian, Dutch and Flemish art. Handbooks that were published about art reinforced the idea of reading art history through a geographical school-based system. That was not to be questioned, but taken for granted. This created a backbone for many installations and collection displays for decades to come, even in the Nordic countries, thus creating a framework for art history (Karlholm 1996; Pettersson 2013; Giebelhausen 2020).

In the Nordic countries, the academic community had a strong impact on the development of the museum field. Nationalism, the Enlightenment, educating the people, creating the story of art and involving the artists all played an important role. Art was meant to be shown to the largest possible audiences, preferably as a complete story. Tools were needed for the dissemination of information: collection displays, catalogues and art historical handbooks, as well as engravings, all of which displayed the most important works of art in collections. Several of these methods are valid even today, even though concepts of sharing information have changed radically. The ideas of openness, sharing and co-creation have replaced the old culture based on careful selection and restrictions.

By the end of the 19th century the art world had changed; artists were no longer sculpting and painting according to identical academic rules but were experimenting with new styles and techniques, which was somewhat shocking to the conservative bodies. This placed growing pressure on museums and their gatekeepers. Artists understood that the museum men could not keep up with changes in the contemporary arts.

The gap between the European art capitals and the boardrooms of the museums was now growing fast, and critical voices were raised. Artists such as Wassily Kandisky and Alexander Rodchenko argued that only the artists could implement proper decisions regarding works of art. Academic art historians were considered not competent enough to evaluate what was topical and contemporary (McShine 1999). Instead of reacting to the critique, museums more or less closed their eyes and museum practises did not progress. This created a concrete need for alternative venues such as galleries and Kunsthallen for displaying contemporary art. For the museum profession, this was the first crisis: authority regarding the fine arts was no longer unquestioned. New competencies were needed.

Critiques covered not only the understanding the arts but also the way that museums communicated with their audiences. This was reflected in the ways that museums reached out by organising guided tours, printing books and catalogues and creating new ways to talk about art in an understandable way. Director of Hamburger Kunsthalle Alfred Lichtwark, who has been described as one of the creators of museum education, published the book *Übungen in der Betrachtung von Kunstwerken. Nach Versuchen mit einer Schulklasse* (Exercises in contemplation of works of art. After experiments with a school class) in 1900, that demonstrated how artworks could be studied with schoolchildren. The publication became exceptionally popular and was translated into several languages, including Finnish (Lichtwark 1926). His followers were the earliest museum educators of the new era. At about the same time, the world economy

collapsed, and museums faced economic challenges that affected their capacity to acquire art, among other things. Museums were forced to learn to think about alternative funding.

After the Second World War, the art scene continued to grow in diverse directions that museums were no longer able to closely follow. Whereas in the 19th century there had been the illusion of a complete story of art that could be presented, now capturing all of it was a mission impossible. This opened a flood of critique regarding such choices. Museums presented mostly white men, with female artists being marginalised. More inclusive policies in terms of gender and race were required (Pettersson 2009b, pp. 23–28). This signalled that museums should become much more analytical and observant. The choices they made mattered, but they were also strongly challenged. Many artists groups such as Guerrilla Girls, founded in 1985, have confronted museums in public, and continue to do so.

Almost every generation of critical minds has produced their own alternative for presenting art: artists' collectives, new and experimental spaces and border-crossing approaches. Established museums have been regarded as the antithesis of renewal and risk taking. Even though such black-and-white stereotypes do not necessarily mirror reality that accurately, this kind of debate has been always been a driver for change and development. As Marja-Liisa Rönkkö has put it, every era creates its own museums (Rönkkö 2009). Accordingly, every era has a new set of demands for the professionals running things (Palviainen 2010).

Museums have always been for the people, have always been changing and have always been criticised. At the same time, museums have contributed to the building of a nation as well as responding to the needs of communities and individuals. Museums are (relatively) agile platforms that react to change, and they can be used in an innovative manner. Museums that were once regarded to be objective are from today's perspective arenas that express, and may express, different views. In today's society, they have extremely strong potential to make a difference on a societal level. Museums are powerful instruments that need to be used wisely.

All of this means that the museum director is expected to master several fields, from economics to politics, not to mention the core competence fields that the museum represents. The director must be interested in everything: the big and the small, the high and the low. If translated into the language of architecture, the museum director has to have a passion for city planning and designing door handles, exactly as the world-famous Finnish architect and designer Alvar Aalto did.

The Potential of the Future

After the turn of the 21st century, museums and their future were discussed in several forums. Museums were rethinking their priorities and policies, as well as their responsibilities (Berger 2004). Books that explored the museums and

their possible roles and identities for the new era were published (Hein 2000; Schubert 2000; Witcomb 2003; Cuno 2004; Genoways 2006). Conferences and talks were organised in the wake of the change of the millennium. Museums were analysed from a global, not only Western perspective (Knell, et al. 2007). Even the roles of national museums were discussed within an extensive research project *Making National Museums* (organised by the Universities of Leicester, Linköping and Oslo), which resulted in a publication that featured national museum narratives across the world, and which discussed the myths of nationality (Knell et al. 2011). Covid-19 has triggered authors to map the future of museums after the pandemic. One of the questions concerns possible changes in customer expectations.

As many stakeholders were working with future-related issues, so was the Finnish National Gallery. I was, at the time, working with the national art museum development initiatives and had a possibility to initiate a future-related experimental project. *Future Art Museums* (2009) was conducted in collaboration with museology students from the University of Helsinki, as well as art students from the Fine Arts Academy/University of Arts. The students worked in groups. Experimental information mining, boundary-stretching artworks in public spaces and bold questioning contributed valuable ideas regarding the potential of the field. Questions were related to the different and even contradictory expectations that museums face on one hand, and the societal potential that they have, on the other. All of this was put into a publication (Pettersson 2009a).

As one part of the project, we conducted a virtual discussion with experts representing different fields: politics, sociology, economy, future research and museums. The well-known politician Sirpa Pietikäinen, sociologist Pasi Saukkonen, professor of economics Saara Taalas and future researcher Anita Rubin, all shared their ideas about four themes: museums and artists, museums and the public, museums and public debate and museums and the economy, together with myself and Kaija Kaitavuori, who was at the time the Head of the Development Department (Pettersson 2009a, pp. 80–115). Ten years after this virtual debate, the conclusions are still worth revisiting. They show how some questions are still valid – and some have become outdated. Quite interestingly the set also reveals that which we did not see coming.

Museums and artists

- Art/artists/museums are drivers of socio-cultural change
- Artists/art are vital for our identity
- The relationship between artists and museums should be negotiable
- Artists no longer depend on the spaces in museums
- Artists' competencies could be utilised in museum management
- Museums should move towards more transparent communication in relation to the art field

Museums and the public

- A museum that tries to cover it all is sure to fail
- A museum can be a generalist with the public, an expert on art
- The same visitor can have different roles and needs, depending on time and place
- A museum can have fans
- A museum must pay attention to the language it uses and to whom it talks (diversity, demographical changes)
- Experiencing art is personal: the right to participate and even touch it is important

Museums and public debate

- Civic action groups as potential networks
- The possibilities of interculturalism
- The role of art critics as interpreters and filters
- Museums have different needs for public debate

Museums and the economy

- What is the funder's/owner's relation to the museum?
- More emphasis on the transparency of publicly funded services: what and why
- Can a museum that collects entrance fees serve as a proactive partner in a public debate?
- Key performance indicators: What is being measured? On whose terms? Can the activities be measured in the first place?
- Companies to be educated by museums

The participants of the discussion emphasised that museums represent continuity and possibilities for change at the same time. Museums were seen as huge power engines for art and culture. Art was regarded as a channel of expression for hopes and fears, and even the most difficult issues (Pettersson 2009a, pp. 112–113). This becomes clear when society is in crisis. The cultural institutions carry a strong symbolic value and public spaces are needed as safe and democratic places of contemplation.

Ten years after the project, the world has changed a lot. It is especially interesting to analyse what we, participants of the discussion, did not catch on our radar earlier. Polarisation of values, political turbulence, neo-conservatism, humanitarian crises, development of technology, climate crisis and ecological issues were not examined earlier. Also, the funding mechanisms for the arts and culture were based on relatively safe ground, the main source being public funding. Therefore, alternative funding models from crowdsourcing to big donations from companies or individuals who wish to give back to the system were not an option, either.

On the other hand, there were also topics that have remained the same. Let's take museums and the public as an example: all the points mentioned are highly relevant still from today's perspective. Museums need to focus, articulate their expertise and understand the needs of visitors. As John Falk and Lynn Dierking have shown, museum visitors have different needs and identities (explorers, facilitators, professionals, experience seekers, rechargers) depending on the situation (Falk & Dierking 2018). Museums work extensively with their returning visitors and products are being developed to support this behaviour. The nationwide Museum Card, launched in 2015 in Finland, is a prime example of this. Museums are also more and more aware of social responsibility and their diverse audiences.

Projects such as the Future Art Museums project are excellent reminders of how significant it is for any museum to draft future-related scenarios, even the most unusual ones, in order to develop practises as part of a strategic process. Think tanks that focus on future trends and future researchers are excellent partners, not to mention the American Alliance of Museum's Center for the Future of Museums (est. 2008), which is mapping out the cultural, political and economic landscape, along with publishing annual *TrendWatch* reports.

Collections as a Core

All museums, no matter the size, profile or location, work with their collections. They should be the museum's strongest and most relevant driver. Collections have a rich history that should be used wisely for the benefit of the public. This has also been on the top of the agenda during the first two decades of the 21st century. Collections have been digitised and many useful portals such as Europeana have been launched to encourage better use of collections. At the same time, museums have been encouraged to collaborate more efficiently in terms of the physical mobility of collections.

A primary example, which I had the privilege to work with, was the European Union's OMC-working group's (Open Method of Coordination) project on Collections Mobility that focused on how practises can be developed together, crossing geographical borders and overcoming legal obstacles within the member states. The project identified the areas that needed harmonising: loan administration and loan standards, state indemnity schemes, valuation, self-insurance and non-insurance of cultural objects, immunity from seizure, loan fees and long-term loans, building up trust/networking and digitisation. Inquiries were sent to the member states and data were analysed. At the same time, museum professionals were offered a possibility to participate in Europe-wide collections mobility workshops. A handbook, *Encouraging Collections Mobility. A Way Forward for Museums in Europe*, was published, both as a paperback and online, thus making the materials accessible to a large professional community (Pettersson et al. 2010).

This Europe-wide project put collections into the limelight. Collection histories were written, collection policies were redefined, collection displays were in focus again and many national museums and museums associations were working nation-wide to support museums with their collection work. Collections were seen as an important asset that had a much bigger value than being just a collection. The sustainable and future-oriented use of collections became a leadership issue and the impact of collections became a topic for evaluation (Rajakari 2008; Jyrkkiö & Liukkonen 2010; Niemelä & Jyrkkiö 2012).

And why is that? The answer is rather simple. From a leadership perspective, collections help you to formulate the purpose of the museum. Who, why and for whom are you? What are you working with, and why? If you are local, let's say a museum of old cars, you don't start arranging international exhibitions of medieval history. Having said that, a museum with a focus on a car collection can easily work with various themes, ranging from the development of vehicles and transportation, design history, popular culture and much more. Collections are a source of inspiration and guidance.

It is fair to say that during the 21st century, collection research has grown in importance, thus providing solid ground for proper argumentation: why collections matter, why they need resources and why local, regional and national stakeholders need to invest in them. Research literature and publications, such as Donald Preziosi and Claire Farago's *Grasping the World, the Idea of the Museum* (2004) should belong to any museum director's and decision-maker's bookshelf. Collections have also received nationwide (and even wider) attention, as in the case of Neil MacGregor's collaboration with BBC Radio 4 and his popular book *A History of the World in 100 Objects* (2010) that was published when he was director of the British Museum. Collecting practises have even been challenged, as in the Victoria & Albert Museum's rapid response collecting project, which was introduced in 2014 and has reminded us about the need to mirror the world when things happen, not afterwards. Collecting and collections have even become popular among fiction authors, Orhan Pamuk's novel *The Museum of Innocence* (2008) and a museum bearing the same name, located in Istanbul, being the most well-known example on that. These examples remind us how the appreciation of collections goes hand in hand with the strategic choices and capacity to make priorities that benefit, at the end of the day, the public.

Museum Competencies

Leading a museum requires knowledge about the key changes of the field and an idea about the future. Museums have been described as mausoleums, cemeteries, temples, laboratories, places of reflection, platforms, meditation chambers and much more (Noever 2001). They form the collective memory of society (Urry 1996). Since the turn of the 21st century, strategies for displays, collections, education, audience development, branding and funding have transformed museum management. Buzzwords have changed from the discursive museum to the inclusive, participatory and beyond, and so have expectations. The museum's

client group consists of visitors onsite and online, funders, donors, the media and academia, as well as politicians and decision makers.

Professionals need to understand the complexity of the culture industries and the links from the museum's own activities to the larger whole, meaning society at large. Many of the world's leading museums draw record numbers of visitors, i.e., millions of people, thus contributing to the economy of a city, a region and even a country. Culture is seen even as a way to brand a region, the Nordic countries for example (Asplund & Fransson 2018, pp. 199–202). Culture has both direct and indirect impact value.

One could ask: What would then be the ideal combination of competencies to run a museum? The question is not new, quite the contrary. Already in 1978, the Association of Art Museum Directors (in the USA) stated that it makes more sense to train art historians to be managers than to train administrators to understand the role of museums. Stephen E. Weil, deputy director of the Smithsonian's Hirshorn Museum and later senior scholar emeritus at the Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies, continued to analyse the question by comparing the pros and cons of the discipline specialist vs. the management generalist. He argued that the managerial generalist cannot be expected to have "the education or experience that would enable him successfully to formulate a consistent, persuasive, informed and authoritative point of view with respect to the museum's subject matter" (Weil 1990, p. 103).

I could not agree with Weil more. The reason is very simple: the director uses the voice of the museum and that voice needs to be trusted. The competence that is required from a director is much deeper than the capacity to master Excel-sheets and budgets, fundraising and investment plans. He or she must have an academic profile, a field of expertise that an organisation consisting of hard-core specialists can trust. The director is expected to cope even during the toughest times and have the guts to fight for the institution through good and bad. Most importantly, the director must understand what the museum is and to whom it is, and make sure that personnel is on board.

Certain core competencies required from museum leadership can be identified no matter which decade or century we are looking at. Put simply, we are discussing connoisseurship, understanding numbers and getting along with people. Apart from that, the director has to understand how the museum relates to society, and the other way around. He or she must have eyes open for the new competencies that the institution needs in order to succeed in a complex world. This can be translated into a recipe for successful museums, which has been illustrated in figure 1.

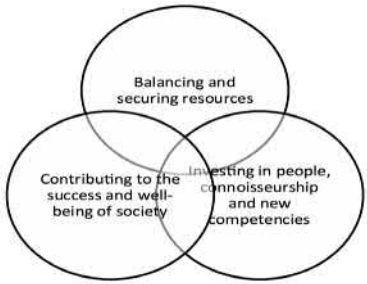


Figure 1.

The museum staff must have the right competencies in place and understand that needs change when the environment changes. When I began my career at the end of 1980s, there was hardly anyone working with information and marketing issues, not to mention fundraising, IT or environmental issues. They were skills that became important only when new requirements created new imperatives: museums needed more visitors (and ticket income) and broader external funding. Technology, in turn, opened new possibilities that changed the ways of communicating. Today, such skills as cultural literacy and diversity awareness, audience development, sales, ecological planning, trend analysis and future research belong to the list. Once competencies are in place, museums must invest in their staff members, their wellbeing and the professional development. Diversity in the work force creates a positive spiral. From the leadership perspective, investing in people, connoisseurship and new competencies are of crucial importance. Hiring the right people for the right positions creates possibilities, whereas wrong choices hit hard like bad investments – not least because museum professionals tend to work a long time at the same place.

Forbes Magazine listed the 10+ most important job skills every company would be looking for in 2020, with a footnote that according to the World Economic Forum 35 percent of the skills that we see as essential today will change in only five years. The list included skills such as data literacy, critical thinking, creativity and emotional intelligence, as well as cultural intelligence and diversity. Strong cultural intelligence was seen as an asset needed to develop more inclusive products and services. Creativity, in turn, was described as critical for any workplace for moving forward (Marr 2019). One could also add agility and tolerance to the list.

Another element in figure 1 refers to balancing and securing the museum's resources. The strategy points out the priorities and tells us what to do – but also what not to do. That is also needed because the world is full of exciting projects. Resources are quite often understood solely as funding, but that is only one third of the pie. The two other thirds are skills and time. The museum might have huge potential for development, but if the people are not right, their competencies are outdated or of low quality or if they randomly do this and that instead of focusing to the strategic areas, the whole organisation will end up facing severe problems. Therefore, the skills and competencies plan is as important as the financial plan, and it is critically important that staff members use their work hours wisely. For example, if a chief curator needs a whole week to prepare a

standard lecture, it might be better not to give the lecture at all. But if the lecture is strategically significant and contributes to the success of the museum, then it might be time well spent.

Strengthening financial resources requires new ways of collaborating with external stakeholders, as well as new thinking. In the 1980s and 1990s in Finland, sponsorship was a relatively new phenomenon in the cultural field and the rules were very straightforward. The museum received a lump sum of money and published the sponsor's logo in connection with the exhibition. International contemporary art exhibition *ARS95* at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Helsinki, housed at the Ateneum building at the time, changed that scene in Finland. ARS95 was one of the first heavily sponsored exhibitions that also developed a new language between the museum and its funders. Sponsors' visibility was defined according to the size of the contribution and the companies also used the exhibition as a venue for customer events. The new funding system created some debate, and opinions were divided: one group saw opportunities for the museum and the arts in general, but the other group despised the idea that a publicly-funded museum took money from the outside. The criticism was linked to fear of the commercialised and Americanised way of running a museum, thinking that the autonomy of the museum might be threatened.

Nowadays, sponsorship is a much wider concept than the exchange of money or services against company visibility on the museum's onsite and online platforms. Instead, one should be able to specify what the added value is that collaboration brings to the museum and, ultimately, to members of the public. What would be the societal impact of such collaboration? As an example, a company can fund an activity that brings art to the people who would not otherwise have an opportunity for that kind of an encounter, or make sure that the museum can afford longer opening hours, as Friday Lates, which are popular in several museums from, the Victoria & Albert Museum in London to MoMa in New York, demonstrate.

The third focus area presented in figure 1 is related to contributing to the success and well-being of society. Museums are never cut off from the rest of the society or the people living in it. Helpful questions are: How does the museum articulate its contribution for the benefit of the people? What is the impact of museums? How can this be demonstrated? This is discussed in more detail in the next section.

Museums and Society

Museums can be globally strong brands such as the Tate, the Metropolitan, the Hermitage, the Tretjakov Gallery or the Louvre. They are institutions that play significant roles within the fields of culture, economics and the branding of a nation. Their directors belong automatically to the group of influential leaders that are expected to use their voices in public. They can use the opportunity of saying out loud what the value of culture is, and why it matters. The same logic applies on a smaller scale to less-known institutions and smaller cities. What is

important is that the directors recognise their potential to make changes and to use their power wisely.

Larger organisations, which are often criticised, are like large ocean cruisers that turn slowly, whereas smaller museums can be compared to speedboats that can make quick and surprising turns. The problems with big organisations are almost always related to their leadership, work culture, funding, rules and regulations and public role, along with the fact that public expectations do not coincide with reality. For example, in the eyes of graduating young curators, big museums might seem like conservative fortresses that never take risks or experiment.

I have good reason to claim that even the biggest national institutions can be agile, quick and radical when needed. Here I'll focus on one example. In 2015 many European countries, Finland included, received a large number of refugees. A silent refugee demonstration, that lasted several weeks, was arranged in Helsinki city centre, first in front of the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma and then in a larger square, between the Ateneum Art Museum and the National Theatre. At the time, I was director of the Ateneum.

We were approached and offered an opportunity to display a work of art commenting on the humanitarian crisis. With a very short lead time we decided to contribute to the discussion concerning basic human rights and display graffiti artist EGS' work *Europe's Greatest Shame #11* (2015) on the facade of the building. The work pictured the black world map against a white background, divided by a red line (figure 2).



Figure 2: EGS' *Europe's Greatest Shame #11* (2015) on the facade of the Ateneum, Helsinki. Photo: Susanna Pettersson.

We at the museum knew that presenting the work outside the Ateneum building would cause lots of debate and even trigger smear campaigns and death threats (which it also did). We also knew that we would definitely want to make space for a work that would make people think and react. We wanted the museum to act as a visible arena for a work that challenges and presents questions. Excluding the right-wing extremists' hate campaign, public support was very strong and encouraging. It showed how memory organisations such as museums are listened to when they use their voices. The feedback also demonstrated how the audience appreciated the work and its strong message.

Decisions like that are relatively easy to make if the organisation has strong values. They create a firm basis for everything, from quick daily situations to more complex problems that need to be solved. Values correspond with society, and the dialogue between the museum and the various stakeholders and interest groups, from politicians to education and healthcare, as an example.

Museums normally know well how important they are for society and what their role is. One could present the question: How well do societies articulate the role of museums? How are they referred to in the official documents, such as government strategies or policy papers of regions and cities, or *Agenda 2030*? As learning platforms? As contributors to people's well-being? Builders of attractive cities where people want to live and work? I would claim that museums have a lot of potential to be more vocal and visible as safe-guards of the world's cultural and natural heritage.

From the point of view of leadership, museums should more precisely articulate how they do their share to achieve locally, regionally, nationally and globally important goals. In this sense, museums need to be ready to change their practises and ways of communicating and show economic, social, cultural and political awareness. Ultimately, it comes down to the undeniable value of art and culture.

A Way Forward

The culture industries were growing rapidly and provided a good number of new jobs before Covid-19 in 2020 and onwards. The pandemic hit these industries hard, but showed, at the same time, the great importance of culture as one of the building blocks of a civilised society. The need for consumption of culture did not disappear during lockdowns, quite the contrary.

The sector needs, now and in the future, professionals who work with expertise and passion. They need leadership that copes with both the soon-to-be retired generation of professionals as well as millennials. Most importantly, they need leaders who have cultural understanding of the institutions that they work for and can take over the intellectual ownership of the organisation.

I usually describe the museum's activities by starting with the public. Without the public the institution would be only a warehouse that would store objects just for the sake of it. Museums collect, research, communicate and organise

exhibitions and events for the public. They interpret the contents and encourage debates that invite different perspectives. But it is the people who make the museum. Every visitor and their individual needs must be respected, as John Falk and Lynn Dierking have demonstrated (Falk & Dierking 2018).

Running museums, developing collections, producing exhibitions and events, funding the work and responding to the needs of the audience create an ongoing need for analysis. Questions that help museums to identify areas for development are many, but one must invest time in thinking them through.

In the following, I present a short (and not comprehensive) list that can serve as a beginning for internal development. The questions might form the beginning for strategic work that will eventually support the annual action plans and delegation of different tasks on a team level, as well as on an individual level.

Collections

- Profile of the collection: what are the strengths? What are the weaknesses?
- Development potential: what to acquire and why?
- Use of the collection: how is the collection used and how should this be developed onsite and online?

Exhibitions and events

- Profile and quality of exhibitions and events: what are the criteria behind the decisions?
- Collaboration & production models: are the ways of working efficient? Could something be done in a better way or differently?
- Partners: which are the most important strategic partners and why?

Research

- Research policy: what does your museum research and why? What must be achieved? Examples: provenance and restitution research, colonial histories, gender studies, etc.
- Partners: who are the most important strategic partners and why?
- New competencies: are practices in place that ensure scholars can start working?

Education and communication

- Target groups and segments: who does your museum invest in?
- Visitor experiences: what kind of ambition level does your museum represent? What is the customer promise onsite and online?
- New methods: how do you work with your audiences?
- Hybrid strategies: how do you disseminate information and create experiences on various platforms?

Public debate and society

- Museum's voice: how does your museum use it? What are the most important arenas?
- Clear strategy and key messages: what are the most important messages that you want to deliver in all circumstances?
- Museum as a medium: what kinds of channels does your museum use to communicate the most important issues? Can they be developed further?

When working with internal development and strategies, one should be aware of the constant need for analysis. One should be ready to define and re-define the work in relation to the needs of the audiences and society. Some changes are there for a short term only, whereas the others might have long-term effects that require, for example, new competences from the museum as an organisation. These changes are typically related to the ways of working, utilising new technologies, writing and rewriting histories, positioning the museum in society and taking responsibility.

Probably one of the biggest differences is related to the concept of a museum: from a place that shows everything at one spot to a concept combining onsite and online presence and services. In the 16th century the earliest collections showed more or less everything that was included in the collection to those very few who had the possibility for exclusive visits. When collections grew, some objects were stored, and this created categories within a collection.

During the 18th century, when the public was gradually allowed to visit collections, a whole new set of rules and regulations was required – a code of museum behaviour. We have seen excellent examples of this, starting from Neikelius' publication in 1727, where he gently guides the visitors to behave well and encourages visitors to deepen their knowledge by acquiring the collection catalogue for any further studies (Schulz 1994). Then, as we remember, museums were gradually opened all across Europe in the 19th century. Ways of displaying collections were formulated and canonical representations were established (Giebelhausen 2020). Collections grew in size, as did expertise in managing them. The biggest changes of the 20th century were related to the notion that museums needed to be able to use the same tools as any other industries: communication, marketing, audience development and a widening of the economic palette from one source only to a sustainable selection of several external sources of income.

To become a museum with an exciting onsite and online personality and presence requires proper policies for securing funding and investing in people with the right competencies. It requires passion for collections and research, ambition to explore the needs of the audiences and honesty and transparency in communication. A museum must not be afraid of taking risks or making mistakes.

Working at a museum is people's business. Objects do not have feelings or talk back, but people do. We cannot say yet how jobs will change in the future. What we know for sure is that we will all need many skills and capacities in order to make better museums for people. Even if the work changes, our need to encounter authentic and original objects will not disappear. Therefore, in

the future, we will also need platforms for these kinds of genuine encounters. They will be challenged and re-challenged, which will keep the cycle of change active. From a leadership perspective the requirements can be put very simply: you need to know what you are talking about. And you need to be really good at and ambitious with what you do.

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Strategic Management in a Changing Operating Environment

Kimmo Levä

Abstract

According to many weak and some slightly stronger signals, museums are undergoing significant changes at present. It would appear that they are no longer simply in charge of preserving, researching and displaying cultural heritage, but also have a duty to promote social equality and democracy, maintain the economic viability of communities and pursue educational policy objectives. At the same time, as the operating environment of museums expands, changes within it are taking place more rapidly and are more difficult to foresee.

This chapter discusses the strategic management of museums and the challenges posed by the changing political, economic, social, technological, ecological and legislative operating environments in the 2020s.

These changes require managers to have more specific management training or experience rather than a background in history, art and culture. A more diverse and dynamic operating environment calls for museums to be better equipped to be both proactive and reactive, and to be prepared to make changes. All of these abilities are at the heart of the strategic thinking, leadership and management skills that are increasingly needed in the museum industry.

Key words: strategic management, leadership, economy, operating environment, strategic analysis

Museums as a Management Environment

A time of change

The widening and growing importance of the social dimension of museums opens up new avenues in which museums can have an impact and succeed, but it also requires a repositioning of activities and a new way of doing things. Added to this, expanding the focus of actions increasingly means making choices about what to do, for whom and under what conditions. Priorities have to be made, as it is impossible to do everything, at least not with the same degree of effort and attention.

This more diverse and dynamic operating environment calls for museums to be better equipped to be both proactive and reactive, and to be prepared to make changes. All of these abilities are at the heart of strategic thinking, leadership and management skills that are increasingly needed in the museum industry.

Museum management and leadership

As Peter Drucker famously opined, management means doing things right, while leadership means doing the right things. Management includes administrative tasks and responsibilities, as well as production and development processes related to goal-setting. Leadership, on the other hand, is about seeing to it that goals are accomplished, motivating people and bringing about change.

One of the special features of museum management is that museums have little financial leeway. This is because substantial parts of a museum's expenditure and income are fixed. Fixed income is not an economic term per se, but grants allocated to museums can be regarded as such. Their share of museum operating expenditure has remained stable at the current level of around 80% on average. Fixed costs in museums, for their part, involve personnel and property expenses. Their share of museum spending has also remained stable at around 80% (Museovirasto 2020).

The remit of the museum director essentially involves managing an expert organisation, as over 80% of museum staff have either a lower or a higher university degree (Suomen museoliitto 2018). This high level of education enables and requires a focus on personal leadership in delivering jointly-developed policies and objectives, and in providing scope for adequate self-management. The management of an expert organisation is primarily coaching, and in this sense, traditional management approaches do not succeed.

Expert organisations are generally regarded as rather cumbersome management environments, according to experienced business executive Eero Kukkola. This is due to the independent thinking and decision-making that is integral to expertise, but which can also cause tensions in multi-expert teams and difficulties in achieving organisational goals (Kukkola 2016).

In the museum area, this expert organisation trait is reinforced by the fact that when evaluating the credentials of museum directors, the focus is on expert tasks. Up to 2020, in order for a museum to be eligible for state subsidies, its director had to have expertise in the museum field. The new Museum Act, which came into force in Finland at the beginning of 2020, and the state funding criteria set out in it, place more emphasis on leadership, but museum expertise retains its strong position in every museum and is compulsory for directors of small museums (Museolaki 314/2019).

The new Museum Act does not radically alter the management of museums, or the management culture of the museum industry. The director is still expected to play a dual role as both a leader and an expert, a feature that is underlined by the small size of museum organisations. In 2019, professional museums employed on average 13 permanent staff members (Museovirasto 2020).

Expertise aside, museum management is characterised by project and fixed-term work, and hence atypical employment relationships. In 2019, about 24% of museum personnel were engaged in work of a non-typical nature (Museovirasto

2020). This figure does not include trainees or people whose work is supported by various grants, which is common in museums. Atypical employment generates a considerable amount of additional work for the administration and maintenance of a cohesive organisational culture.

In addition to the specifics of financial and human resources, museum managers must take into account the fact that, as non-profit organisations, museums are public-interest entities. Their mission is value-based and designed to fulfil a social need, which guides the activities of state-owned museums and those owned by municipalities in particular, which account for 59% of the total in Finland. The value base is also emphasised in museums run by private foundations and associations, which, in turn, make up about 39% of the total number of museums (Museovirasto 2020).

Governing bodies

The work of a Finnish museum director is guided and supported by boards in municipal museums, and by boards of directors in private museums. In state-owned museums, this role is performed by central offices or the Ministry of Education and Culture. In all cases, the members of the governing bodies are appointed mainly on the basis of status. It is not uncommon for such members to be appointed by nomination committees or with expert assistance, with the aim of finding the most competent and suitable person for the position from the point of view of the museum's current situation or strategy. It is common for the museum rules to allocate the right of appointment to several organisations. In municipal museums, the right of, and responsibility for, appointments are both shaped by political power relations.

Members of the board participate in the museum's activities in a voluntary capacity or in addition to their main work, on the understanding that they are not expected to dedicate a significant amount of time to these duties. As a result, guiding and supporting the work of the museum director emphasises the setting of goals, financial and operational supervision, as well as ensuring compliance with laws and regulations. The governing body duly has a supervisory role.

According to economist and business executive J.T. Bergqvist, the work of boards and other governing bodies should evolve so that they primarily support the management in terms of sparring and alternative solutions and strategic policies, as well as strengthening the organisation's know-how in matters of substance (Bergqvist 2007). This is also true in the case of governing bodies in the museum branch, particularly since the diversity of the social functions of museums outside of traditional museum work is increasing. Museums are increasingly expected to be providers of know-how, efficacy and results in the business and social sectors.

The shift towards business management

During the 2010s, the management of museums and businesses converged. The change was due to the fact that the share of income earned directly from the

customer in the museum economy increased significantly. In addition, public funding is conditional upon private financing in connection with investment or, at the very least, upon the prospect of investment strengthening opportunities for private financing (Levä 2019).

According to Canadian museologist Robert R. Janes, museums are embedded in the business world framework, where their management is becoming shorter-term than before, and where action and investment are sought for their ability to provide a rapid and measurable impact. Money and its economic and activity indicators are a substitute for a hard-to-measure and slow-moving social mission. This is one reason why business experience is increasingly being emphasised as a prerequisite for museum directors and members of governing bodies (Janes 2012).

Another indication of the emergence of corporate leadership in expert organisations in the 2010s was the introduction of the Lean Management philosophy, developed in the 1980s to meet the needs of the Japanese Toyota car manufacturing company in terms of streamlining the workflow and eliminating waste. Lean management is based on the concept of continuous improvement, a long-term approach that aims to bring about incremental changes in processes in order to improve overall efficiency and quality in an organisation (Torkkola 2015, pp. 22–27).

The Top Priority for Museum Management – Ensuring long-term sustainability

The Code of Ethics and the Museums Act

While museums are expected to deliver more tangible and measurable results in the short term, long-term sustainability must be a core priority in museum management. In other words, the focus of the economic and operational infrastructure must be to ensure the long-term, if not permanent, existence of the museum. This is emphasised in the definition of a museum in the *Code of Ethics* of the International Council of Museums (ICOM), as well as in the Finnish Museums Act. According to the latter, permanence is particularly relevant when it comes to museum collections. An organisation that maintains a museum must show that the collection is also secured in a situation where a museum has to close down for one reason or another (Museolaki 214/2019).

The criterion of permanence is a tough requirement for museum management, highlighted by the ICOM Museum Definition and the Finnish Museum Act, which both stipulate that the aim of museum activities is not to make a profit, which, if realised, would actually provide much-needed economic leeway and risk tolerance.

Risk tolerance is particularly needed in change situations that are characterised by a new direction, growth or action. In museums, such a change usually implies investing in real estate to house exhibitions or collections, although in the 2010s

the activities of many museums also changed significantly as a result of mergers. In the case of the latter, the change has focused on reorganising operations and bringing working community cultures together.

From plans to strategies

The Museums Act requires a museum to formulate a multiannual economic and operational plan that sets out how it will maintain its activities and finances in the coming years. The Act does not require a strategy as such. Semantically, one can examine the distinction from the point of view of how activities will be managed. The "Economic Action Plan" is in line with long-term planning thinking, where changes in the operating environment are seen as linear or reflective of a trend, and a museum can make fairly detailed decisions on how operations and finances will be structured in the coming years.

Strategic management, on the other hand, is based on the assumption that the operating environment is constantly changing and partly unpredictable, especially as a result of changes in the competitive situation. Mika Kamensky, who has written several books on strategic management, has identified three different tasks or goals for the strategic process:

1. A strategy is an organisation's conscious choice of key objectives and guidelines for action in a changing world.
2. A strategy allows an organisation to control its environment, either by adapting to changes in the environment, modifying and influencing its environment or choosing the best environment for itself.
3. Through its strategy, an organisation purposefully manages external and internal factors, and the interrelationships between them, so that the organization's profitability, continuity and development goals can be achieved (Kamensky 2014, pp. 13–21).

Arguably, a key difference between planning and strategizing is that the focus in a strategy is always on the outside of the organisation, and one has to be prepared to change the operation quickly, in accordance with signals coming from customers, financiers, owners or the operating environment.

In the museum branch, there is justification for referring to both a plan and a strategy. The use of the word plan is underpinned by the fact that 80% of the funding for museums comes from grants, as a result of a political decision. In this kind of operating environment, changes have traditionally been minor and predictable. There is also no recognisable competitive framework among museums in terms of this type of funding.

The grounds for using the term strategy arose in particular from the development that took place in the 2010s, a decade in which the predictability of political decision-making weakened as populism intensified. The risk that the public administrative environment will change dramatically has increased accordingly.

Moreover, the need for strategic thinking and strategic management has been heightened by the change in museum funding, an increasing proportion of which is derived from consumer service revenue and hence from competition in the market. This has marked a significant change. In 2010, 14% of museum expenditure was covered by consumer service income, but by the end of 2019, that figure had risen to 20% (Museovirasto 2020).

In addition to direct service revenue, the extent to which public funding is conditioned upon private sector involvement and investment has grown. The game changer in this respect was the Guggenheim Helsinki project in the early 2010s. In this context, public funding was conditional upon substantial private investment. The Guggenheim project did not come to fruition, but the funding model for museum investment survived.

In light of the developments that took place in the 2010s, it is evident that the level of planning laid down by the Museum Act for successful and long-term museum management will not suffice. Museums must monitor the development of the operational and competitive environment, and be as proactive as possible in preparing to make the necessary changes to their activities.

Museums need to understand the effects of change on the operational environment and be prepared to adapt their activities in order to seize opportunities and turn threats into advantages. The need for foresight in strategic management is highlighted by the economic structure of museums, with their low level of flexibility and risk tolerance, which allow for neither quick responses nor significant losses.

When making changes, museums must also take into account the rigidity of the museum economy in terms of investment. In practice, investment will never increase service revenue as much as it correspondingly pushes up fixed personnel and real-estate costs. Hence, in order to avoid the problems of the post-investment business economy, a museum must ensure that grant funding also increases before an investment decision is made.

A sustainable investment plan is based on a calculation in which grants cover 80% of the increase in investment costs on average. This is essential because of the structure of the museum economy mentioned earlier. The 80% fixed costs, 80% fixed income structure does not vary significantly, irrespective of the size of the museum. Any increase in the volume of service revenue as a result of investment will invariably increase the need for grant funding. This differs from the corporate investment philosophy, where the premise is that an investment will always pay for itself in terms of service revenue from consumers or corporate clients.

Strategic Analyses

The present and the future

The success of museums and their long-term activities is determined by two main factors: 1) a favourable political environment at the municipal and state level and 2) consumers' use of museum services. Successful strategic management requires the systematic monitoring of both of these key variables. In terms of the first, a PESTEL (PESTLE, STEEP) analysis provides a useful tool for museums. In the PESTEL framework, the operating environment is assessed through six variables: political, economic, social, technological, ecological and legislative. The PESTEL framework is examined in greater detail below.

When it comes to the second variable, a number of different analyses can be used to gauge and forecast its impact. In a competitive consumer market, customer feedback forms and questionnaires are frequently used, as well as other follow-up activities. An often-used framework for evaluating changes in the competitive environment is Michael E. Porter's Five Forces analysis, which evaluates changes through customers, subcontractors, competitors, products and internal dynamics within the industry (Porter 2008).

An analysis of the life cycle of products and services is also vital in the consumer market. The most well-known tool for this is the Life Cycle Matrix of the Boston Consulting Group, commonly referred to as the BCG model. By means of this tool, the life cycle of products or services is divided into four stages of development (question marks, stars, cash cows and dogs) in terms of time and economic significance.

The question mark represents the launch phase, during which the service is developed and the financial result is negative. The star symbolises a phase of strong growth, where service usage rises and generates increasing revenue. The cash cow is a stage whereby growth levels off, with development and marketing inputs invested in service decreasing and profitability improving. In the dog phase, demand for and profitability of service will decrease until service becomes unprofitable and should be discontinued.

As noted, the financial success of museums is determined by political funding decisions made at the local and national levels. Hence, a life-cycle analysis of the competitive environment or services in the consumer market is less important in the strategic management of museums than analysis of the social environment. There are, however, museum-specific differences. In a situation where the entrance ticket, museum shop and other service revenues have a crucial or increasing significance from the perspective of the museum's long-term activities, the monitoring of the operating environment should be increased regarding the consumer and competitive aspects. Indeed, this was a growing trend in museum development in the 2010s.

The most well-known and most widely-used strategic reference framework is SWOT, which evaluates the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of

an organisation. Despite its widespread use, SWOT is often conducted wrongly, and the result is an analysis where there is some confusion between strengths and opportunities, as well as between weaknesses and threats.

In order for a SWOT analysis to be carried out successfully, weaknesses and strengths need to be assessed as part of an internal review of the organisation, asking what works (strengths) and what does not (weaknesses). Questions must be addressed regarding all aspects of the operations and management, from personnel to administration, and from exhibitions to collections. Opportunities and threats need to be examined in light of the changes that PESTEL or other analyses point to in the operating environment. In assessing identified opportunities and threats, we need to ask what we have to do in the coming years to avoid the threats that are visible, and to take advantage of the opportunities available.

PESTEL analysis

In Finland, the political environment can be monitored according to election cycles, the most important of which from the museum perspective are municipal and parliamentary elections, as well as EU elections, for the purposes of developmental funding. Both prior to and after elections, the announced programmes lay the groundwork for political decision making at the municipal and national levels for the coming four-year term. During the term of office, changes in the political environment are influenced by societal values that come to the fore, as well as party programmes and ideologies. In terms of the political environment, the most important task is to monitor cultural policy developments, although as the social function of museums expands, business, education and social policies are becoming increasingly important variables.

In the economic environment, the operation of museums is primarily influenced by economic upturns and downturns. In this respect, changes in the operating environment can be gleaned from national and local economic forecasts and reports. National signals also guide economic decision-making at the local level when it comes to changes in the structure of the economy. A case in point with regard to museums is the increasing importance of tourism in economic policy. In addition, changes in consumer behaviour are relevant for the use of museum services. In recent years, for example, consumer growth has shifted from goods to services, which has been beneficial for museums.

Changes in the social environment are more related to megatrends, such as an aging population, urbanisation and changes in the way that work is performed. Changes in the social environment occur slowly, but can be monitored by projections issued by ministries or think tanks, for instance, while shorter-term effects can be anticipated by studying existing municipal and national social policy programmes. In the 2010s, museum services were increasingly used in the implementation of these programmes, in relation to immigration and multiculturalism, and the activation of the elderly and those at risk of exclusion. This trend continues to gain momentum.

The technological environment can be examined to assess the development of the tools and processes needed to carry out museum work. In practice, this entails preparing for the changes brought about by digitisation in managing, presenting and producing collections and utilizing various presentation technologies in exhibition activities. In addition to the ICT sector, the development of technologies related to management, maintenance and the production of light, heat and cooling is important for museums. Keeping track of technological changes also involves being aware of the available services and technologies on the market and their developmental trends.

The ecological environment, and the associated global warming, have quickly turned from a megatrend into a key strategic variable that must be taken into account in all museum activities, even in day-to-day management. Museums are expected to act to mitigate and to prepare for the consequences of climate change. The ecological imperative has to be evident in choices made in connection with energy solutions and materials, for example. Relatedly, museums play a role in promoting ecological solutions and lifestyles because of their educational and media mission. Understanding the potential of recycling and other ecological solutions, as well as how the ecology affects consumer behaviour, is the key to monitoring changes in the ecological operating environment.

One of the easiest ways to keep track of variables related to the museum operating environment is by monitoring the relevant legislation. The effects of legislative changes can be anticipated and prepared for, due to the lengthy legislative process and possible transition periods. Museums are subject to the same laws as other organizations, for example when it comes to financial and human resource management. Most museums are run by municipalities, so they are particularly subject to municipal legislation. Private museums are organised into foundations or associations, so their administrative structure is determined in accordance with specific laws, while the activities of state-owned museums are governed by state legislation.

The most important legislative framework covering the work of professional museums is the Museum Act and its related state-funding legislation. In the case of the National Gallery and the Finnish Heritage Agency, separate laws apply to the role of state subsidies. Legislation concerning the specific remit of museums defines their most important tasks and the related quality criteria and financial frameworks. In addition, the exhibition and collection work of museums is closely linked to protection of the cultural environment, data protection and copyright laws. Staying abreast of the government's programme and proposals during the parliamentary term is the key to monitoring changes in the regulatory environment.

Strategic Choices

The museum director and the executive team are responsible for formulating a strategy, while approving it and subsequently supporting its implementation are the remit of the museum board or other governing body. After analysing

the operating environment and current situation of the museum, a strategy formulation starts by making choices, usually in terms of quantity or quality. Generally, there are three alternatives, namely maintaining, raising or decreasing the current level of operations within the given time span. These options can also be described as securing, expanding or radically changing the current level.

In the museum branch, the time span for a strategy is usually long compared to the business sector. In an ideal situation, a time span is determined on the basis of the results obtained from the operating environment and an analysis of the current situation, but in general a museum strategy covers a period of five years, which appears to work well.

Securing a certain level entails updating the current activities as a strategic choice. Expanding could, for example, involve an exhibition or collection activity that sets a goal of increasing the number of visitors or digitizing collections. In the case of museums, the most radical change option usually involves a large investment in construction or the consolidation of functions, which often calls for a goal that extends beyond a single strategy period.

Strategic choices are defined for each of the museum's functions, which can be roughly divided into collections, exhibitions, research and administration. Usually, pressure from both inside and outside the museum prompts an increase in the quantity or quality of each area. However, a successful and action-oriented strategy calls for choices to be made, as not all functions can be increased or decreased at the same time. Even maintaining the existing level requires making a choice, because a change in the operating environment demands a change in the way of working, even if quality and quantity remain the same.

In the corporate and commercial sectors, strategic choices are usually aimed at gaining a competitive edge in the market. According to W. Chan Kim and Renée Mauborgne, the market consists, metaphorically speaking, of two types of oceans, blue and red. Blue oceans comprise all the industries not yet in existence, and red oceans consist of all the industries that already exist. Blue oceans are unexplored and deep, providing opportunities for growth, and hence a blue ocean strategy entails creating new demand and finding a previously untapped market area. Conversely, a red ocean strategy is all about cut-throat competition in a crowded market, as companies fight for a greater market share, turning the ocean bloody. As competition increases, the potential for profit and growth diminishes (Kim & Mauborgne 2005).

Museums tend to find it difficult and often unnecessary to define their strategic position from the point of view of gaining a competitive advantage. In general, museums could operate from the perspective of their main function in a blue ocean, based on their mission and the policies related to curation and other activities. There are very few overlaps and little competition when it comes to the preservation, exploration and presentation of cultural heritage.

On the other hand, from a competitive point of view, museums do not navigate in a perfectly calm blue ocean, or in a vacuum where they would be able to succeed in strategic management without taking other museums and providers of cultural and recreational services into account. The key to success for museums lies in finding solutions that ensure their share of public funding remains intact. In this sense, the competition is to all intents and purposes with all public service providers, but especially with other museums, as well as with the cultural and leisure sectors.

The direct and indirect impact of revenues from consumers and the private sector has increased in recent years, and this trend seems to be strengthening. In the consumer market in particular, museums operate in a red ocean, where visitors have a considerable number of options to choose among from the point of view of spending their time and money. Yet by virtue of their unique competitive differentiation, museums can mitigate the waves.

Strategic Objectives

After choices have been made, strategy work defines the objectives that will be achieved. Defining objectives is often a demanding process, and there is a risk that it will become so all-encompassing that it will not be helpful in managing an annual or shorter time span. The tendency towards overgeneralisation can be detected, either in expressions such as "try to do", or in setting goals for the entire museum without an activity-specific breakdown. Another pitfall is establishing overly ambitious goals, a tendency which is exacerbated if the strategic choices are not made before the objectives are outlined.

Objectives must be defined in such a way that it is possible to determine whether they have been or are being realised during the strategy period. In other words, they must be specific and measurable. From the point of view of strategic management, a goal should be formulated in such a way that it answers at least these two questions: What is the team, function or unit expected to achieve and how will the outcome be measured with quantitative or qualitative indicators? In addition to being Specific, Measurable and Achievable, it is also beneficial to pay attention to the other two variables in accordance with the so-called SMART framework, to ensure that the objectives are also Relevant and Time-bound.

When setting goals, it is crucial to assess whether sufficient financial and human resources are available to fulfil them. As a rule, the functional and financial structure of museums does not allow for the allocation of significant individual resources for the realisation of strategic objectives. When setting quantitative growth targets, it is important to be aware of what can be achieved during an average year. Achieving an objective also requires a buy-in from employees at all levels of the organisation.

At best, a museum should be identifiable by its goals. To this end, attention can be drawn to the reasons for any proposed changes, particularly in the area, region or other major target group served by the museum. Identity is of par-

ticular importance when it comes to radical changes, such as seeking partners and funding for investment.

A strategy is always time-bound. As stated earlier, museums tend to implement strategic changes over a period of five years. The timeframes related to the implementation of the strategic objectives must be defined within the strategy's period. To this end, at least two temporal criteria must be defined for an individual objective: When special measures to achieve the target will be initiated and when the results will be obtained?

Implementing a Strategy

The elaboration of a strategy, with its choices and goals, is at the heart of management at the organisational level. Once the board or other administrative body has adopted a specific strategy from among the various options presented, the focus of strategic management will shift to leadership, in order to drive change by encouraging and motivating the staff to achieve the set goals.

Successful implementation of change requires a joint effort of will by the museum administration, management and staff. The greater the consensus on the chosen direction and the need for change, the easier this becomes. Change management is also easier to facilitate with a more pro-developmental work community. In an ideal situation, where the work community unreservedly supports reforms and there is a complete consensus on the direction of the change, it is possible to implement a strategy swiftly, and great strides forward can thus be made.

However, the optimal management environment is seldom attainable. It is more common for the organisation to have different perceptions of the need for change, the direction the change should take and the goals that have been set. This is particularly the case with expert organisations, where people are accustomed to independent thinking, and to formulating their own ideas of both what the goals should be and how they should be implemented.

For the most part, museums also employ people who have had a long career in the museum industry. According to a survey conducted by the Finnish Museums Association in 2018, permanent staff in museums had worked in the industry for an average of 18 years (Suomen museoliitto 2018). One outcome of this is that the common values and practices of the museum industry exert a strong influence on the kind of reforms and operating models that are regarded as acceptable. It is also common for the appropriateness of reforms and goals to be assessed with reference to the *Code of Ethics for Museums*, as defined by ICOM.

When initiating a change, a leader must assess both the forces that support the change and those that support the status quo. After this assessment, efforts must be made to motivate those units, teams or individuals that regard the change as a threat or an undesirable development for one reason or another. At the same time, of course, care must be taken not to frustrate the units, teams or individuals that are directly affected by the change, if the measures are not implemented immediately or according to schedule.

During a strategy's period, it is possible to change the balance of forces promoting and resisting change through human resource management. The result is likely to be a strategic leadership environment where the pace of change is slower than desired for those who expect it, and faster than desired for those who resist it. This is because the strategy's period is too short to bring about a change in the community culture. Indeed, there is a saying that "culture eats strategy for breakfast", which means that the success and efficiency of a strategy or strategic plan will always be held back by the people implementing the plan, if the culture does not support it (Luukka 2019, p. 39).

From the point of view of change forces and organisational culture, Pauli Juuti and Mikko Luoma classify organisations under four headings: stagnant, intense, resting and flow mode (Juuti & Luoma 2009). A museum that is in a stagnant situation has little appetite for change, and trust in the management or among colleagues is lacking. There is conflict over the direction that change should take, and the organisation is wary of diverging from the way things have been up to the present. Managing a museum in a state of stagnation calls for an emphasis on building trust between management and staff before setting any objectives. Particular attention must be paid to raising awareness of the need for change.

In the so-called intense situation, there is a strong desire for renewal in the museum. The work community is infused with energy, expectations and ideas, but there is no common understanding of the direction of change. The intensity is visible in daily activities. Perceptions of the right way to act are brought to the table, both formally and above all in so-called coffee table discussions. When it comes to strategic management in an intense museum, the foremost priority is to clarify and adhere to the direction of change.

In a museum that is in a resting state, information about the direction of the required change is clear, but the willingness to change is limited. The frustration caused by previous unsuccessful change projects and the resulting fatigue have led to a kind of sleepwalking. Managing an organisation in a resting mode requires an emphasis on quick and demonstrable results, underscored by specific and measurable goals. In this kind of situation, it is helpful if certain objectives can be implemented early on in the strategy's period.

When in the flow mode, a museum combines a strong desire for change with a clear sense of direction. In this mode, the museum requires little actual change management. The organisation is inherently driven by change itself. The flow mode is highly desirable in bringing about change, but it can also result in a dip in morale, as excessive zeal often gives way to disappointment if good ideas cannot be realised in their entirety. In the worst case, the flow mode rapidly turns to stagnation. Sustaining momentum for change is central to the strategic management of a museum in the flow mode, even if all its goals have already been achieved. Similarly, it is important to maintain the willingness to change, even if some of the desired changes have not been realised.

The first months of strategy implementation and other change management activities are crucial. Once the proposed changes and goals have been precisely defined and determined in such a way that the museum's situation has been taken into account from the perspective of the drivers of change and the organisational culture, the strategic management of the museum is on track. If the point of departure has been poorly assessed, stumbling blocks will occur. In the worst-case scenario, the museum director may attempt to drive change by adopting a flow-oriented approach in a situation of stagnation, where the majority of personnel and even other managers are resistant. This risk is particularly acute in cases where a newly-appointed director assumes responsibility for the change in question.

This risk can be avoided by mapping out the strategy as openly and comprehensively as possible and doing sufficient groundwork beforehand, by analysing the operating environment and the need for change within the museum. In this context, it is also important to ensure that experts, and all those involved in the strategy work, are made aware of the importance of the input and insights they provide in enabling management to build a strategic plan that the board will readily approve.

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Continuing Professional Education as a Tool for Developing Museums

Leena Tokila

Abstract

Finnish museum professionals are highly educated; most have a university degree. The legislative policy on the museum sector has determined the qualifications required of museum workers since 1989. The new Museum Act, which came into force in 2020, includes the following provisions: a museum must have a full-time director with an appropriate university degree, leadership skills and sufficient familiarity with the mission and tasks of the museum; a museum must also employ at least two full-time museum professionals, who have completed an appropriate university degree and basic studies in museology, and one of these two mandated experts should serve as the museum's director.

Changing museum work in a changing operational environment requires new knowledge and skills. To this end, museum professionals should develop their professional competence after completing their initial qualification. Post-graduate training can be regarded as human resources development, which enhances an employee's professional skills, as well as the organisation's ability to function in a mutable operating environment. Training and learning can be considered from the perspective of lifelong learning.

Finnish employees are keen to participate in continuing training programmes. The 2017 Official Statistics of Finland indicate that more than half of Finnish wage earners had participated in personnel training supported by their employers. Personnel training is completely or partly sponsored by the employer and aims to develop employees' professional knowledge and skills. The Finnish Museums Association (FMA) is the leading in-service trainer in the Finnish museum sector, and approximately 1 500 museum employees attend FMA training sessions annually. Reviewing the history of FMA's continuing professional education, we are able to perceive how training operations have reflected changes in museum work.

Keywords: continuing professional education, personnel training, museum professional, museum work, lifelong learning

Changing Museum Work Requires a Wide Variety of Knowledge and Skills

Digitalisation and developing technology transform our tasks and methods of working, as well as the tools we use. Professions evolve; many professions disappear altogether. Several studies indicate that 25 to 40% of current tasks will disappear over the next fifteen years due to digitalisation, especially that involving artificial intelligence and related automation. This transformation of work and its impact on society has been compared to mechanisation within agriculture and its societal effects in the 1950s and 1960s. Automation and robots have been in industrial use for a long time, and the tasks that are easy to automate have already been automated; there is no great wave of change in sight in the industrial field (Ailisto 2017).

The situation is different in the service sector, where the application of artificial intelligence will produce big changes in working methods. The development of technology and expanding self-service will remould tasks and professions; self-service checkouts are one example of this evolution (Ailisto 2017). Changes in the larger society naturally impose changes on museums as working environments, and there are consequent changes in the procedures, modes of working and museum professions. Digitalization in the museum context means not only digitalized objects and better online access to museum collections and exhibitions, but also new services, including expanding digital museum experiences.

In museum work, automation will be first applied to the management of collections, especially to the work of cataloguing. Museum collection management systems require museum professionals to have new skills and knowledge; ideally, these include a combination of IT skills and knowledge about museum work. There are not many hybrid professionals like these yet, but the need for them is likely to grow significantly in the next few years.

In 2011, the International Committee for Regional Museums (ICR) and the International Committee for the Training of Personnel (ICTOP), committees operating under the aegis of ICOM, published a book, *Staff and Training in Regional Museums* (2011), which articulates the changing nature of museum work from the perspective of education. The publication is based on presentations from an international conference and is an excellent example of the current international and national discourse about museum professions and the education required for museum work. The book also reflects the versatile nature of museum work and the different ways of using resources to maintain and develop museums. In particular, the publication relies on observations of the situation regarding regional and local museums, which is probably a better way to generate a realistic picture of the museum field, compared to using observation of those museums with more resources.

ICTOP was founded in 1968, making it one of the oldest ICOM committees. It supports museum professionals' basic university-level education and continuing education and has produced reports and publications for the international

museum community. The committee organises annual international conferences on education in the museum field and participates in various projects. Another example of ICTOP's publications is *Museum Professions – A European Frame of Reference* (2008), which is an overview of museum professions, including job descriptions and required education, intended for the use by the international museum community.

In 2016, ICOM launched an initiative, the aim of which is to revise the existing definition of a museum. From the museum community's point of view, this definition is important, because it represents a document capable of determining museum operations, internationally and nationally, thereby functioning as a determining factor of museum work, as well as the knowledge and skills of museum workers. The definition aims to reflect the transformation of museum work in the rapidly changing operational environments of museums (see also Ehanti, this volume).

A Conceptual Framework of Lifelong Learning for Continuing Professional Education

The development of the museum should be based on a personnel strategy derived from the museum's strategy, which ensures long-term and goal-oriented development. Post-graduate training can be seen as human resources development, which enhances the employee's professional skills and the organisation's ability to operate in a changing operating environment.

Learning can be reviewed, for example, from the perspective of theories of learning organization or communities of practice. The individual perspective emphasizes, e.g., professional identity theories. Personal and professional identity is now a key factor in working life (Eteläpelto 2007).

One research field within adult education discipline is lifelong learning. Lifelong learning denotes all learning and development of a human being over the course of his or her lifetime. Lifelong learning can be informal everyday learning or independent goal-oriented studies within, for example, liberal adult education. It can also consist of formal, degree-oriented study within the official education system. The concept of lifelong learning is often mentioned in connection with changes in an individual's life course. Lifelong learning may include development of an employee's professional knowledge and skills as part of a personnel training scheme or as independent work-related studies in various courses and training programmes, which aim to enhance or maintain an employee's employability.

The definition of lifelong learning depends on who defines the term and to what context. Lifelong learning has been discussed widely within adult education. The advantages of independent, non-formal and non-professional education have been examined in the context of the extensive Benefits of Lifelong Learning project, which involved a survey carried out in ten European countries; the results showed that participation in education had introduced many positive

changes in the participants' lives. For example, participants experienced more social engagement and appreciation for education. Liberal adult education also seemed to benefit participants' work and careers. Participants expressed increased confidence about their potential to expand their influence within their environment. This and other benefits gained by participants also seem to have resulted in positive changes in their health habits. The most important factor contributing to these benefits seems to be the independent or voluntary nature of studies. Small successes strengthen students' self-image and their motivation to study (Manninen & Meriläinen 2015, p. 90, pp. 94–95).

The ideology that promotes lifelong learning underlines learning for and by adults of all ages, which enables equal opportunities for societal participation. In recent years, the discourse on lifelong learning has emphasised adult education and professional skill development as an objective associated with improving national and European capacities in the context of global economic competition (see, for example, Kinnari 2013).

Museum Professionals are Highly Educated

Finnish legislative policy on the museum sector has determined the requirements for state subsidies, including museum employees and their educational background. With an act and decree in 2005, Finland was the first country in the world to establish museology as a discipline that qualifies graduates to work as museum professionals (Vilkuna 2010, pp. 345–346 and this volume).

The Museum Decree 2005 (effective as of 1 January 2006) and its 2013 amendment established the minimum number of museum employees and their required education, in the following manner:

> A museum has a director and at least one other full-time employee: One of them is required to have a higher university (master's) degree and the other is required to have a university degree, a higher vocational diploma or a corresponding earlier vocational college diploma. Both are required to be familiar with the museum's field of expertise and have completed basic studies in museology, or have at least a year of work experience as a museum professional.
>
> In exceptional cases, a museum director with the degree mentioned in subsection one, item two and familiar with the museum's field of expertise, need not have completed basic studies in museology or have a minimum of one year's work experience as a museum professional. In such cases the museum must have at least two other full-time employees who have completed basic studies in museology or have at least one year's work experience as a museum professional (The Museum Decree 2005/1192 and its amendment 456/2013, unofficial translation from Finnish).

The 2020 Museum Act retains museology as a qualification requirement, while incorporating leadership and managerial skills into the requirements for a mu-

seum director for the first time. According to the qualification requirements for employees in state-subsidised museums, the museum must have a responsible full-time director with an appropriate university degree, leadership skills and sufficient familiarity with the field and tasks of the museum. Additionally, the act requires that a museum have at least two full-time museum professionals who have an appropriate university degree and basic studies in museology. One of them can be the director of the museum. A museum must also employ a sufficient number of additional personnel (Finnish Museum Act 2020, unofficial translation from Finnish).

Museum of Opportunities, the Museum Policy Programme 2030 of the Ministry of Education and Culture, which was published in 2018, highlights the education, knowledge and skills of museum professionals. The policy aims to staff museums with multi-professional experts to guarantee excellence in museum services. Museum professionals' knowledge and skills can be developed through the establishment of international mobility programmes, as well as continuing and postgraduate education programmes; doctoral dissertations on museology should also be encouraged. The status of museology, as a discipline, must be guaranteed to provide new information to the developing museum sector (Museum of Opportunities 2018, p. 17, p. 19).

The *Museoväki* survey states that most museum employees have a university degree. The survey was conducted by the FMA in 2003, 2008, 2013 and 2018 to map museum employees' educational backgrounds, age distribution, duties and job satisfaction. The number of respondents in each of the four surveys ranged from 700 to 900. The surveys showed that most museum employees have a degree from an academic university or a university of applied sciences. Since 2003, the proportion of employees with a university degree has increased, although the number of doctoral or licentiate degree holders has remained relatively small. The 2018 survey made it possible to choose more than one degree option, which indicated that one museum professional could hold several university degrees. In addition to this, museum professionals may also hold vocational qualifications or college diplomas. All in all, the Museoväki survey showed the versatile backgrounds of professionals working in Finnish museums (Museoväki 2018, p. 4).

According to museum experts, their job corresponds to their education, mostly or at least in part. Museum professionals with an educational background in art history, ethnology or history report the closest correspondence. As many as 75% of art history graduates working in museums find their degree appropriate for their job. The corresponding number was 73% for ethnology graduates and 69% for history graduates. Among graduates from other disciplines, 49% of graduates find their degree appropriate for their jobs. For example, 71% of conservation/restoration graduates, 53% of archaeology graduates and 38% of science graduates find that their degree corresponds with the job (Museoväki 2018, p. 5).

Those museum professionals who answered that their job corresponds to their education slightly or not at all could develop their knowledge and skills by at-

tending continuing professional education. New knowledge and skills to apply could also increase job satisfaction.

The Museoväki surveys have also asked about museum professionals' studies in museology. Museology courses for full-time students are available at the Universities of Helsinki, Turku, Tampere, Oulu and Jyväskylä. The Open Universities in Helsinki, Turku (and its Pori Campus) and Jyväskylä also offer museology courses. From 2005 to 2016 the FMA also provided its member organisations' employees the opportunity to complete basic university-level studies in museology; the programme included onsite and remote teaching, as well as students' independent study, and could be completed while employed. a total of 155 museum professionals have completed this course since 2005 (see also Vilkuna, this volume).

Continuing Professional Education as a Means of Human Resources Development in Museums

Finnish employees are frequent attendees of personnel training programmes. The majority of adult education relates to the participant's work or occupation. In 2017, 1.2 million Finns – half of the Finnish workforce – participated in this type of education. Statistics Finland states that more than half of adult education and training programmes were organised with employers' support. Approximately one million people – 53% of wage earners – participated in this type of continuing professional education. In 2017, women were more involved than men by 9% (Official Statistics of Finland: Participation in adult education 2017).

The Finnish Museums Association is the leading in-service trainer in the Finnish museum sector and approximately 1 500 museum employees attend FMA training sessions annually. Statistics Finland shows that 3 100 people were employed by the museum sector in 2016 (Statistics Finland's FOLK data, 2011–2016).

Next, I describe how the FMA's continuing professional education operations have reflected changes in museum work. Established in 1923, the FMA is a national interest organisation for professionally-run museums. The association has always provided instruction and development facilitation to museum professionals. Historically, association representatives travelled to regional museums to show the staff how to run a museum and design or update exhibitions (Vilkuna 1998, p. 38, pp. 53–55). Unless otherwise mentioned, a reference is from an FMA training archive.

The FMA has a tradition of organising museum events that involve lectures, debates and practical advice on running a museum. The first practical and theoretical courses for museum workers were organised in the late 1920s. During the following decades the FMA arranged annual museum meetings, as well as practical and theoretical courses for museum workers.

In the 1970s the number of courses increased steadily, from one event to several events per year. The contents largely focused on the practical skills required

of a museum staff, but they also featured the research and professional skills needed to develop expertise in the field. As an example of training topics in 1975, the FMA organised educational opportunities: a course in museology in Turku, a conference on museology in Kajaani, a course in serigraphy, a seminar on museum lighting and a five-day ethnographic seminar on the popularisation of cultural styles and fashions. An excursion to Rome exemplified how the trends of museum work, e.g., exhibition design, could be observed at the international level.

Other themes in the 1970s involved museum safety, including burglary and fire protection and safety planning. The association also organised the first long, five-day course in exhibition design and technology, with practice in manuscript writing and miniature construction for exhibitions. Other training sessions involved the care and maintenance of artworks and textiles.

Several museum seminars involved discussions about collaboration between museums. Another topic of discussion was the regional museum experiment for cultural history museums. The reason for these topics was that in the 1970s a national regional museum administrative plan was discussed, and a report of the *Regional Committee of the Museum Field* was published in 1973 (see also Vilkuna, this volume). An extensive seminar on copyrights was launched in the late 1970s; the relevant lectures were compiled into a printed publication *Tekijänoikeus ja kuvapalvelukysymyksiä* (1979).

In the early 1980s, the FMA began to play a more important role, as an organiser of continuing professional education. To that end, the association hired a training officer, whose tasks included the planning and implementation of continuing professional education for museum employees with a university degree. Other continuing professional education programmes were organised for trustees, politicians and other decision-makers. The number of participants in the continuing professional education programmes remained steady at a few hundred per year, until it rose in the mid-1990s, exceeding one thousand.

The first signs of information technology emerged in the 1980s. In 1981, the Hanaholmen Cultural Centre was the seat of the first pan-Nordic photography seminar. Notwithstanding its title, the seminar discussed automatic data processing and retrieval systems for photographic material at museums. At the 1981 art museum seminar, Pori Art Museum presented its project on a computerised registry of artworks; the seminar also discussed automatic data processing in museums (Kinanen 2010, p. 75; Hakamies 2019).

The FMA even organised an excursion to Stockholm's Nordiska Museet, where participants learned about the museum's automatic data processing system. The excursion was also an opportunity to discuss the status of information technology at Finnish museums and to engage in the nationwide planning of a joint data register. Art museums have contributed actively to the introduction of information technology in the museum sector, and art museum seminars featured such themes as a pan-Nordic microfilming project and data registers of art collections.

Also in the 1980s, data system suppliers were invited to introduce data processing systems at designated seminars. The art museum seminar in Jyväskylä discussed the role of a central art museum and the art museums' minimum files, based on the report of the art museums' Automatic Data Processing committee. In 1987, the FMA's training programme included the first basic five-day course in automatic data processing for museum employees. In addition to basic knowledge about automatic data processing, the course provided instruction in computerised cataloguing, as well as an introduction to two collection data processing systems. Two additional courses were organised in 1987 to provide museum professionals with knowledge about information technology and related decision-making.

Basic courses in data processing were organised for several years. In 1988, FMA engaged in a joint discussion about automatic data processing with its Nordic colleagues; one of the topics was the situation regarding image storage. In the late 1980s, a training programme in audio-visual technology and videos was organised for museum amanuenses. Later in the decade, museum professionals developed their professional skills through extensive courses in exhibition design and technology.

In the 1990s, information technology training continued. The main topics included the most common brands of software for word processing, databases and desktop publishing. A 1993 course in audio-visual technology included a variety of topics: multimedia, hypermedia, image storage and processing, data transfer and various storage media. Additionally, the contents involved such future possibilities as the virtual museum and three-dimensional images. In 1994, the first Internet-focused continuing professional education event, titled What is the Internet and how will it affect your work?, took place.

In 1996, the FMA launched a training programme related to the development of the information society. The programme was part of The Finnish Information Society, a nationwide development programme organised by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The project to develop museum personnel's information regarding society-related competencies and museum services based on digital materials, later titled An Information Strategy Training Programme, received a designated allowance from the Ministry of Education and Culture until 2015. The programme involved basic training in automatic data processing at museums and the use and development of collection management systems. In 2014, one of the courses organised by the association involved 3D printing.

The FMA's first online learning environment for continuing professional education programmes was a 2003 online course in museum safety. Two years later, the association offered a study programme in museology worth 10 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits. In 2006, the FMA piloted the *Tietoyhteiskunnan työntekijä* (Information Society Professional) qualification for the museum branch (worth 10 ECTS credits) by the Finnish Information Society Development Centre.

In 2007, more online courses became available; the museology study programme was extended to cover 25 ECTS credits, the equivalent of the basic studies in museology offered by Finnish universities. The same year, the association launched an online course, worth 2 ECTS credits, in the basics of museum work; this course was intended for new museum employees who lacked formal qualification.

Other study programmes organised by the association include courses in the production of online learning services at museums, collection cataloguing and the marketing of museums. Parts of the study programmes were implemented in collaboration with, for example, the University of Helsinki's Palmenia Centre for Continuing Education. Presentation of recent dissertations is one way to improve museum workers' skills and knowledge; it is a method that has been assessed as part of the FMA's continuing education programme, in co-operation with the University of Helsinki's museology studies and the Open University.

Vocational Qualifications as Continuing Professional Education

The development of museum management has been regarded as an integral component of continuing education. The first museum management training courses were already being organised in the early 1980s. Extensive administrative courses, targeted at museum managers and amanuenses, dealt with the development of museums as work communities and the improvement of work processes. Management development, as well as other continuing education in the museum field, was undertaken in co-operation with Finnish universities' continuing education centres. These management training sessions continued into the 1990s. Finnish city college (*Kaupunkiopisto*) participated, for example, in the organisation of a training course focused on goal orientation and the estimation of profitability in museum work. In the late 1990s, the quality of museum work became a subject of interest in training sessions. In the 2000s, continuing education programmes also provided education in the management of expert organisations.

Finally, in 2012, a more comprehensive museum management programme was established, together with the school of management (*Johtamistaidon Opisto*, JTO). The programme still exists, although mergers led the partner to change its name to MIF: Management Institute of Finland. The museum management programme is the first vocational competence-based qualification operating as part of Finland's official education system; it is customised for museum managers and professionals who are preparing to assume managerial duties. In the programme, participants complete a specialist vocational qualification in business management and administration. Financing for the programme's contact instruction and competence demonstrations comes from the governmental apprenticeship training system, which is probably one reason for the programme's popularity. The current management programme is the sixth of its kind, and approximately 200 people have already graduated from it. The FMA and MIF have also collaborated to establish a development programme

for first-line managers, in which participants complete a specialist vocational qualification in first-line management.

The FMA, in collaboration with the Rastor-instituutti, organises a vocational qualification in business and administration. This programme, as well as the specialist vocational qualification in product development provided by the multidisciplinary educational institution Careeria, is also targeted specifically at museum workers.

The requirements for the first vocational qualification for museum technicians were completed in 2017. The museum field was strongly represented on the qualifications committee appointed by the Finnish National Agency for Education. The first museum technicians to graduate from the new programme did so in 2019.

Conclusion

In the discussion about the transformation of museums and museum work and about the museum of the future, issues under current debate are the competences, skills and knowledge needed in museum professions. An integral part of this discussion is ICOM's museum definition, which will be revised in the 2020s. The definition is essential to the museum community, because it represents a document capable of defining museum operations, both nationally and internationally. Change in the operational environment of museums is constant. To understand the meaning of this change in terms of competence requirements is essential for museums and individual museum professionals, as well as for organisers of basic education and continuing professional education.

More information regarding museum staff education is needed. Academic research related to the museum sector has been conducted, for example, on museum work practices and the development of the profession. There is a huge need for more research on museums, museum profession and professionals, and co-operation with universities is crucial, especial with those universities that teach museology.

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Section II

Collection Management Leading to Collection Development

Collections and collection curatorship have always been at the core of museum operations. Centuries of caretaking traditions have left us with collections that offer concrete evidence and enrichment for our understanding of the future. Traditionally, museums are responsible not only for the care and maintenance of their objects and collections, but also for the dissemination of information to the public. This work has always been fundamental to museum operations. Recent decades have produced studies where such work has been under scrutiny and some have even contested the need for collections. The pressure to justify the existence and upkeep of collections, from technical, material and substance perspectives, has been an issue for museum professionals (Conn 2010; Snellman 2016). Questions have been raised regarding the amount of care debt that accumulates, and compromise seems to be a constant when it comes to practical measures for collection care in museums. At the same time, in-depth knowledge of collections has increased due to the increasing ways of collecting data for cultural heritage. Due to various digital technologies, more unified collection policies and the nation-wide division of collecting duties in Finland, known as the TAKO Network, we now have more knowledge and a better understanding of our shared cultural reserve than ever before.

The authors of this section are experts in the field of collection management and collection care. They have used methods such as Significance Analysis (Russell & Winkworth 2001; Häyhä, Jantunen & Paaskoski 2018) in their everyday museum work, as well as in teaching future museum professionals. The Finnish modification of the Australian Significance Anlaysis method is described in detail in Leena Paaskoski, Sari Jantunen and Heikki Häyhä's chapter. The role of collections and the meaning of co-operation among various stakeholders are discussed in their text, as well as how analysing the significance of museum objects will transform the role of these objects from silent entities into cognitive anchors. Furthermore, the need to be dynamic and take a collection development approach, rather than restricting functions only to collection management and maintenance, will be a crucial step in seeing significance in collections evolve. Another tool for collection work is offered in Minna Sarantola-Weiss' chapter, which highlights the meaning of collection policies. In this work, one needs to keep in mind the concept of cultural reserve, something that is not restricted to museums. There are private homes and home or house museums, as well as corporate collections, that house and maintain artefacts and artworks that can be seen as part of the same cultural reserve. Liisa Oikari and Kristina Ranki make a contribution to the category of house museums. In their chapter, special attention is paid to the concept of a home museum, and how this distinction differentiates highly personal and authentic homes from various historical houses. Teemu Ahola's chapter on the TAKO Network (*Ammatillisten museoiden tallennus- ja kokoelmayhteistyöverkosto*/Contemporary documentation and nation-wide division of collecting duties) is also a good example of the practical tools needed for museums in order to intensify collection work, very much with the long term in mind. Rapid technological advances have, for example, made 3D modelling a viable tool, both to keep delicate archaeological objects preserved, but also to improve accessibility and make objects more informative to the public (Roe

2014). This technology brings collections and collection work closer to audiences in new and exciting ways, as described in Visa Immonen and Ismo Malinen's chapter on 3D modelling. They remind the reader that regardless of the chosen technology, one should keep in mind the fast-changing environment of the industry and the need for close co-operation between the museum and technology provider. Ultimately, this section highlights the meaning of collections for entire societies, not only for museums, as seen in Teija Luukkanen-Hirvikoski's chapter. One needs to keep all collections in mind, regardless of their ownership, as well as the importance of the cultural exchange between corporations and various cultural institutions.

Heikki Häyhä, Sari Jantunen, Leena Paaskoski
How to be Dynamic – The potential of analysing significance in Finnish museum collections

Minna Sarantola-Weiss
Collection Policy – Experiences and challenges

Liisa Oikari, Kristina Ranki
Home Museums – Biographical collections of significant lives

Teemu Ahola
The TAKO Network – Developing collections together

Visa Immonen, Ismo Malinen
3D Imaging in Museums

Teija Luukkanen-Hirvikoski
Between Private and Public – Corporate art collecting and collaboration with art museums in Finland

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How to be Dynamic – The potential of analysing significance in Finnish museum collections

Heikki Häyhä, Sari Jantunen and Leena Paaskoski

Abstract

This chapter discusses the meaning and museum value of collections as essential cultural resources of society, promoting the idea of dynamic collections and collection development, as well as encouraging museum professionals to implement the significance analysis method, *Merkitysanalyysimenetelmä,* as an essential part of museum work. Discussing the origins of the Finnish Forest Museum Lusto's forest machine collection has led to an examination of the challenges and compromises concerning two enormous PIKA50 processors from the 1960s–1970s in the museum. The solution was achieved using the Australian *Significance* method, which was first published in 2001 and the second version, *Significance 2.0*, in 2009. Other examples of significance methods are the British (2010) and the Dutch methods (2014), which are also introduced in this chapter. Encouraged and empowered by these examples, we set out to compile a version that would fit for the Finnish museum sector. The Finnish method was published in 2015 (in English 2019). The aim was to make a method that was simple enough for a non-specialist to perform, with a clean presentation and plenty of concrete examples. We argue that there is a great need for producing better cultural heritage information connected to museum collections, which form a living heritage and a dynamic resource in society.

Keywords: significance, dynamic, collections, cultural resource, sustainability

Creating Meaningful Collections

At the beginning of the 2000s Lusto, The Finnish Forest Museum, started to collect large forest machines as part of its documenting work in the area of Finnish forestry. There were no other professional museums collecting forest machines – tractors, forwarders, processors and harvesters – or addressing the significant history of mechanised forestry. It was recognised as an important part of the story of forestry and the forest industry in Finland. Telling this story needed proper evidence in the form of artefact collection (Anttila, Lehonkoski & Paaskoski 2004; Karhunkorva & Paaskoski 2008a). The mechanisation of Finnish forest work started already in the 1940s–1950s. First came chainsaws for felling; tractors used in agriculture were soon introduced for transporting

and finally, from the 1960s onwards, developing forest machines started to significantly change heavy and human-powered forest work. It was all part and a continuum involving the great post-war intensifying project of Finnish forestry. Finland had lost about 12% of its forest area as a war indemnity and was in the middle of structural change. Forests and forestry played an important role in recovering from the war, as there was a need to produce more, and much more efficiently. It was also part of the modernisation of the Finnish society (Pakkanen & Leikola 2010, pp. 303–308, pp. 384–387, pp. 319–331).

With the help of its stakeholders, Lusto collected 17 forest machines during the years 2000–2010. Most were donated to the museum by *Metsähallitus* (a state-owned enterprise responsible for the management of state-owned land and water areas) and the former Jämsänkoski Forestry School (Karhunkorva & Paaskoski 2008a, p. 10). There were many challenges for a museum collecting large, mechanical and old artefacts such as these machines. On the one hand, there was a need to present history from the first processor to modern solutions in forestry, but without too many space-demanding machines in the collection. On the other hand, many forest machines were demolished already, and the museum was forced to choose from what was left in the field. There were thus somewhat random objects left to be collected for a museum in Finland. This inevitably led to a situation in the collection where some key objects were missing (as there were none left in Finland) and some were duplicates (as the museum later found a better example of a particular artefact). Another challenge was the physical condition of the machines, which had not been used in a long time, and that sometimes had been exposed to the elements for decades and sometimes were over-restored with plenty of new paint. Finally, the third challenge had to do with information, i.e., cultural heritage knowledge, as there was not always enough information available to be able to create the rich metadata of a museum object (Karhunkorva & Paaskoski 2008b). The forest machine collection put together during those years can be seen as a museological compromise.

A museological compromise is often a part of museum work. It means balancing between different viewpoints and criteria in collecting and valuing museum objects. Museum collections have had various tasks and aims throughout museum and collection history. They have been sources for research, objects to be exhibited and the tangible heritage of society, and have told various stories about both the past and the present (Pettersson & Kinanen 2010). They are believed to tell about society and human life, but they also tell us about museum professionals, their visions and affections. Nonetheless, the cultural heritage information itself, collected and connected to the objects, has not dramatically changed throughout the course of museum history (Ekosaari 2009). In our cataloguing work in Finnish museums, we still concentrate on describing the appearance of artefacts, instead of pointing out their meanings and significance. Cataloguing is, in fact, seen more as a technical process of recording than as a process of producing content, meanings and stories (Museoiden luettelointiohje 2014, p. 9).

The need to produce better cultural heritage information and more meaningful museum collections has arisen in many ways during the 2000s. For example, participation, co-operation, the professional-amateur movement and the idea of shared cultural heritage are all seen as means for creating dynamic collections. According to Peter van Mensch and Leontine Meijer-van Mensch (2015, pp. 24–26), we should talk more about collection development than collection management. At the same time, various methods for assessing significance have been created around the world.

Lusto's forest machine collection is partly the background of why we became interested in *Significance, an Australian method of assessing the significance of cultural heritage objects and collections* (Russell & Winkworth 2001). The first efforts were made in 2011, when Lusto's artefact collection curator Sari Jantunen used the method in her short-term studies concerning museum work. The class took place at the Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences; the method was introduced by teacher Heikki Häyhä. Sari used Significance to assess a part of Lusto's forest machine collection. The degree work, *Kookkaita koneita – Raskasta rautaa* (Large Machines – Heavy Metal) (Jantunen 2011), proved that the method was feasible and worth further examination. Next, in 2013, we started evaluating the museum value of the forest machine collection in co-operation with Lusto and the students of Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences' Degree Programme in Conservation. One of the concrete problems to be solved was that Lusto had two PIKA50 processors from the 1960s–1970s and, as they are enormous objects and expensive to preserve, the museum had to choose the better one to be musealised and kept for future generations. We successfully used the Australian Significance method in making this deaccession decision for the other machine. The concepts of significance analysis (*merkitysanalyysi*) and significance statement (*merkityslausunto*) were collectively defined in Finnish with the Metropolia conservation students and museum professionals at this time. Later on, we ended up working even more with significance analysis.





Figures 1. and 2. From left to right: The too-rigorously restored PIKA50 (V1M0607) was chosen to be disposed of from Lusto. The authentic PIKA50 (dcs5297) was conserved and relocated to the exhibition hall.

Examples of Significance Analyses Methods

Through the experience of analysing and evaluating Lusto's forest machines in 2013, we considered the Australian Significance method inspiring, but it appeared to need some developing to fit the particular needs of Finnish museums. We started a project, *Merkitykselliset museokokoelmat – Museo-objektien ja -kokoelmien merkitysanalyysimenetelmän kehittäminen* (Museum collections of significance – Developing a significance analysis method for museum objects and collections), funded by the Finnish Heritage Agency and carried out in 2014. In this project, we developed the criteria and certain concepts concerning significance analysis, as well as making a method that was more flexible and easier to use. Before we got to this point, there were several foreign examples to be thoroughly investigated. In the following, we introduce the Australian, British and Dutch methods for analysing significance, created from 2001 to 2014.

The Australian Method

Significance – A guide to assessing the significance of cultural heritage objects and collections (Russell & Winkworth 2009) is based on the concept of the assessment process and summary statement of significance that were developed by the Australian National Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (Australia ICOMOS) in 1979, known as the *Burra Charter*. The Method of Assessing Significance was therefore first used for the management of places of cultural significance (Russell & Winkworth 2009, p. 4). The first

edition of Significance was published in Australia in 2001 by the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts through the Heritage Collections Council (HCC) and the museum sector. Significance was created by heritage consultant Roslyn Russell of the Australian Heritage Projects, along with heritage consultant Kylie Winkworth (Russell & Winkworth 2001, pp. 7–9). According to the publication, the project's aim was to facilitate museums to identify and preserve cultural heritage, help assess the significance of objects in collections and provide a basis on which to set priorities, focus resources and generally make solid collection management decisions.

The method was intended for all collecting institutions and for everyone working with collections, and the process was to be applied to both single objects and whole collections. The meaning and value of an object was to be defined by considering significance against a standard set of assessment criteria. The primary criteria were historic, aesthetic, scientific, research or technical and social or spiritual. The degree of significance was estimated using the following comparative criteria: provenance, representativeness, rarity, condition, completeness or intactness and integrity and interpretive potential. The completed process of significance assessment was summarised in a statement of significance (Russell & Winkworth 2001, pp. 7–12).

The step-by-step-process gave clear instructions on how to proceed and what to do. Firstly, the executor was to compile all available details about an object and its history, secondly, to research the history and provenance, as well as talk with donors, users and relevant community members, and thirdly, to understand the context of the object. The fourth step was to analyse and record how an object is manufactured, how it works and its condition. The fifth step was to consider comparative examples of similar objects and the sixth step to assess significance against the main criteria. The seventh step was to determine the degree of significance by making an assessment based on the comparative criteria. The final step was to write a statement on significance that explains why the object is significant and what meanings and stories it carries (Russell & Winkworth 2001, p. 20).

The second edition of the significance method, Significance 2.0, was released in 2009. The authors Roslyn Russell, Kylie Winkworth and the Collections Council of Australia Ltd took into account the experience gathered with determining significance in different collections settings – archives, galleries, libraries and museums (Russell & Winkworth 2009, preface vi).

As a result, Significance 2.0 includes a greater emphasis on whole collections and cross-collection applications, as well as the inclusion of criteria for assessing national significance (Russell & Winkworth 2009, p. 1). The core of the method remained unchanged, but the steps of assessing significance were refined. The method now involved only five main steps: Analysing an item or collection, researching its history, provenance and context, comparing it with similar items, understanding its values by reference to the criteria and summarising its meanings and values in a statement of significance. The assessment consisted of four

primary and four comparative criteria. The four primary criteria were historic, artistic or aesthetic, scientific or research potential and social or spiritual. The four comparative criteria were provenance, rarity or representativeness, condition or completeness and interpretive capacity (Russell & Winkworth 2009, p. 10).

Looking at both the 2001 and 2009 versions of Significance, the refinement of the latter was noticeable and welcomed. With the aid of the Australian method, it was possible to apprehend the meaning of the studied object on a much deeper level. The step-by-step process guided us in exploring aspects of the object that one might have overlooked otherwise. Also, writing the Statement of Significance forced one to crystallise ideas and discoveries into a solid form. Nonetheless, the two-fold method and use of the English language made the Significance a little too laborious to be even partially implemented into everyday use in Finland.

The British Method

The British method, *Reviewing Significance 2.0 – A framework for assessing museums collections' significance, management and use*, is a 2012 updated version of the original Reviewing Significance framework that was published by Caroline Reed, Museum and Heritage Consultant, together with Renaissance East Midlands (REM), in 2010. The publication was inspired by the Australian Significance 2.0 and University College London's Collections Review Rubric (Reed 2012, p. 2).

Like its Australian inspirer, Reviewing Significance 2.0 presented a method, the Significance Assessment Process, which helps with assessing a museum collection's meaning and value, developing understanding of the use of collections and creating a basis for dynamic collection management. In addition, the framework presented the Collections Review Process to help with comparing collection management, care and documentation with usage, as well as several grids, forms and data sheets as ready-to-use tools. The Significance Assessment Process and the Collections Review Process were intended to be used either together or separately (Reed 2012, p. 2). The Collections Review Process, a score-based data analysis system, was not utilized in compiling the Finnish method, *Merkitysanalyysimenetelmä*.

The Significance Assessment Process provides two tools: Significance Assessment Grid and the Statement of Significance Template. The Significance Assessment Grid presents a structured series of questions in tabular form. The questions are grouped under six column headings and six row headings. The column headings are: provenance/acquisition, rarity/uniqueness, visual & sensory impact, condition/completeness, historical meaning and exploitability. The row headings are: key points, national/international, regional or cross-regional, locally specific, community/group and organisationally or site specific (Reed 2012, p. 2).

The written answers to the questions presented in the Significance Assessment Grid are then collected to the Statement of Significance Template. The bullet-pointed key observations are first summarised after each heading and finally

as an edited and ready-to-publish Statement of Significance. The Statement of Significance template also has a separate section to indicate ideas of further research and consultation (Reed 2012, pp. 6–7).

Reviewing Significance 2.0 had both pros and cons. The bullet-pointed key observations in the Significance Assessment Grid made it easy to summarise the meaning and value of the studied subject. The five different perspectives – national/international, regional/cross-regional, locally specific, community/group and organisationally or site specific – made it clear that the impact of the object or collection probably is and should therefore always be considered more widely than just from the museum's perspective. Yet again, the use of the English language and the way the method was presented made it quite difficult to use for us Finns.

The Dutch Method

The Cultural Heritage Agency in the Netherlands has published a method of Assessing Museum Collections in 2014, called *Collection valuation in six steps*. The method makes distinctions among value, criteria and significance (Cultural Heritage Agency 2014). They describe the concept of valuing in relation to heritage as making reasoned, verifiable statements about its value. This elucidates the value assigned to heritage in order to guide the way in which museums preserve, develop and use this heritage, as well as to engender public support for it. According to the Cultural Heritage Agency, such valuation has been almost the exclusive preserve of professionals such as architects, historians and curators, who tend to express valuation in scientific or culture historical terms. As Laurajane Smith (2006, p. 30) writes: "Act as stewards for the past, so that present and future publics may be properly educated and informed about its significance." The world is changing, however, as they state in the introduction of the method – politically, economically and socially – and so is the way that we view heritage and valuation. Ideas about who values heritage are also subject to change.

According to the Dutch method, the value assigned to collections plays a key role in three activities: use, preservation and development. The most interesting activity is development, which, as they state, may increase through research. This is an accepted reason why objects about which nothing or very little is known are kept in a collection. It is very difficult to see who other than experts, can conduct research, and this in our opinion rules out other stakeholders who may also have an interest in value heritage.

The method introduces the concept of a reference framework. Does an item have a high, medium or low value at the national, regional or local level, or within an institution? What is the significance of an artwork in relation to the artist's complete oeuvre, or to other works from the same period, of the same style or from the same region? This reference framework, in our opinion, exists only for experts in the relevant field.

The Dutch method, despite its great ideas about who values heritage, doesn't really achieve its goals. We felt that to be successful the method should support the creation of community identity by opening collections to new generations and by honouring the effort of previous generations toward the common good.

This could be understood as increasing social inclusion, a concept that is mentioned many times in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. According to Hilary Silver (2015, p. 3) social inclusion may refer to a process which encourages social interaction among people who have very different socially relevant attributes or to an impersonal institutional mechanism of opening up access to participation in all spheres of social life.

Merkitysanalyysimenetelmä, i.e., Analysing Significance – The Finnish method

Encouraged and empowered by these examples, we set out to compile a version that would fit the Finnish museum sector. The aim was to make a method that was simple enough for anyone to perform, through a clear presentation and plenty of concrete examples. We also wanted to make sure that using the method would be easily approachable and the end result individualised. The former chair of ICOM Finland, Eero Ehanti, aptly describes this in his foreword of the English version, Analysing Significance:

> Having tested the method, I know that it works, and is fun to use. Easiness is another important quality that deserves to be highlighted here. Why? Because it is not the exclusive right of museum professionals to define cultural heritage and establish its significances. It is a responsibility that can and should be shared with communities and individuals to whom cultural heritage essentially belongs, and who have unique insights into it. This publication opens the door for better community involvement, which is another excellent reason to spread it as widely as possible. (Ehanti, in Häyhä, Jantunen & Paaskoski 2019, p. 5)

The Finnish method was modified on the basis of experiences and comments that we received from a total of 60 museum professionals, stakeholders and other persons who tested the method on a number of tangible and intangible expressions of culture, objects and collections both inside and outside museums (Häyhä, Jantunen & Paaskoski 2019, p. 6).

The method consists of selecting the object and perspective for analysis, justifying these choices and determining what the goals are. Subsequently, those who will carry out the analysis need to be found. This is then followed by familiarisation with the object of analysis, the collection of information, contextualisation and an assessment of the significance and meanings based on the chosen criteria. The method concludes with the writing of a significance statement (Häyhä, Jantunen & Paaskoski 2019, p. 8).

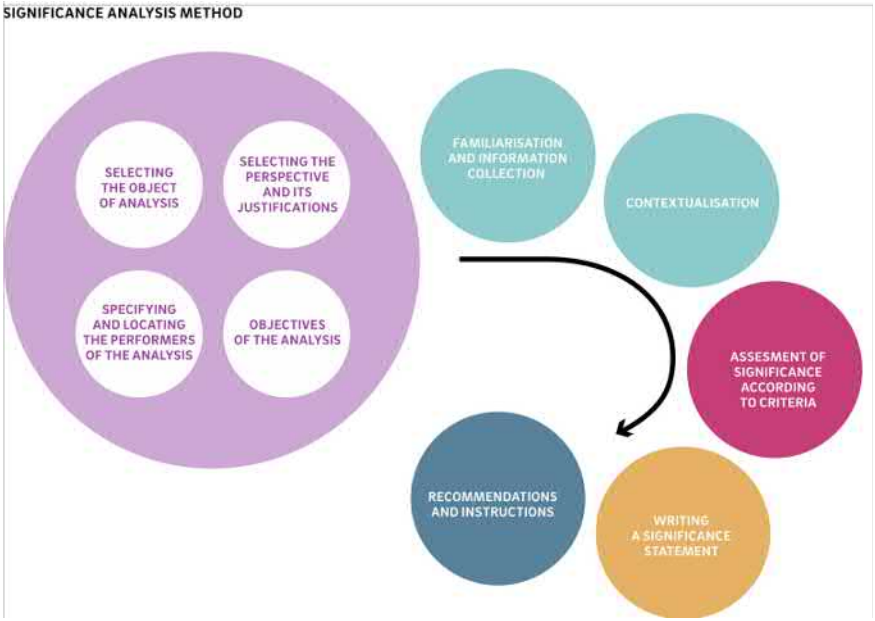


Figure 3. The process of the significance analyses method (Häyhä, Jantunen & Paaskoski 2019).

We did not want to dictate which implementation or presentation method would be the most beneficial for analysts and interest groups, and therefore the most fruitful for their analyses. Even though finding actors and interest groups may be challenging, it would also be rewarding and would support participation within and the transparency of museums. What would be a stimulating way to process and express thoughts – a group discussion, communal writing assignment, diagram, comic strip, video, etc.? It is also good to consider which method would best convey the significance and meanings of the object to audiences. The analysis requires a research-oriented approach, and its results always depend on the interpretation by the performer(s) of the analysis. This is a continuous process, open for later reassessments and new interpretations (Häyhä, Jantunen & Paaskoski 2019, p. 9, p. 12).

It has to be kept in mind that the communal analysis of objects and collections may yield conflicting interpretations. The objects and collections may have different significance and meanings to different actors. Their relationship with the object of analysis varies, and this influences the results. Therefore, in accordance with the principles of cultural studies, the party or parties who determine the significance and meanings become visible in the process (Häyhä, Jantunen & Paaskoski 2019, p. 9).

The Need for Richer Metadata and More Use of Collections

Museum collections are an essential part of cultural heritage. They should be dynamic and well-utilized resources for individuals, nations and societies (Mattila

2018, p. 21). With the help of cultural heritage, we can create deeper understandings of cultural processes, change and time, as well as building identities and having an impact on a sustainable future. Museum collections should, therefore, be seen as a means for building a better world – and this where the concepts of dynamic collections and collection development (van Mensch & Meijer-van Mensch 2015, pp. 24–26) are needed. Dynamism means:

> The collections are developed by means of acquisition and deaccession, but also that existing collections and museum objects are reflected upon, significance is attributed to them and they are contextualised repeatedly and from new perspectives. The potential and utility value of collections are highlighted. Significance analysis is a method for developing museums' collection work and producing dynamic collections (Häyhä, Jantunen & Paaskoski 2019, p. 10).

We argue that there is a great need for producing better cultural heritage information connected to museum collections and to include it to our understanding of what a museum object is, and what it is for. To improve the metadata we have expressed in Analysing Significance that a museum object, first of all, should be defined as:

> Not only a physical object but a combination of selected information, significance and meanings, as well as a tangible or intangible expression of culture. A museum object has both a physical and cultural life cycle. An object's physical life starts when it is manufactured and ends when it is destroyed. In the various phases of its cultural life cycle, the object manifests itself as an idea, as an existing but not yet used object, as an object with a usage history and finally, as an object that has been destroyed but still exists in documents or memories. From the perspective of the cultural life cycle, the significance and meanings relating to the object are essential. A museum object's purpose of use is almost always something else than what it was originally designed for. For example, it works as a piece of evidence and source, conveys information and meanings and produces identities, experiences and well-being. A museum object's authority as evidence is guaranteed by its genuineness; authenticity strengthens the "power of the genuine object", on which the relationship with the viewer or user is often built. *(*Häyhä, Jantunen & Paaskoski 2019, p. 10)

Developing collections' use has been emphasised in the new Finnish museum policy programme Opportunities in the Museum Sector (Mattila 2018). Museums need better metadata to be able to use and get more use for their collections. In recent decades there has been very little discussion about the information contents and cultural heritage information included in museum collections. Instead, the computerisation of Finnish museums since the 1980s–1990s has created a constant negotiation regarding technical cataloguing. We know very well how to catalogue, but not so well what to catalogue. The significance analysis method is an attempt towards establishing more dynamic museum collections in Finland.

Examples of Using the Significance Analysis Method

In the following, we introduce a few examples of using the significance analyses method in museums, together with the audiences and stakeholders of museums. Our examples are from the Finnish Forest Museum Lusto, the Craft Museum of Finland and collaborative project involving the Kerava Art Museum and the Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences.

A few years after the significance analysis method was launched in the Finnish museum sector, we found ourselves keen to make the most of it, trying to figure out how to get museums to actually implement it. The good news was that all the museum professionals and museums' stakeholders who had been testing the method seemed to have found it useful, innovative, inspiring and worthwhile. What made the method less compelling for the museum professionals was all the cataloguing necessary, regarding millions of museum objects and not enough time. Using the method as part of everyday work seemed to be too time-consuming. There was also the question of "proper museum work". Proper museum work is still talked about in the museum sector and it includes more or less practices connected to collections. Cataloguing is one of them (Hakamies 2017, pp. 148–149; Hakamies 2019, pp. 42–43). As long as significance analysis is not seen as proper museum work but as some new, extra practice, it will not become mainstream.

We believe that significance analysis methods in Finland and abroad will become proper museum work and help creating dynamic collections, catering to the needs of individuals and societies. There have been several inspiring and encouraging examples of this already.

In the collection management of the Finnish Forest Museum Lusto, the significance criteria have been used for defining and determining the museum value of an object since 2015. This is needed when deciding on acquisition and deaccession or doing value classification. The aim is to more deeply integrate significance analysis into the various collection management processes (Collection Management Policy of The Finnish Forest Museum Lusto 2015). As part of its participatory museum work, Lusto has also used the method successfully with its stakeholders, for example when documenting and evaluating the significance of the forest workers' Hiace van. The group of forest workers analysed their van themselves and found the most essential and relevant museum values during their analysis (Häyhä, Jantunen & Paaskoski 2019, pp. 20–21).

The Craft Museum of Finland has decided to implement the method of Analysing Significance as an essential part of its work, especially involving the acquisition process (The Collection Management Policy of Craft museum of Finland 2018, p. 40). Questions that can produce the most expressive answers have been chosen from the method and changed into simplified language. The questions are then handed out to those who plan to a make a donation to the museum. The idea is that the donor will be able to tell the story of the object or objects as fully as they possibly can, without having to understand the language that museum profes-

sionals use. At the same time, they are hopefully guided to an understanding that what cultural heritage museums wish to collect and preserve is much more than mere artefacts. For museum professionals the answers, which will be speed-read through the Analysing Significance criteria, will offer an easier and faster way to form a clear vision of the object's significance, as well as to highlight the issues that speak for or against the acquisition. Asking donors to participate this way also complements the method's communal nature.

In 2013 the Kerava Art Museum and the Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences launched a pedagogical conservation project to restore the *Sirkusmuistomerkki* sculpture by artists Heikki Häiväoja and Antero Poppius (1979). This sculpture consisted of five almost life-size fibre-glass horses, which formed a circus monument in the centre of Kerava city (Kauppinen & Häyhä 2015, pp. 134–141). The project partners wanted to share this journey of care-taking with the people of Kerava. The aim was to raise awareness and increase knowledge of the circus monument, to lift the curtain of museum work and allow people to participate in the future of their beloved monument. The Significance 2.0 analysis was used as a key to unlock the meaning of the monument, and to study its intangible elements. This significance assessment was a collaborative and transparent process and it took into account that the circus monument may hold different meanings and values for different groups and individuals. A class of school children were at the core of this project. They were following the process from the beginning, working with the conservation students involved.

The children were given the task of spreading knowledge about the project. They expressed their thoughts and shared their knowledge with the project group and a wider audience through a blog. They also made a short film that was shown in every elementary school in Kerava. Alongside the children's project the project, group also invited people to participate in different ways. They asked people to contribute to this project by sharing their memories and stories of the monument.

According to the consultations carried out in Kerava, it seemed clear that through functionality the circus horses had made their way into the lives and memories of the people. They played a significant role in childhood memories. According to the memories collected and interviews conducted, functionality was the most important value for the community. Functionality was then chosen as the ideal state of the monument. Ideal state, a concept from conservator Barbara Appelbaum (2007, pp. 173–193), is very useful in defining a realistic goal for the conservation-restoration process. Ideal state is always a real historical state. Functionality also preserved the cultural practice and meaning of the monument.

What did the project group gain by making the process transparent instead of just conducting it behind closed doors? It was able to show that conservation is a process that does not happen overnight and one that involves decisions. The group wanted to show that both tangible and intangible aspects should be studied carefully before decisions are made. The group was also able to share knowledge of local history with a new public. But maybe most importantly in the project, a sense of engagement with the community was gained. The project

group was able to demonstrate that public space, in this case public art, creates private memories and experiences that are beyond the creators' intentions, and that those experiences are of value.

In the course Significance Analysis as an Interpretation Method arranged by the University of Helsinki and Helsinki Open University in 2019, around 20 students studied and analysed artefacts from various museums' collections. The museums, in co-operation, offered the students chosen objects and their own museum expertise for doing the analyses. The results – 14 comprehensive significance analysis works and statements provided to the museums – were real research and fantastic summaries of history, cultural meanings and interpretations of these objects. The objects analysed during this course showed interesting views and became part of a larger context, what Renatas Berniūnas and Janusz Barański call "cognitive anchors" (Berniūnas 2009, pp. 167–171) and "material medias" (Barański 2012, p. 88). This is how a museum object, at its best, works.

As these examples show, the significance analysis method has been very useful, in co-operation among museums and universities, as it offers a new way to study museum collections and find meanings and significance connected to physical objects. It also creates research that is highly relevant for museums, universities and students.

Significant Museum Collections of the Future

Today, the problem of Lusto's two PIKA50 processors has been resolved. Even though the significance analysis process helped us to make our decision, it took several years to prepare for the actual disposal of the duplicate object. The PIKA50 machine with new paint and only a little contextual information has since 2008 been part of Lusto's basic exhibition. The conservation of the PIKA50 with high museum value (notable significance, rich metadata and original, albeit poor condition) is now finished and the other machine with lower museum value was sold in Autumn 2019 to a local heritage village. The next steps are to replace the processor in the exhibition and transport the disposed object to its new home.

Collection work has always been seen as the heart or foundation of a museum. It has also been one of the most time-consuming areas of museum work. Throughout the years of professional museum work, museum professionals have concentrated on collecting, documenting, cataloguing, managing, describing, digitizing, preserving and conserving museum collections. Today, the use of museum collections is becoming probably the most central question, as 5.6 million artefacts, 346 000 artworks, 15.9 million specimen of nature, and 24.1 million photographs, among other things, are preserved in Finnish museum collections (Museotilasto 2019). These items are needed as a living heritage and dynamic resource in society, and they help us to understand ourselves, the past and the present, as well as creating a more sustainable future. The collections will, however, act as such only if they are studied, analysed and given significance.

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Collection Policy – Experiences and challenges

Minna Sarantola-Weiss

Abstract

This chapter describes the phases of collection policy thinking in cultural-historical museums in Finland. I explore collections policy as a process that is constantly changing in relation to a museum's own operational environment and to national and international developments. In the 2020s, the challenges will be collected under the umbrella term of sustainable development. The collections should be sustainable from the environmental, economic and cultural points of view.

Keywords: dynamic collections, sustainable collections, material culture and digitalisation

Helsinki City Museum in 2021, founded in 1911, 62 permanent employees.

Collections include approximately 450,000 cultural-historical objects, more than a million photographs and approximately 6,000 pieces of art.

Awards: Museum of the Year 2017 Finland, Winner of the Museums + Heritage International Award 2017, European Museum of the Year 2018 Special Commendation.

Introduction

According to the national Museum Statistics annual data from 2018, the object collections of Finland's cultural-historical museums included approximately 5.6 million objects, while the total accession in 2018 was 59,000 objects. The collections included approximately 23.6 million photographs, with the photograph accession for the year being 373,000. Helsinki City Museum housed approximately 450,000 objects and a million photographs. The size of the collection and all related management responsibilities are considered huge, and museums need tools and strategic thinking to accomplish this task. A common tool used for this purpose in the 21st century has been a collections policy document, in which a museum defines its collection mission and describes the core contents of its collections. In an ideal situation, the document describes what will be collected in relation to the collection mission, and it also includes policies related to collection care and use. The identity of most museums and the services targeted at their clientele is based on a museums' own collections, so the collections policy document can be regarded as the most important document that guides a museum's long-term operation, alongside the museum's memorandum and articles of association.

A collections policy is not only a document that describes goals related to strategy and content. It should also be an everyday tool that describes how museums should organise their collections management so that their strategic goals can be achieved. Museum consultant Freda Matassa (2011) divides collections management into collection acquisitions, documenting collection information and information management, collection storage, exhibition use, mobility and access. The Finnish *Checklist for Museum Collections Management Policy* (Ekosaari et al. 2013 & 2014), has largely the same basis but focuses more on the importance of defining a museum's collection mission as the basis for all collections management. Many collections policy documents include a section that resembles a handbook, and work instructions are sometimes made into a separate instruction manual.

My chapter is not a guide for creating a collections policy. Instead, I describe the phases of collections policy thinking in cultural-historical museums and how the discussion around collections policy has affected collections management. I explore collections policy as a process that is constantly changing in relation to a museum's own operational environment and the museum industry's national and international developments. I also look to the future and examine which questions collections management will face in the 2020s and what tools we have acquired throughout the years[1]. Helsinki City Museum's collections policy process acts as a concrete example for this chapter. As the museum is in charge of regional matters in the Helsinki metropolitan area, our task is to also support our region's museums in developing and documenting their collections policy.

The Legal Framework

The Finnish museum field has developed while interacting with the international field. ICOM's *Code of Ethics for Museums*, in particular, is extensively considered in the development and guidance work of museums. This applies to collections policy as well. ICOM began outlining the ethical principles of museum professions very early and published the Ethics of Acquisitions recommendation in 1970, which outlined the ethical accessioning of collections, but it was not until the 1986 Code of Ethics that the creation and publication of a written policy was required. In Finland, the Act on the Statutory State Aid and Subsidies of Museums (*Laki museoiden valtionosuuksista- ja avustuksista*) (1146/1988) was established in 1988, and the requirements for receiving statutory state aid were considered to be the careful storage and appropriate cataloguing of objects and archival material owned by a museum. The Museums Act of 1992 (729/1992) required museums to collect and store material and visual cultural heritage for future generations in accordance with ICOM's ethical guidelines. For the same purpose, museums were required – again, in accordance with ICOM's instructions – to practice collection research, education and information dissemination,

1. I am grateful to my colleagues Elina Kallio, Tiina Merisalo, Tuomas Myrén, Aki Pohjankyrö, Eero Salmio, Satu Savia and Tommi Uutela for sharing their knowledge and experience.

as well as exhibition and publication. No definitions were created for operations or written instructions given related to collecting and storage.

The 2005 Museums Decree defined a long-term operational and financial plan as a requirement for receiving statutory state aid. A part of these plans was a plan for how museums organise the displaying, collecting, accessioning and storing of collections. The basis was the Museo 2000 (Museum 2000) commission's view that all museums require a collections policy programme, in order to improve the management of their collections (Museo 2000, p. 53, p. 58). This marked the beginning of collections policy documents for many Finnish museums. As an example, the first collections policy document for the National Museum of Finland was published in 2009. Nevertheless, the new Museums Act of 2019 was the first law to state explicitly that museums receiving statutory state aid required both collections and a collections policy programme. Helsinki City Museum was slightly ahead of many others, since its first collections policy document was completed in 2003.

The Beginning of the Helsinki City Museum Collections Policy Process

The history of the City Museum's collections goes back to 1787, when the bass drums, horns and standard that belonged to the city's disbanded cavalry unit were collected.[2] The members of the bourgeoisie who led Helsinki at the time must have had their reasons to preserve these specific objects, even though no documentation of those reasons remains. We can consider their collecting to be a part of the general identity project of the rising European bourgeoisie class. Weapons and musical instruments were typical collectibles, already in the collections of Renaissance nobility, and flags and standards were valued as spoils of war and signs of victory.

The first written form of the City Museum's collection mission is the task given to the Antiquities Board of Helsinki in 1906, i.e., documenting a disappearing Helsinki. The City Museum was founded in 1911 to continue the Antiquities Board's work with the task of "collecting objects that are ideal for illustrating the city's history, its appearance and its societal life" (Kertomus Helsingin kaupungin kunnallishallinnosta 24, 1911, p. 230). In other words, the view of what should be collected for the City Museum's collections has existed since its founding, even if the matter was not conceptualised as a collections policy per se.

In 2000, Helsinki turned 450 years old and was named the European Capital of Culture. After the City Museum had accomplished this Herculean task, it was time to focus on developing collections management. Many factors incentivised development. Firstly, Helsinki's city administration adopted a results-based management model from the business world. The model emphasised strategic thinking and measuring operations. A mission and vision were also defined

2. Helsinki City Archives, Maistraatin pöytäkirjat Ca:93. 3. maalisk. 1787, § 5. pp. 14–149.

for the City Museum as one of the city organisation's actors (Helsingin kaupunginmuseon kokoelmien historia 2002, p. 2). Secondly, the museum's own museological thinking developed in the same direction as part of the internal professionalisation process, together with the museum field. By chance, the City Museum of Stockholm explored the collection collections management goals of other Nordic capital museums during this time (Sigurdsson 2001), and discussions during this process inspired colleagues in Helsinki to study their own collections more analytically.

The work was aided by the storage room's basic renovation and a desire to direct resources from accepting donations toward museum-led documentation projects (Helsingin kaupunginmuseon kokoelmastrategia 2003, p. 2). The undertaking was characterised by the difficulties involved in pioneering work. There were no real domestic models, which was one additional reason why Stockholm's report was so welcome.

Work had to begin from scratch. The first task was to describe what the museum's collections actually included. Information on the collections' specific contents was largely based on employees' personal skills and tacit knowledge, because the information was – as was the case with almost all other museums – primarily recorded in manual record books and files. Moreover, cataloguing was behind in accessioning, despite the fact that the first IT-based relational database was implemented in 1991 (Toimintakertomus 1991). Information on the contents and goals materialised as accessioning and everyday practices, and was retained as an oral tradition whose interpretation depended on the new generation of museum employees.

The analysis demonstrated that the personality and interests of the Museum Director had a significant impact on the collections' acquisitions until the beginning of the 1980s. Directors made decisions on which objects to purchase for the collections and purchased objects themselves. Later, as the museum grew, curators began to play a larger role. A survey conducted as background for the history project revealed, however, that curators either lacked the necessary skills or were unwilling to analyse the reasons for their decisions. Instead, they spoke of "an intuitive recognition skill" (Helsingin kaupunginmuseon kokoelmastrategia 2003, p. 39). That said, there was a unanimous view of the goal, which was "a collection of objects that is as varied and comprehensive as possible and describes Helsinki and the people of Helsinki" (Kokoelmastrategia 2003, p. 38). In other words, the process of adding to collections had followed the mission given during the founding phase at the beginning of the 20th century, even though there were no written or public instructions. The insufficient cataloguing made accessioning difficult in the present, because people felt that there was no comprehensive understanding of the collections.

The City Museum's first real collections strategy was completed as part of the process in 2003. It began ambitiously with the definition of Helsinki's city identity. According to the strategy, the identity's elements were being a city by the sea, the city's position as a capital city and being European – all themes that

are still present in the Helsinki City Strategy. The collections were examined in relation to the identity's different elements. One central observation was that the object collection placed more emphasis on private life and women's lives, whereas the photograph collection focused more on public spaces. Another observation was that the collections as a whole emphasised the inner city. It was noted that these factors caused many of the city's residents to be excluded from the collections. Much thought was given to what it meant to identify as a Helsinki resident, but the museum's relation to legislation or the Helsinki City Strategy was not mentioned at all. Instead, borders were defined between the Helsinki City Museum and other museums in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. The aim was not only to limit the museum's acquisitions but also to improve co-operation. The museum's own primary processes received descriptions, which was possible because the city had recently adopted a process description practice. Contemporary collecting was mentioned referentially, but the matter had clearly been considered:

> We must assess which contemporary trends will be given more significance and become permanent fixtures of city life. If these trends are added to collections, the reasons for adding them should primarily be based on the impact of the trend in Helsinki instead of how hot the trend is. (Helsingin kaupunginmuseon kokoelmastrategia 2003, p. 48, translated by the author)

The document also notes that the museum should represent other realities besides those of the museum's employees and most typical customers, but no means to accomplish this or concrete goals were defined. The document also discovered deficiencies and development needs. Online publication was not yet possible in 2003, and the document was not published in any other form either, so it was only available for the museum's internal use. In fact, the internal nature of the document is one of its notable features. There are no mentions of any stakeholders, external users, citizens or financiers.

The collections strategy was updated rather quickly in 2007, and it was called *The Collections Policy Programme*. This time, the incentive came from legislators. The Museums Act of 2005 required museums receiving statutory state aid to have a comprehensive long-term plan. The previous document consisted of 56 sheets of A4 paper. The new document was comprised of only 12 sheets and contained many references to previous processes and the history of the collections. It was easy to build on earlier work, and the new document proved that collection thinking and work had developed. The collections strategy of 2003 was mostly descriptive, whereas the 2007 version included more strategically-minded writing. The document defined customers, citizens and the research community, and named the owner of the collections, i.e., the City of Helsinki. The document also set a goal for collections policy work – defining the future of the collections' content and care. The guiding principles according to the document were the museum's mission and operational plan, which meant that collections management was redefined as a part of the museum's comprehensive

operation. The museum's first collection inventory began with this collections policy update. In addition, the document made visible the serious problem of objects without inventory numbers, which had previously gone largely unmentioned. The accessibility and mobility of collections were mentioned for the first time, which indicated that museological discussions and suggestions were being followed. The digital world had also developed. Transferring collection information online was set as a goal, and the new collections policy programme could be published on the museum's website.

Toward Dynamic Museum Collections

The goals written in the 2007 collections policy document were goals of their time. Similar objectives were present in both national and international discussions, and there was even talk of reinventing the museum as an institute (Anderson 2004). The period was also an eventful period for collections management, and the development of digital technology facilitated networking and made collection information more easily accessible. Common topics at the beginning of the century included the uncontrollably growing museum collections, collection bulimia and the hoarding of collections, with museums becoming more aware of the fact that resources were limited. In England and the Netherlands, discussion about the costs of collections management began at the end of the 1980s, and in Finland, the depression in the 1990s had made the vulnerability of public funding painfully obvious. The remedy offered was the concept of dynamic collections, which was launched by many parties (van Mensch & Meijer-van Mensch 2011, p. 19, p. 20). The idea at the core of the concept was that collections are not static, given entities; rather, they are entities whose contents and significance can change from time to time, with collecting and deaccessioning being two sides of the same coin. Considering the significance of new and existing collections was seen as important. The first version of the significance method was launched in Australia in 2001. There was also discussion of potentially increasing the use and shared ownership of collections, and the *Collections Mobility 2.0. Lending for Europe 21st Century* project was conducted between 2001 and 2010. The aim of the project was to increase the mobility and shared use of museum collections within the European Union (Petersson et al. 2010). ICOM also established a new committee focused on the development of collections (the Committee for Collecting; COMCOL) in 2010. Other megatrends in the museum world included the participation of customers and communities, which had been established as an idea as early as in the 1970s, but did not get much wind in its sails until the 2010s. The position of experts was challenged, and museums began searching for an active role for the audience as partners and experts in both acquisitions, as well as in interpreting the significance of existing collections. COMCOL created a new, visible forum for skills and thinking related to these matters.

There was also much activity around these questions in Finland. In 2011, led by the Finnish Heritage Agency, the Finnish National Gallery and the Finnish Museums Association, the Museum 2015 project began. During their project, cataloguing instructions based on the SPECTRUM standard were created. Ad-

ditionally, the project implemented a collection management system that all museums could choose to use. The aim was to develop the management of collections and the accessibility of collection information widely throughout the entire museum field, and to find solutions to challenges related to electronic bodies of work. Museum 2015 wished to steer museums' activities away from each museum's internal needs toward common practices, where different collections and their objects would be accessible to users, regardless of their original source. This unification of practices was supported by the *Checklist for Museum Collections Management Policy* publication. The checklist was complemented by the Finnish version of the significance analysis method (2015), which museums could use to deepen their understanding of their collections' museum value and significance (see also Häyhä, Jantunen & Paaskoski, this volume).

One matter that was crucially important for the dissemination and accessibility of electronic bodies of work, and one that strongly steered the guidelines of collections policy, was the Finna service. It opened in 2013 and is the customer interface of the National Digital Library. Through Finna, the public has constantly-expanding access to the cultural heritage information of libraries, museums and archives.

From the perspective of collections policy, the TAKO Network played an important role. The network significantly improved the transparency of collections management and increased the exchange of knowledge and skills related to collections management. Museums in the TAKO Network can accession their collections in a controlled manner and avoid overlapping work, based on the framework defined by the agreement on collaboration among Finnish museums in accessions and collections. Teemu Ahola examines the TAKO Network in more detail in this publication, but the network's significance cannot be exaggerated when writing about the collections policy of Finnish museums. Museologist Simon Knell argued in 2004 that the collections policy documents of museums often look inward, focusing only on their own collections, and that the documents do not sufficiently account for either development and future outlooks or the relation between a museum's collection and the rest of the museum field. With TAKO, such navel-gazing in collections policy has been considerably reduced in Finland.

Besides TAKO, the development of collections management in the 2010s also invested in other projects that unified operations in the museum field and provided tools for collections policy work. Even the Museo 2000 Commission recognised the need to limit collections and accessioning and proposed that museum collections should implement a classification system based on the museum value of objects. This classification system also included the possibility of deaccessioning (Museo 2000, p. 16, p. 54). Museums took up the challenge at very different times. Tampere Museums were trailblazers who had already implemented a classification system for their collections in 1994. Action was truly finally taken with the *Kokoelmapoistojen hyvät käytännöt* (Good practices for deaccessioning) project between 2014 and 2016. In the project, six museums created a proposal

for a national deaccessioning process (Sarantola-Weiss & Västi 2016). In this sense, the attitude of Finnish museums towards deaccessioning has followed European developments. In the early 2000s, many museum professionals still considered deaccessioning unethical. Now, the scales have tipped in such a way that not deaccessioning is generally seen as equally unethical, although that is not the case everywhere. Museologist Dieuwertje Wijsmuller (2017) has charted the attitude that EU countries have towards deaccessioning, and has stated that almost all countries have legislation related to deaccessioning, national instructions or best practices developed by museums themselves, but there are still differences in whether collection management aims to produce dynamic collections or preserve the material cultural heritage that museums control as perfectly as possible. In Finland, as in other Nordic countries, the idea of dynamic collections is widely shared, and museums have implemented collection classification tools related to it. Furthermore, they have started to perform significance analyses and have begun deaccessioning processes. The national museum statistics began tracking deaccessioning for the first time in 2016. Between 2016 and 2018, cultural-historical collections had deaccessioned a total of 14,295 objects documented on Museum Statistics, which amounts to an insignificant 0.2% of the collections' total number of objects.

All projects described above were characterised by their network structure. Different museums participated in the development projects, while the Finnish Museums Association, the Heritage Agency and the Ministry of Education and Culture worked as a steering group, publisher of the final report and investor. The substance of the projects was produced by museum professionals. The structure made the field's voice heard and helped to implement developmental thinking. In the 2010s, collections changed from being a private matter of individual museums to being part of a shared, professionally-developed national cultural heritage. The work done together culminated in the Ministry of Education and Culture's 2018 programme, *Mahdollisuuksien museo* (Opportunities in the Museum Sector) (Mattila 2018). The programme emphasised planning in collections management and collections as a resource for communities and society. *Mahdollisuuksien museo* – and all national collections policy steering and development work, in fact – was penetrated with the idea that it should be possible to prioritise and classify all kinds of museum collections.

Good Work is Rewarded

Helsinki City Museum also enjoyed the benefits of networking. The museum actively participated in founding the TAKO Network and in the deaccessioning project. The agreement on national collaboration in accessions and collections was made with the Finnish Heritage Agency in 2013. The deaccessioning project brought much-needed support from colleagues to the discussion regarding the ethics and practices of deaccessioning. Deaccessioning had already been documented as a collections management tool in 2000, but in 2014, the leasing periods for collection centres were ending and inventories as well as deaccessioning had

to be conducted on a large scale. Active participation in COMCOL's operation brought an international perspective to the proceedings.

All the development work and networking were visible in the City Museum's next collections policy programme, which was completed in 2014 and continued until 2019. Like many other museums, the basis for the City Museum's programme was the *Checklist for Museum Collections Management Policy*, which introduced the concept of collection mission to the document. The concept encompassed the somewhat disorganised concepts of city identity and collections history from previous documents. Compared to the earlier documents, the new document was generally characterised by more accurate terminology and a broad view of the different perspectives of collection care, from developing spaces to attempting to assess the economic impacts of collections management. Another new feature was that the idea of customer perspective was included in the document.

The City Museum got new premises in 2016. The move made it possible to renew the museum's strategy, as well as our understanding of our audience and of who we want to reach. Customer thinking and inclusive practices had internationally permeated museological thinking, and the City Museum was on the cutting edge. The results of this work were encapsulated in the new vision: "Everyone has the opportunity to fall in love with Helsinki".

With new legislation, updating the collections policy became a topical issue again in 2019 as part of the statutory state aid system reform. The update provided a good reason for looking both backward and forward. One delightful note was that the museum's own collection workers considered the 2014 collections policy document a helpful tool. The document helped in recognising areas that had improved, and it was used in customer communication and even as a tool in recruiting.

I believe that there is good reason to say that the City Museum's collections are well under control as we enter the 2020s. Collections management has taken a huge leap in 15 years, and there were developmental tools that museum workers could only dream of in 2003, i.e., the main body of object and archive collections was kept in one collection centre in appropriate conditions. Collections were processed as dynamic entities whose accessioning was carefully considered and limited, and both collection inventories and deaccessioning were constantly performed. Contemporary collecting was done regularly, and the targets of documentation were usually selected through national discussions or as part of university collaboration. The TAKO collaboration established clear boundaries with other museums and enabled an active, collegial discussion. Overall, the museum was no longer an introverted, autonomous actor that was detached from others. Instead, collections management was conducted while actively interacting with the operational environment. As an example, the Helsinki City Strategy, i.e., the strategy of the museum's owner community, had a much more visible impact on collections management than it did before. This can be interpreted as having less freedom, but committing to the Helsinki City

Strategy also clearly helped in both defining the borders of our own operation and in budget negotiations.

All in all, the development of the City Museum's collections management reflected the general professionalisation of museum work from both a management and accessioning standpoint. The museum's directors – regardless of their gender – long represented the tradition of gentlemen collectors, where the views and tastes of individual connoisseurs were deciding factors and where accession procedures were not central to operations. This attitude, in turn, was reflected in collection workers as the museum expanded. In the 21st century, accessioning was no longer based on the intuition of individual experts, but rather on collection responsibilities and collegial decisions, and there was strong commitment to collection procedures. The founding-phase documentation regarding collecting the city's history, face and societal life continued to steer the collection mission. We have considerably developed in the strategic thinking heralded by Simon Knell (2004, p. 14), and our understanding of our own collections, as well as their potential and challenges, has deepened significantly. The development can be clearly observed by reading the museum's collections policy documents, but it can also be seen in everyday work.

Museum Collections in the 2020s

What about challenges? What should Helsinki City Museum and all other museums prepare for as we enter the 2020s? Many present and future challenges have already been identified several times over the decades (Lubar 2017). These include challenges such as controlling the growth of collections, controlling and publishing collections digitally and including the audience in accessioning. Becoming mainstream does not mean that all the work is done, however, although our museographical and museological competence has advanced significantly. In the 2020s, these themes will be gathered under the umbrella term of sustainable development. We must develop museum collections that will be ecologically, financially, socially and culturally sustainable.

The theme of sustainable development has been relevant for a long time. It was the basis of the eco-museum movement. The British Museums Association, for example, already published an article on the topic in 2008 (Sustainability and Museums). The Finnish Museums Association included sustainable development in their strategy for 2007–2010. Controlling energy consumption related to collection storage and using ecological materials are actions that we have begun to view as obvious. Controlling the growth of collections is a very important tool in this matter as well, as growing collections inevitably result in increased stress on the environment (Marisse 2010, p. 60). Museums must do their part, even though some have questioned whether a single museum can have a direct impact on climate change (Pop et al. 2019). Responsible thinking also applies to digital collections, whose required server space consumes large amounts of energy. There is still much left to do. Collection lifespan thinking is still in its infancy, and the materials of industrial and post-industrial culture will

require much attention from a conservation and storage perspective (Paavola 2016; Fontell & Leskelä 2016; Holkeri et al. 2016). Additionally, digital service products form a special object group, because traditional competence is focused on material cultural heritage that is made to last (Ojala 2016). The conservation of digital collections is a phenomenon in its own right, and we still have little experience with it.

What about economic sustainability, then? Our understanding of storage conditions, materials and different converting needs has increased substantially, but better competence in these areas has also increased costs – high-quality spaces, materials and tools cost money, after all. This forms a cost-related challenge that museums must face openly, because it appears that financing property and equipment costs will become more difficult as financiers are increasingly interested in the results of work done with the audience and the work's impact. More goals are also constantly being set, from both outside and within museums, without a corresponding increase of resources.

Furthermore, the challenges of social and cultural sustainability will become increasingly evident. Social sustainability refers to generations inheriting the requirements for well-being from previous generations. Cultural sustainability, then, means ensuring that cultural heritage and other kinds of intangible capital are passed from one generation to the next, along with the values related to them (Pop et al. 2019). These two forms of sustainability are at the core of museum work, but we must become more aware of them ourselves and better at communicating about this as a fundamental task. Clear arguments must be provided for why collections work is significant to future generations, as well as to different communities and groups. The lack of sustainability in the economy is currently dominating the discourse, so we should become better in our ability to use economic and business-related language when speaking to owners and decision-makers about the benefits of collections and collections management, without losing sight of our core mission (Loach et al. 2017). Significance analysis, for example, provides us with ways to discuss the contents of and values related to collections. We should especially be able to measure the impact of collections management, so that we have definitive numerical arguments that are easy to communicate when defending collections. The Impact Playbook produced by the Europeana Foundation (Verwayen et al. 2017) presents ways to measure the impact of digitising collections, in particular. Developing such tools will definitely be a challenge for collections management in the 2020s. In Finland, the number of Finna users is one simple measure of impact, but the numbers only explicitly indicate the impact of digitalisation work, even though there are a number of collections management issues in the background, such as prioritising and conserving.

The Audience as a Focal Point

All aforementioned challenges are, in one way or another, bound to the relationship between the audience and collections. The meanings and impact of

collections are central quality criteria, and neither significance nor quality is currently defined by experts alone.

Expectations of providing experiences and entertainment meet the challenges of objectivity, diversity and empowerment of all kinds. Museum collections should aim to fulfil the same goals and needs as other museum work. Peter van Mensch and Leontine Meijer-van Mensch state (2011, p. 15) that we should view collections as tools for achieving a museum's goals, not as goals *an sich*. We must examine whether our collections can serve these needs. Should we perhaps acquire new types of collections or develop our collections management, so that we can utilise the empowering potential that collections have?

There has long been the opinion that an exhibition is the platform on which a museum can best display its collections to the audience. Exhibitions continue to ensure the best media visibility for museum work, and museums' operations are mainly assessed in light of visitor numbers. From this point of view, collections have no intrinsic value; their purpose is to support the goals of a museum's exhibition activities (Anderson 2004, p. 4).

There is also an opposing view of development to the previous perspective. Exhibition visitors want to be ever closer to collection objects and experience them with all their senses by touching, listening and smelling. This underlines our ability to classify collections. The Helsinki City Museum has utilised collection use classifications for approximately a decade, and objects are actively used in both exhibitions and activities related to museum pedagogy. Some visitors also want to know more about the mythical behind-the-scenes life (Lubar 2017) of museums. For these types of visitors, the museum organises visits to the collection centre. Unfortunately, the City Museum has not been able to arrange an open access collection centre for visitors, despite plans in the early 2000s.

On the other hand, the first steps in including audiences in collections work have been taken with the introduction of two voluntary groups doing photograph collection work. The *Kuvakummit* (Photo Godparents) group focused on photograph collection care, and the photography hobbyist group, *Kuvaussakki* (Photographing Bunch), documented Helsinki and the city's life, in co-operation with museum staff. Meanwhile, voluntary work is still being defined in the cultural-historical collection.

For Complexity

The new paradigm that puts the audience more into focus was visible in the Finnish 2019 Museums Act, which, for the first time, highlighted matters such as community, cultural diversity and equality as purposes of museum activity (314/2019, §1).

Museums have undertaken complete turnabouts with regard to identity politics. They have constructed a cohesive worldview and a homogeneous community identity for many generations and have simultaneously built and maintained the

concepts of otherness. The word community is, in and of itself, excluding, and it places a boundary between us and the other (Walle 2018, p. 107). In a global culture, however, people's identities are constructed transnationally, and in many locations, which museum collections should reflect (Mulinari et al. 2009, p.13). As a result, museums have begun to deconstruct this ideal monolith, and they are now steering their operations toward diversity.

There has been a desire to introduce fractures and different tones to homogeneous and monocultural narratives about national and, in the City Museum's case, local identities. Thomas Bauer, an expert on Arabic literature, has presented a strong case for the culture of ambiguity (2018). He is concerned about the tendencies of simplification and overgeneralisation that are related to populism and fundamentalism and that also affect depictions of history. Museums have the opportunity to take a role in resisting fundamentalism and in making diversity and complexity visible. This is an essential part of social and cultural sustainability. Bauer reminds people that the past is truly different – sometimes even bizarre and repulsive – but change has existed and always will. The emancipatory power of museum collections is that they are proof of the potential for change. They also bear witness to the fact that all change is not always positive, and that we must constantly fight for the values we believe in.





Figures 1 and 2. The challenge of the collection's development is to create shared interfaces between collections and the many identities and stories manifest in the audiences. A young family in Helsinki in 2004 and a uniform from the 1780s. Photos: Matti Huuhka and Jan Alanco/HCM.

Changing one's own identity as an actor is not without its problems. Museums have a strong desire to deconstruct traditional stereotypes instead of strengthening them, but accomplishing this task demands much self-inspection and education. One criticism concerns museums' positions as actors. Museums and their collections are thought to represent the established power structures of the majority – which they often do – and they do not necessarily recognise their own motives (Damsholt 2012, pp. 34–36; Boast 2011). From this perspective, the desire for understanding and harmony often means assimilating the other into us. Thomas Walle argues that a truly inclusive museum process is one that changes new communities and the museum's traditional demographics, as well

as the museum itself (Walle 2018, p. 107, p. 115, p. 124). In other words, the result should be truly new communities that are not based on nationalism or local patriotism. Individual groups and their diversity should be strengthened. This is obviously not an easy task, and it is not easy to always make the right moves in relation to an issue that is an object for much ideology, politics and feelings (Ahmed 2012).

A Culturally Sustainable Collection from Helsinki?

Until the 1970s, people moved from Finland to other countries in search of a better life. Today, however, Helsinki is a city of migrants. In 2017, only approximately half of Helsinki's residents were born in Helsinki, and 16% of the population originally came from abroad. In 2030, approximately 30% of the inhabitants will speak something other than Finnish or Swedish as their first language (Saukkonen 2018). The City Museum wishes to make the culture of these new Helsinki residents visible, and we hope that the museum becomes one of their contact points. The vital question is to what extent collections and the practices of documenting collection information will enable varied and multi-layered interpretations that could offer building blocks for alternative narratives and identity processes.

In other words, to what extent will the collections of the Helsinki City Museum offer tools for visualising and reframing cultural diversity? We have some objects that are related to Jewish, Romanian, Tatar and Russian history and culture, as well as the history and culture of other groups that are traditionally not thought of as natively Finnish. There are only some sporadic examples of immigration from the end of the 1900s. The search term Somali, for example, yields some photographs and women's stockings from the 1980s, whose colour has been designated as Somali. Cultural differences and sexual norms have been addressed in exhibition and event production, but they are only sporadically represented in collections. Records related to the city's language relationships – old Swedish roots, the German bourgeoisie class and being under Russian rule in the 19th century – have not been catalogued systematically from a language or ethnic standpoint. The collection of LGBTQ culture has, however, been designated to the Finnish Labour Museum Werstas in TAKO co-operation (see also Ahola, this volume). Documenting anti-racist activities is also Werstas' responsibility. One notable challenge for the City Museum – and for the mobility and accessibility of collections in general – is making collections and collection information in other museums visible to the museum's own audiences.

Collections have never been systemically analysed as to how they reflect gender, social class or ethnic background. The collection analysis of 2003 observed, as already mentioned, that wealthy districts of the inner city and the educated middle class were over-represented, and the general feeling is that this is still true. The division between public and private life, in particular, follows the bourgeoisie gender system, meaning that objects related to private life are primarily related to women, whereas objects related to professions and production are

more related to men. The City Museum's example supports Fredrik Svanberg's (2015, p. 391, p. 392) argument that even though museology frequently analyses the significance of exhibition and audience work, collections are researched less from the audience's perspective.

It can be said that reaching marginalised groups is still one of our challenges. That said, we do have the desire to add examples of different ethnic, linguistic, religious and social groups to collections. Then again, the notion of marginalisation is problematic in the same way as is the notion of community, because the concepts of marginalisation and example already imply that something is normal, while something else is marginalised and requires examples. A key question is what collections will mean to future Helsinki residents. The current collection objects and their narratives will be distant and foreign for them in terms of both time and culture. Cultural sustainability requires cultural accessibility.

The Digital Possibility

To conclude, a few thoughts on the digital world should be given. The collection objects of cultural-historical museums have traditionally been three-dimensional. At the beginning of the 21st century, the mass of objects, archived paper records, photographs and pieces of art started to become a problem, and digital solutions were proposed to control it and its expansion. Digitisation was a new phenomenon at the time, and it raised many questions about how museums would be able to adapt to the new operating environment (Mairesse 2010, p. 64; Knell 2010). On the other hand, Tomislav Šola dreamed of a total museum (2010) that could integrate museums and the cultural heritage they control into people's everyday practices. In 2020, we can see that museum collections have, for the most part, truly moved online and that they are also being utilised.

The Covid-19 pandemic of 2020 has also put digitalization at the centre of museums' work in a revolutionary way. The already existing know-how has taken a huge leap, and the situation has shown, on the one hand, the necessity and possibility of digital ways of working in the new global context, but at the same time it has also emphasised the importance of physical collections and encounters. In any case, it seems that the areas of collection work and public work in museums are becoming increasingly intertwined due to the new digital tools and communication now available.

Putting collection information on the internet has played a significant role in, for example, the City Museum's operation. In 2020, the entirety of collection management was based on a collection management system that offered extensive possibilities for openly publishing collections online. Thanks to this practice, particularly the accessibility and methods of using the photograph collection have changed in ways that we could not even have imagined in 2003. Approximately five percent of the collections had been published as digital objects through the national Finna service by the end of 2019, and the City Museum also had its own Finna-based *Helsinkikuvia.fi* interface, through which photographs were

published as high-resolution images with a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC BY 4.0) license. This was rare in Finland, and even rare around the world. The collections were opened through the EU digital platform for cultural heritage Europeana in 2020. In 2019, there were some 3.4 million visits to the digital treasures of Helsinki heritage.

On the Relationship Between the Material and the Digital

It is obvious that keeping object collections dynamic and significant will require new practices and museological perspectives. The material life that the historian Fernand Braudel examined – the ever-present, unnoticed substances of everyday life (Mäkikalli 2010, p. 13) – does still exist. However, an everyday life that functions through virtual means and tools now exists right alongside it, and material substances have faded into the background. In contrast to the traditions of modern society's consumerist world, physical objects have moved from the spotlight to the background, while global production has almost completely overtaken local production. We are still interacting with all kinds of stuff (Miller 2010), but individual and institutional discourse is at the moment concentrated around letting go.

Physical objects are not necessarily in a key position anymore, not even in the research of material culture. Digital cataloguing makes it possible to attach many types of data and different meanings to collection objects, and it also enables a new system for referencing objects outside of a museum's own collection. Online portals and search engines have made it easier to search for data from large collections and to simultaneously search for data from the collections of several different organisations.

In summary, digitisation increases the accessibility of collections in research, and an individual researcher can analyse larger and larger object masses. This does, of course, place demands on museums regarding both cataloguing and photographing quality. How can cataloguing meet the demands of changing information interests and research questions, and what will happen to the parts of collections that have not been catalogued in a collection management system or other forms of digitisation? Will anyone remember them or know how to use them?

This inevitably also affects the position of collection objects. Firstly, the collection and long-term storage of digital objects must be ensured. We must continue to consider the relationship between the material substance and its digital counterpart. As physical objects are increasingly documented using digital documentation systems, digital records will surely replace physical collection objects in the future, at least partially. All kinds of images, etc. – photographs, the visual arts, moving images – are at the core of modern virtual communication, and images are used more than ever, which requires objects to be in a format that can be shared digitally.

On the other hand, the material essence of collection objects, their materiality, is significant to the relationship between the observer, the object and the object's interpretation. How can a two-dimensional image or virtual reality even convey something three-dimensional, and how will digitalisation work in relation to dimensions such as weight, smell and touch, as well as all the other information that is conveyed through the different senses (Roivainen 2016, p. 52, p. 53; Ilmakunnas 2016, pp. 140–141)? Furthermore, we must separately consider the documentation and recording of digital culture. How can we document all the many different work and leisure activities that place codes and algorithms at their centre and use a computer or phone as their interface?

Digitisation presents huge opportunities from an audience perspective, when we consider including the audience in narratives and in collecting data, but it also creates possibilities for inventing new user experiences. When collections are digitised, they can be opened to the audience for free examination, which may lead to the audience viewing collections from an entirely different point of view than would an expert. The audience can invent new and innovative ways of using collections. Open culture increases the feeling of community and strengthens the idea of sharing an identity, regardless of location. It also inspires us to think in new, creative ways. At its best, open culture increases productivity, innovation, learning and well-being (Putkonen 2018).

By 2020, we have seen a huge amount of creativity in both the public sphere and in museums. New collection products have been launched and the use of existing services has increased. Museums have gained visibility outside their walls and found new audiences. However, not all museums can do everything, and in the coming years we will see museums looking for the best virtual ways of working for themselves. Maximal impact and the ability to prioritise will be focused on in the coming years.

Physical objects are easily overshadowed in all the excitement for digitisation. Fortunately, museum experts will not be wholly responsible for collection research. After many studies that emphasise the textual nature of reality, humanist research has become interested in re-examining material substance. There has been a return to studying concrete, physical objects, and digital collection information has been challenged in terms of how sufficient it will be for conveying information related to material entities (Immonen 2016; Snellman 2016). In any case, maintaining object research is always a challenge. Object culture is constantly changing, and objects from pre-industrial times are distant to us today (Roivainen 2016, p. 45). The change in object culture has even been referred to by words such as fossilisation (Shove & Pantzar 2006). The challenge for museum workers is keeping these parts of collections usable, so that researchers and museum visitors can approach the past through means other than text and verbalised or digitised entities.

Conclusion

Growing collections, globalisation, climate change and the digitalisation of culture are enormous challenges. However, museums should not lie down and do nothing. Rather, they should seize the opportunities that these changes provide and be agents of change. At best, we can support our communities in processing change and even in making changes. This also applies to collections management. At the beginning of this chapter, I stated that collections policy should not only be comprised of strategies and goals; it should also be an everyday tool that helps museums manage their collections. Still, the strategic dimension is crucial. Collections policy can be a tool for change, and museums can use it to broaden their horizons beyond exhibition schedules and to take control of the future. Grand statements should, however, correspond to concrete goals and actions. The usefulness of a policy is not measured by its breadth or rhetorical inventiveness, but by how well it meets the demands of everyday work. Every museum has its own environment, and one key challenge is keeping a policy alive and developing it.

Helsinki City Museum's experiences have been positive, which is likely the result of several factors. To begin with, collection workers have always been actively involved in the creation process. This has resulted in a certain type of slowness and many meetings in such a large museum, but it has also helped form a shared understanding and commitment. Moreover, the policy has always aimed to be as concrete as possible, and it can be used to verify who does what and what the goal is. Furthermore, there is a realistic understanding that not all goals can be immediately reached.

Customer perspectives were introduced to collections management in 2014, and the photograph collection has already accomplished much in this area. Audience perspective continued to be important in the 2019 collections policy update, because it plays a crucial role in meeting the challenges of social and cultural sustainability. A new challenge was to face the city's cultural diversity from a 2020s point of view and to understand diversity very differently compared to the beginning of the 21st century, when Helsinki's multiculturalism was still often illustrated through such groups as the Russians, Jewish people and Tatars, who had come to Helsinki during the Grand Duchy era.

Because of this, the 2019 update included experiments in the collections policy process to help form a view of how collections and collections management could become more important to different user groups. We wanted the audience to be closer to collections. We experimented with a significance analysis course in museology, invited students attending a course in the adult education centre to the collection centre, analysed our own exhibitions, together with our customer service staff, and supported the photography project of youths who were at risk of social alienation. In short, we followed the museum's vision to find methods, so that "everyone has the opportunity to fall in love with Helsinki".

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Home Museums – Biographical collections of significant lives

Liisa Oikari and Kristina Ranki

Abstract

The chapter discusses museums usually categorised as house museums or historical houses. Different types of museums in this sector and the existing terminology are both examined. We look at the differences and the common features in these museums, as well as their role in biographical knowledge. The focus of the chapter is on a special type of house museum that we – inspired by the Finnish terminology (*kotimuseo)* – call a home museum.

The psychology of home museums, their main characters and approaches, is discussed using various European examples. The Finnish home museum does not in itself differ from the European home museum. The strategies and practices are the same.

Homes become excellent museums because of their ideal size, human interest content and because they provide a perfect narrative of history in a dense form. Modern museum visitors have many requirements on their agenda and as a result, the existing or non-existing fame of the home museum's former occupant is important. Collections, the physical necessity of the home museum, is in the end what makes it different from other biographical and house museums.

A home museum's identity and the significance of collections are approached by examining and comparing two different Finnish home museums through their collection profile: the Mannerheim Museum and the Gallen-Kallela Museum. Authenticity and its many levels in house museums are discussed with special interest placed on the home museum and the high demand for authenticity regarding this particular type of museum.

Key words: home museums, collections, significance, biography, authenticity

Introduction

> The biggest strength of our museum is "the authenticity and the emotional connection that visitors make" to our main character.[1]

In a museum dedicated to an important historical figure, one of the main questions is: What essentially draws the visitor to the house? In other words, is it the admirable collections or the sheer reputation of the personality? This chapter

1. Said by a participant in the European home museum meeting in Helsinki, October 2019.

discusses museums usually categorised as house museums or historical houses. We examine different types of *lieux de mémoire* in this sector of museums and discuss the existing terminology, with its various subcategories that create this unique group of museums. We look at the differences and the common features in these museums, as well as their place in the broader field of museums. This museum type is approached through referring to some European, and especially some Finnish museums that fit the suggested category, as well as by indicating how they differ from other house museums.

The psychology and practical work in a home museum is examined by analysing a group of museums in this category through the strategic aims and identity of the museum. The strengths and weaknesses of these museums as experienced by their caretakers today are under discussion. How do the Finnish and more generally European home museums currently deal with their initial biographical mission, with the modern vision of the given museum field and the transmitting of their everyday values to the public? Do their identities include specific attitudes and are they accessible enough?

A house museum's identity and the significance of collections is approached by examining and comparing two different Finnish house museums through their collection profile – the Mannerheim Museum, former home of the iconic Finn, Marshal Mannerheim (1867–1951, figure 1) and the Gallen-Kallela Museum, former home and atelier of the beloved and influential Finnish artist Akseli Gallen-Kallela (1865–1931, figure 2). The question of authenticity and its many levels in house museums also captures our interest.





Figure 1. Gustaf Mannerheim. Photo: The Mannerheim Museum. Figure 2. Akseli Gallen-Kallela. Photo: The Gallen-Kallela Museum.

Various Ways of Categorisation

House museums are in many ways identifiable and distinguishable from their museum peers. Often house museums are places and buildings in need of museumification, some form of rescue and redemption; they act as glimpses and timestamps of history. Others are places of commemoration, monuments to heroes, collectors, artists or historical events. A house museum combines meaning and content, and functions as a container (Young 2007, p. 60). A house museum preserves history and is meant to represent the past as it once was. It makes us see, understand and feel the experiences of the past, to resonate with the ones who lived before us. The house museum offers a particularly direct encounter with the materiality of another's life (Hancock 2009, p. 114). House museums serve as vessels for immersive history.

Museums in this sector often share similar visions and strategies, and collaboration with peers is welcome. DEMHIST, an ICOM International Committee (Demeures Historiques, "historical houses"), focuses on the conservation and management of house museums. It is a network for house museums and historical houses with a professional perspective on the sector, and it brings together a wide range of expertise regarding the management of house museums. In addition to DEMHIST, other international museum type focused networks, such as Iconic Houses and the Artist Studio Museum, also exist (ICOM DEMHIST; Iconic Houses; the Artist's Studio Museum Network).

Many countries also have their own national networks for museums in this category. In 2011 the Ministry of Culture in France created a network of kindred house museums dedicated to notable persons called *Maison des Illustres*. As of 2018, a total of 235 museums have received this label, which "represents an official recognition of the patrimonial interest of the house". To obtain this level a museum must fulfil certain criteria, including accessibility, authenticity and forms of professional activity. Above all, these *maisons des illustres* need to "excel in the aura of the (national or local) personality." In Finland, the Ministry of Education does not provide such recognition of museums, but in its subventions, it could be said to be supporting the same idea of nationally important heritage houses. More common is the network model between the museums themselves, ranging from the Italian Case Museo in Italy to the Nordic network for literary museums and writer's homes.[2]

In Finland, networks like TAKO (*Ammatillisten museoiden tallennus- ja kokoelmayhteistyöverkosto*), an acquisitions, documentation and collection collaborative network for professionally managed Finnish museums, the Tuusulanjärvi artist colony house museums, the Laajalahti seaside museums and co-operation among house museums in the capital area in Finland, all offer support and a platform for ideas and collaboration for Finnish house museums (see also Ahola,

2. Recently, a Danish initiative around home museums was also created.

this volume).[3] A museum can of course join multiple networks, if one does not satisfy all of its needs. It is also a question of identification and identity; what type of house museums feel the closest and similar, and is there a specific group that the museum wants to connect with?

The terms *house museum* or *historical house* tie together a broad spectrum of different museums. House museums can be categorised further and distinguished by their museum profile and identity, but they are all united by the fact that they are dwellings, museumified and presented as dwellings (Young 2007, p. 60). There are many ways to approach classification and sub-categorisation of the house museum genre. When interpreting house museums, historic, cultural, artistic and social information is considered. One of the earliest categorisation attempts of this type was Sarah Butcher-Younghan's classification of historic house museums into three categories:

> The documentary historic house museum: a house that commemorates a rich or famous individual or family. It provides a glimpse into a famous person's life, but also shows how various social classes might have lived at the time.
>
> The representative historic house museum interprets a particular style of architecture from a particular period.
>
> The aesthetic historic house museum: a historic house that serves as the setting for special collections, where decorative and fine arts, furniture and antiques from various periods are displayed. The house serves as a backdrop for the objects, with no particular attention paid to former residents or the events that took place there.
> (Butcher-Younghan 1993, pp. 184–186)

Another categorisation example is Linda Young's classification of house museums. She focuses on house museums in the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia. With almost 600 examples, she divides them into six categories:

> Hero: Someone important lived here (or sometimes merely passed through).
>
> Collection: A collection of furnishings intrinsic to the house, or a collection formed by the inhabitants that is worth conserving in its original location.
>
> Design: Especially important form, fabric, decoration, technique or innovation; may be aesthetic or technical.
>
> Historic event or process: Something historically significant happened here, once or regularly; may be particular or generic.

3. The Tuusulanjärvi artist colony consist of a group of house museums, mainly artist ateliers and homes. The Laajalahti seaside museums are house museums located around a cove in Helsinki and Espoo.

> Sentiment: Positive spiritual or communal feeling for the place, usually focusing on non-specific antiquity (contrasted to history).
>
> Country house museum: Product of multi-generational development of the house, furnishings, collections, and gardens.
> (Young 2007, p. 63)

Similar views on categorisation of house museums can be observed in a classification project organised by DEMHIST. The committee was founded in 1998 and plans for a categorising project started during the very first years of its operation, lasting until 2009. The project sought to create a system for classifying types of historic house museums along homogenous museological lines. The aim was to discover a shared museological approach to the problems house museums face. In the categorising project, it was argued that the house museum field needs categories in order to manage different houses, based on their different strengths. Situating a museum in one of the categories is the first step toward understanding its significance. Categories are tools that facilitate comparisons between similar house museums, to enable museum professionals to identify exemplars and establish standards (Bryant & Behrens 2007; Pavoni 2000, 2001, 2002, 2010).

With the aid of 135 responses to a questionnaire, the DEMHIST project group was able to create category definitions based on the information received from the house museum sector as follows:

1. Personality houses (writers, artists, musicians, politicians, military heroes, etc)
2. Collection houses (the former home of a collector or a house now used to show a collection)
3. Houses of Beauty (where the primary reason for a museum is the house as work of art)
4. Historic Event houses (houses that commemorate an event that took place in/by the house)
5. Local society houses (house museums established by a local community usually seeking a social cultural facility that may reflect its own identity, rather than for an historic reason)
6. Ancestral homes (country houses and small castles open to the public)
7. Power houses (palaces and large castles open to the public)
8. Clergy houses (monasteries, abbots' houses and other ecclesiastical buildings with a former or current residential use, open to the public)
9. Humble homes (vernacular buildings such as modest farms valued as reflecting a lost way of life and/or building construction)
   (Houses for Museums, Period Rooms, Bryant & Behrens 2007)

In the DEMHIST categorisation project, the categories classify museums mainly by the building's purpose, not by the building type, collection profile or biographical context of the museum. The categorisation project was never finished in the form of a formal publication, as time changed the perspective on interpreting

house museums and new ways of approaching these museums and their place amongst the museum field started emerging.[4] House museums and the intangible cultural heritage connected to them have become more relevant and interesting.

Stefan Bohman's categorisation format for house museums is mostly based on the level of authenticity. The museums used as examples are specifically house museums related to composers, but the classifications can be modified to suit a broader selection of house museums.

> *Nyckeloriginal* (*a key original*, a house that is exactly as it was left by the historical person)
>
> *Rekonstruktion* (*a reconstruction*, a house or a place reconstructed with the original furniture and objects of a historical person)
>
> *Kopiering* (*a copy*, a house or a place reconstructed with similar objects and materials from a specific time)
>
> *Utställningslokal* (*an exhibition space*, a place used for exhibitions of the historical person)
> (Bohman 2010, pp. 44–45)

The categorisations within the house museum sector are certainly helpful for a house museum searching for its identity and a place in the house museum sector. However, categorisations have their flaws and exceptions. As the range of museums included in this museum sector is very wide, so are the classification categories. The need for a deeper and more precise classification arises within the created categories, and subcategories for such as artist ateliers or literary homes are required. No two museums are alike, but the need for peer support creates bridges between similar house museums. The difficulty in categorising also comes up in cases where a museum is suitable for many categories. Forcing a museum into only one category can affect a museum's whole strategy and identity.

In addition to classification, the terminology used to define house museums presents its own interesting dilemma. The terms house museum, historical house or historical house museum, a combination of the two, are commonly used, but broad terms such as these tend to include all places that can be classified as dwellings. Sometimes more specificity is needed. Museum work in a former artist atelier can be very different from that in an open-air museum with house specimens, both of which can be categorised as house museums and technically fall under the terms house museum or historical house.

The intent of this chapter is not to comment on whether the presented category types are suitable for house museums' needs or not. Instead, we mainly focus on the definition of one of the categories. In the footsteps of our fellow researchers, we are proposing an additional term for the field of house museum types

4. Email exchange with DEMHIST board members. (10–13th June 2019)

that can be subcategorised in the DEMHIST categories under the definition for personality houses: the home museum.

Defining Home Museums

There are almost one hundred museums dedicated to individuals in Finland alone. These can be home museums, but also places of memory and exhibitions inside other buildings or exhibitions. Terminology around this type of visitable place is both flourishing and confusing. A debutant museum director cannot always tell if his or her institution is a biographical museum, an atelier museum, a collection house, a historic house or a mix of several of these. The terms house museum and historic house seem to refer to a generally stereotypical timeframe, a generic and neutral house museum. A home museum, on the contrary, was somebody's home. It was founded to memorise a name, and it used to be a genuine home with authentic objects that were collected there for living purposes. It holds a spirit that combines the pedagogical element that the remarkable person brings through his or her exemplary biography and the warmth and hospitality of the (disappeared, therefore mysterious) private home, which understandably appeals to any human being who himself or herself lives in a home or dreams of one.

To begin with, there is a simple – linguistic – explanation for our sympathy for the term home museum: in French (*maison*) and in Italian (*casa*), for instance, the term signifies both the building and the residence. In Finnish, there is a lexical distinction between *talo* (house) and *koti* (home).

The term home museum can also be regarded as a refinement of DEMHIST's category personality house. Personality houses are houses of writers, artists, musicians, politicians, military heroes, etc. They have a biographical connection but are not necessarily in the form of a home. A personality house can also be an exhibition space focused on one historical person. In order to be classified as a home museum, a personality house should, according to us, have a certain level of authenticity and a strong connection to a historical person's life.

In our opinion, any biographical museum can inform, teach and entertain us with a particular personality in mind. Its efforts lie with the human being's history, life and works, but it is not necessary that it should illustrate such physical evidence as authentic collections. It is possible to create a biographical museum totally from the external perspective, either academic or more hagiographic. In house museums, on the other hand, the focus can vaguely shift from the building, its collections and its inhabitant. A house museum can even exist without a personal history attached to it. In a home museum, the purpose and core theme cannot be contested: the mission, vision and every related value all come down to the vocation of conserving and transmitting the memory of those who have distinguished themselves in (local, national or international) history. In a home museum, most attention should be given to the totality – although scholars

understand the hierarchy of its elements: the contents of the house can be seen "as the key to unlocking personality" (Forgan 2012, p. 257).

Instead of the numerous conceptual possibilities, we have here settled for the term significant lives.[5] The illustrious, famous, known or heroic personalities (men, or increasingly, women) who have lived in homes that have been made into museums – and whose lives have a larger, national or even international significance in artistic or political developments – are special in the sense that people usually visit them not in anticipation of incredible treasures, which is the case with art museums or history museums in general. The visitor is drawn to these places or knows of their existence only because of an a priori interest towards the names that the museums carry. As a visiting destination, the museum connected to a hero or an anti-hero has a huge brand advantage compared to generic or neutral museums.

Significance is of course subjective, and we wish not to enter the discussion of human value, but are simply suggesting that the more known a person is, the more his or her museum fits into our studied category. Subcategories are subsequently the home museums of regional and local heroes (unknown outside their region), national *illustres* (Winston Churchill or Urho Kekkonen) and international mega-stars (Elvis Presley or Jean Sibelius). The idea of canon is useful here – whose home museums belong to the story of Finland or a global history more than others? Significance or illustriousness in the sense of exemplarity has great advantages, for instance in the construction of a national identity. Having its background in the *viri illustres* tradition going back to Plutarch, and reinforced in the Enlightenment tradition of the *Grands Hommes* (great men), home museums of important individuals are opened to the public specifically and exclusively because of the importance of that person and due to their either exemplarity or fascinating counter-exemplarity. Therefore, it is a part not only of their history of origins, but also a mission stated in their statutes and still today the core of their existence.

What is not a home museum? Anonymous houses should not be classified as home museums. They can be good examples of a certain architectural style, a period in history or a social class, but this must not be mixed up with the type of museums where a dichotomy between talking about the person's significant life and his or her possessions might present challenges. There are many museums where the biographical side is neglected or where it is secondary to the efforts of reinforcing local identity. In our view, recently created inauthentic homes built in order to strengthen a celebrity with a mere illustration of how it might have looked should not be counted as home museums.

Another somewhat problematic dimension to these distinctions can be added by memorial places that are actual visitable homes but are not intended to perform the function of a professional museum, such as Astrid Lindgren's home in

5. *Merkkihenkilö* in Finnish and *bemärkt* person in Swedish come very close to the term significant person.

Stockholm. There are also combinations of art museums and former homes – not to mention waiting sanctuaries that could be opened to the public.

ICOMOS (2008) has defined the spirit of the place as follows:

> Spirit of place (or genius loci) refers to the unique, distinctive and cherished aspects of a place. It is thus as much in the invisible weave of culture (stories, art, memories, beliefs, histories, etc.) as it is the tangible physical aspects of a place (monuments, rivers, woods, architectural style, pathways, views, etc.) or its interpersonal aspects (the presence of family, friends and kindred spirits).

A home museum is a suitable cradle for the spirit of the place to reside in. It is a space where the spirit of a person still lingers. Authenticity, a term which we delve into later in this chapter, also affects the classification of a house museum, and even more so, that of a home museum. A home museum is required to possess a high level of authenticity, an expectation created by not only museum professionals but the audience as well.

Whereas the biographical museum does not necessarily have an authentic collection, and the house museum does not always present a clear historical inhabitant, the home museum combines these two into one, and is also dense with historical information in an experienceable form.

The Psychology of the Home Museum

> To create museums of significant people's homes is not that modern.[6]

In this section, home museums are seen from a distance, as well as from an internal perspective gained through working experience. In the classroom, some students of museology stated that the main task of a home museum is to make a person considered immortal be understood as a mortal. How does the museum manage this noble goal? What is the home museum's working environment and how does it cope with its central mission in the midst of various challenges, from collection care and conservation duties to the growing expectation of entertainment in museums?

The home museum phenomenon has its roots in the 19th century high season of (national) heroes, which in its turn replaced kings and saints in the turmoil of

6. "*Merkkihenkilöiden kotien museoiminen ei ole tätä päivää.*" See for instance a blog writing by the Finnish Heritage Agency in 2016 on the funding of museums, where an attack against small home museums comes as a bit of a surprise. Available at http://blogi.nba.fi/2016/maararahaleikkaukset-murentavat-kulttuuriperintoa [Last accessed 27 October 2019]. The same de-personifying tendency is to be seen in the Finnish way of re-baptizing the great men's commemorations days in the calendar to commemorate the context as well as the person – Sibelius or the day of the Finnish music (8th of December), Aleksis Kivi Day or the Day of Finnish literature (10th of October). The 4th of June has a slightly different history, which since the 75th birthday of Marshal Mannerheim, has also been the Flag Day of the Finnish Defence Forces.

the French revolution. Exemplary people were presented through biographies, statues and tombs – today they can also be understood through home museums, where it is possible to access the human being behind the myth.

Contrary to what has sometimes been argued, home museums are still in fashion. Partly due to the popularity of museums in general, they still are the perfect way to personify history and to give faces to nations, societies or artistic movements. In the era of digital media and "information tsunamis", there is a strong need for experiencing "the real thing" (Bohman 2010, p. 11, p. 24, p. 25). If we travel to a place that is new to us, it is surely tempting to go and find the "soul of the place" in the residence of the Norwegian composer Edvard Grieg or the St Petersburg poet Anna Akhmatova. We might also want to examine to what extent the Swedish Prince Eugen in his Waldemarsudde or the artist Joaquin Sorolla in his atelier-villa in Madrid were representatives of or dissidents regarding their time and social circles. The homes of the significant persons in each culture are not just unique curiosities, but discussion starters for many other issues – the less a tourist knows of a country or theme, the more powerful the home museums are in communicating their chosen message.

The home museum is a specifically important tool**,** not "only" for cultural heroes, but when the significant life in question is a strong symbol of a nation, belongs to a dramatic phase in history or is a phenomenon. We come to think of Victor Hugo for the eloquent yet changing France, Winston Churchill for critical moments of British history, Nicolae Ceausescu for difficult Romanian re-evaluation or Anne Frank for the victims of the Holocaust. There was, throughout the second half of the 20th century, and has been even more so in the recent decades, a strong museumification tendency of significant persons' homes. In Finland, too, new home museums arise, and old ones revisit their strategies. From the oldest home museum in Finland, the national poet J. L. Runeberg's home (opened in 1882) to the most recent project of rescuing the former home of president P. E. Svinhufvud in Kotkaniemi, they all struggle for attention, both among other museums, but also among other forms of entertainment.

An Illustrated Biography

A home museum's identity is based on a combination of various elements: what kind of organisation, history, activities, strategy, reality (human resources), economic challenges and possibilities, narrative choices, image and brand, significance and controversy the museum has. As we have stated, much depends on the illustriousness of the name the museum bears – but at the end of the day, it is the way the museum chooses to treat that legacy which decides the museum's orientation.

As we know, a picture is worth a thousand words. In this context, it means that the physical environment of the home museum, an illustrated biography, truly broadens and completes the visitor's biographical understanding. The results of a museum visit are often quite different from what was expected – a per-

sonality has revealed himself as much more interesting and filled with various dimensions, all of which has been highlighted by silent but convincing material. Triviality or obscurity connected to the home museum's significant person is a brand problem for the museum. When leaving the home museum, the tourist or random visitor should absolutely have a clear idea of whose home he or she just visited – otherwise the home museum remains a mere collection of somebody's estate, with more death than eternal life in its atmosphere. This is how important the identity of the former inhabitant is to the home museum.

Comparing European home museums is rewarding.[7] In a house filled with objects with stories and where the former inhabitant was a person with an extraordinary life, it is worth contemplating *which story* is the most important to be presented by guides or in exhibition texts. The general house museum can concentrate on the interior in the home, but a home museum of a significant person must put the focus on his or her biography. It can emphasise the meaning of the person to the whole nation (which used to be the main idea in great men's homes!) or stress the many different roles of the hero in his long life – like in the Mannerheim Museum and in Georges Clemenceau's house. Intellectual environments like the Strindbergsmuseet can, by stating "we are not a fan club", also take a little more distant approach to the writer, whose opinions today are not considered to be politically acceptable. The Victor Hugo museum in Paris excels in an ocean of stories, with Hugo either on the centre or on the periphery of the subject, but always shaking up the limited view of the *homme de lettre,* the mere literary man, Victor Hugo.

In many of the modern home museums, the narration does not end with the story of the significant life alone, but it also considers the wives, daughters and mistresses of the great man – or the male companion of a great woman. Ainola, the home of Sibelius, has recently put more focus on Aino Sibelius, whose name was given to the actual house, and her role as a strong inhabitant, alongside the isolated, difficult composer. In the Runeberg Home, we find an active story of and a museal presence of his wife Fredrika. This is true also for Chartwell, where Clementine Churchill was the object of a special exhibition recently, and in the Gallen-Kallela museum in Finland where the memory of Mary, Akseli's wife, has not been forgotten.[8] It is possible that in cultures with a high degree of gender equality this phenomenon is stronger. In most parts of Europe, the family is just a nice addition to the story of the remarkable person, and it can only be made visible in the private sphere. In some social circumstances, the uncomfortable feeling of celebrating one individual over others may lead to the

7. These observations have been made based on general acquaintances of home museums in Finland and abroad, on their websites and especially during the home museum meeting in Helsinki called *Illustres 2019*, where representatives of 10 museums met in October 2019 and exchanged thoughts and experiences.

8. Available at https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/who-was-clementine-churchill and https://www.porvoo.fi/fredrika-charlotta-tengstrom [Last accessed 10 October 2019]. On Aino Sibelius see Konttinen 2019.

suggestion that these connected personalities were as important as the original names to whom the museum was opened.

More important than the gender issue, it is worth reflecting on the plurality of people in general around the significant person of the home museum. As a form of biography, the home museum can present the entirety of the former inhabitant's *entourage*. In special exhibitions or in its presentation of the interiors it can bring up interesting social historical issues (servants or guests), political context logics (political opponents and followers) or transnational arguments (compatriots abroad, colleagues in other countries).

An interesting case study could be made regarding the fascinating Casa Ceausescu in Bucharest. While the former home palace of the dictator of Romania was opened, it was decided to leave the interpretation completely to the visitor and only show the physical environment, without any story. Of course, not evaluating the political issues surrounding the person is efficient per se, because the visitor usually sees the palace and knows that the people in Romania from the same time did not have that standard of living. The commercialisation of the mansion for an audience looking for a luxurious event is also a kind of appropriation of the Ceausescu mansion and a narrative in itself.[9]

Home museums are on the one hand bridge-builders between the widespread popular interest in history, personified in each case by the significant lives they represent, and on the other hand, by the professional researchers in history, politics, art and literature and their academic networks.

Some home museums do not feel the weight of problematisation hanging over them; they are happy just to exist. It is true that not all museums need to engage in theory and abstractions concerning the interaction between their identity and activities. Many smaller museums have a constant issue with resources and bigger organisations can be lost in the quest for constant novelties. There is also a big difference between being a small part of a larger organisation (like the departments of the National Trust or the Finnish National Museum) or an independent private actor. But even if the strength of the home museum is that it should resemble a real home, its direction should have a museological interest, with the ability to see the home as a part of the historical museum landscape. A high self-evaluating style and impeccable caretaking of collections are possible to combine.

Home museums are strongly connected to what we call difficult history (see also Thomas, this volume). Controversial personalities make difficult museums, since the gap between heroizing and presenting the whole truth and nothing but the truth can be challenging. Even in the most non-provocative beloved artist's home

9. "We want our visitors to see how Nicolae Ceauşescu lived, not only as an internationally known head of state, but as a man in his own private life – the hobbies that he had, what his routine around the privacy of his home was, how he studied or what art collections he had in his house." Available at https://casaceausescu.ro/?page_id=3412&lang=en [Last accessed 1st November 2019]

museum there is the possibility that the main character's more positive sides are emphasised, while issues that might provoke the audience or diminish the universal admiration are avoided in the presentation, whether textual or spoken.

Home museums, in our experience, also display examples of obstinacy. In most of them, the many faces of digital modernisation are recognised. On the other hand, too much technique is not desirable in a sanctuary. Professionals cherish their *genius loci*, in order to be able to offer quiet and genuine places in a hectic world. Furthermore, rather than participate in the research field of their protagonist's expertise (literature, military strategy, music, etc.) it seems that they want to balance and enlarge the image generally portrayed, and in that way act as educators of the public. Surprisingly, the central theme in the home of Victor Hugo is not literature, and in Sibelius's home museum other issues than creating music are taken up. Perhaps every home museum dedicated to a significant life in its own way wants to shake up the mainstream understanding of its main figure, to provoke a little by being something more and to break free of the canonical image.

Strategy and Practice

Strategies – mission, vision and values – try to answer the many questions as to how the museum should operate and what is essential in the understanding of the museum's main character. In the Mannerheim Museum, Marshal Mannerheim's former home opened to the public in 1951 as a museum. Strategic re-evaluation is as topical as in other European home museums at the moment. Re-branding a museum is possible to do without changing its eternal content – but by enlarging the means and adapting them to current audiences.

Exceptionally, the background organisation, the Mannerheim Foundation is not, according to Mannerheim's last will, established to create a biographical museum, but to promote promising Finnish officers' internationalisation. The mission of the museum is crystal clear, but the visions and values are more debatable, and also time bound. As in other biographical museums, here the mission is to ensure that interest remains relevant and the memory of Gustaf Mannerheim vivid for future generations. As in other museumified homes (for example, Vladimir Nabokov's apartment, Charles Dickens' house or Ainola), collections are understood as a unique possibility to enter the private sphere – the desk, the bed and the slippers – and to give a valuable feeling of intimacy in a genuine home. The Victor Hugo museum in Paris is not as authentic as his villa in Guernsey, but in both places of memory the man would not be as great without his objects – and this has consequences for strategic thinking. Artefacts are both the strength and fragility of this type of museums; they are easier to grasp than the mere reputation and interest towards the great man worldwide.

The Mannerheim Museum promotes the understanding of Mannerheim's life and work, as well as being an explanation of Finnish history. It is a physical scene for the Mannerheim foundation to present its values through which it can

participate in societal debates. For the future, it strives to secure the professionalism of the museum and its own strengths as a private, independent actor. The museum relies on a scientific approach, cherishes values such as cosmopolitan patriotism and supports a variety of opinions in relation to its main character. In other home or house museums, strategy can more concentrate on a specific theme or section of the person's life. For example, an atelier museum can focus mainly on the artistic side of a historical person and intentionally leave aside political or societal issues as secondary interests.

From a more practical side, the leader of the Mannerheim Museum is continually torn between two important but quite diverging fields of action and expertise. On the one hand, the accumulated information and scientific approach to the history of Marshal Mannerheim requires attention, if the museum wants to not only maintain but to enforce its role in society as a memory organisation based on historical research. On the other hand, as a professional museum, not too much time should be put into the details of biographical history, but rather into direct museological activities. In a home museum this is a normal, time challenging conflict, and both sides of such museum work are strongly needed. We must respond to both peer pressure and public pressure, to equally ensure knowledge about Mannerheim and the implementation of museological skills. As one house museum colleague put it, the priority must always be the day-to-day running of the site and the care of the property. In the home of Churchill, general awareness focuses often on his wartime leadership, but the museum is a place where other stories of his private life are told.[10]

In the case of Mannerheim, the display of furniture and objects in his private home feels like a striking autobiography. His memoirs being very scarce on information about the self, his home is much more explicit and eloquent in this sense. It is possible that objects were moved around and removed, but the element of self-representation is still present.

Towards a Collective Biography

Significant lives are important components of society. They do not represent only microhistory or curiosities, but together form a collective biography. As in literature, museums can be seen forming entities, where group biographies emerge. An artistic community arouse around the area of Lake Tuusula in the late 19th century, and there are now several museums that commemorate the work of the artists and cultural figures that lived there: Juhani Aho (1861–1921), Eero Järnefelt (1863–1937), Pekka Halonen (1865–1933), Jean Sibelius (1865–1957) and J.H. Erkko (1849–1906). These artists and cultural figures together form a collective biography of the *fin-de-siècle* artists in Finland. They have unique fates, but together represent issues such as national romanticism, international orientation, artist couples, the young Fennoman movement among artists, and so

10. Katherine Carter, project curator and collections manager at Chartwell, questionnaire during the Illustres 2019 meeting.

on. If we take this idea of a collective biography to a higher level of abstraction, Finnish *illustres* such as Pekka Halonen, Amos Anderson, Alvar Aalto and Tove Jansson do not have as much in common, as historical persons, as their home museums do. In each of these, the museological questions are the same. How did they emerge? What do they today identify as their strategic core competence? How authentic are their collections? A history of humankind united by each different fate is not possible, but a European or global biography of museums dedicated to significant lives could be worth a try.

The story of Mannerheim and the stories of other European great men together form, through research on their lives and their authentic home museums, a collection of significant lives. In the end, it is not about individual history. Home museums in general present a bird's eye on how societies, history and individual actors interact in the world.

Homes become excellent museums because of their ideal size and human-interest content, and because they serve a perfect narrative of history in a concise form. It is a no-brainer to understand that the former inhabitant completely still dictates the psychology of the museum many decades after it has been established. The special atmosphere depends on the interests of the main figure; many are those amateurs of history who only concentrate on one particular destiny.

However, gone are the days when the public would be grateful just to enter the mysterious, dusty estate of their idol. Home museum visitors today – and museum professionals often form a part of the visitors – are educated and not that easily impressed. They have many requirements on their agenda: the museum webpages must be clear and up-to-date with virtual tours, there must frequently be new interesting exhibitions, the collections should be opened as open data, there should be pedagogic and V.I.P. events and tours and the merchandise should be both intellectual and fun. Therefore, the current level of relevance of the museum and that of its protagonist are probably the most important factors influencing the museum's work.

In all museums, there is always the risk of changing values in current museum work and the interpretation of the historical figure in question. The international dimensions of national heroes are possible to exhibit only in those lucky circumstances where the political atmosphere allows this. If the celebrity is only a private individual and thus not representative of his nation, the use and abuse of his character, however, could reveal crucial features about society.

The Significance of Collections in Home Museums

> I do not build just for us, I build for the five hundred years to come.[11]

11. "En rakenna vain meitä varten, vaan viideksisadaksi vuodeksi eteenpäin." Akseli Gallen-Kallela. Gallen-Kallela 1956, p. 240; 1992, p. 624.

We now introduce and analyse two house museums in Finland as case studies. The museums are viewed through their collection profile. A museum's collection plays a crucial role in the forming of a museum's identity. Even though both example museums can be categorised as house museums, their surrounding walls, collections, history and everyday practices all affect the way the museum interprets and forms its identity. The two museums compared here are the Mannerheim Museum in Helsinki and the Gallen-Kallela Museum in Espoo. Both museums are linked to historical persons who have undisputed status in Finnish cultural history, Gustaf Mannerheim and Akseli Gallen-Kallela. However, when looking at the history of these museums and their current collection profiles, the two are rather different, as were the two characters in their own time. These museums act as case studies; the Mannerheim museum as an example of the proposed home museum type and the Gallen-Kallela Museum as a mirror and comparison, an example of a versatile house museum that is difficult to classify.

All museum collections have three things in common: the collection is made up of objects that hold a meaning or some form of cultural value, the objects within the collections come to us from the past and they have been assembled with intention by someone (Pearce 1992, p. 7). This is true in both of our case studies. Both museum collections consist of objects that are regarded as meaningful, originally to the historical person who collected and owned them, and consequently to the person who made them immortal as part of the museum collection, i.e., the person responsible for the museumification process. The materiality of the house museum is doubly layered: an archive within an archive, both container and contained (Hancock 2009, p. 114). The objects are indeed from the past, but interestingly with two layers of history, the first layer being the objects' past in the eyes of the original collector or possessor, the second being the time period, now past, of the historical person. The intention in assembling is where these two example museums differ somewhat (see also Häyhä, Jantunen & Paaskoski, this volume).

What makes the collections of home museums special is that they are strongly linked to the historical person, by the act of his own possessing, collecting, arranging or making of them. It is also important to note that without collections, the house of even the most distinguished person is not actually a home museum. A home museum is an entirety given, ready to be interpreted. It is a spontaneous museum form, when compared to intentionally assembled museum collections. A home museum does not just represent the historical person; it is the historical person.

The Mannerheim Museum

The Mannerheim Museum is the former home of Gustaf Mannerheim, located in Helsinki near Kaivopuisto Park. It is a private Eden for a public man, a baron, a soldier, the Marshal of Finland, President and an integral part of Finnish history. The house was Mannerheim's home for 26 years, from 1924 to 1951. It was his home, a place for entertaining and a place for exhibiting his life. Mannerheim

took great care in creating a place for himself where he would be surrounded by not just beautiful things, but things of personal meaning and cultural value. He decorated his home with finesse and was inspired by the things he had seen and experienced during his life. In his home, Mannerheim created an identity and a sense of history not only for himself, but also for guests to see and reflect upon. He saw his house as an entity to which various parts contributed. In a sense the house is a *Gesamtkunstwerk* created in the shape of a home.

When Gustaf Mannerheim died in 1951, the Mannerheim Foundation thought it important that the home of Mannerheim be preserved, and its doors opened to the public (von Fersen 2007, p. 81). The house was in a way cocooned in a time capsule, where it remains today. The interiors and objects are left as they were when Mannerheim himself resided in the house; the feeling of a home remains, although some changes have been made to the interior since Mannerheim's death. In 1951, the rooms on the first floor of the house were occupied by the Archive of War Accidents, and Mannerheim used the rooms on the second floor. Some of Mannerheim's furniture and objects were at this point also placed in his other residence, Kirkniemi Manor, in Lohja. When Mannerheim died, the interior of his home in Kaivopuisto was returned to how it was before the Second World War. This transformation was largely carried out by Major O. R. Bäckman, the first intendent of the museum, Mannerheim's younger aide-de-camp (von Fersen 2007, p. 83; Ojala 2001, pp. 32–34; Klinge 2016, pp. 211–212).

It is worth contemplating as to how much these decisions made after Mannerheim's death in fact affect the authenticity of the home museum. It is also important to note that preserving his home as a museum was not in fact Gustaf Mannerheim's intent, but an idea that arouse after his death by people who wanted to honour his memory. Mannerheim's own thoughts about his home being made into a museum remain unknown. It is safe to say that he did have his own public image in mind when creating his ideal home. His private home was always a public space. In this sense the museum could be seen as an autobiographical museum; it is a collection created and curated by the historical person himself (Hill 2012; Nemec 2012). But since Mannerheim, as far as we know, didn't plan on the museumification of his home, the term autobiographical exhibition seems more suitable. His house was a meticulously curated exhibition of his life. Today, one of the missions of the museum is to preserve and secure Gustaf Mannerheim's home and present him through the variety of his interests, strengths and achievements. This mission can be fulfilled through the home museum.

The collection profile of the Mannerheim Museum is rather clear and distinct. The collection consists mainly of cultural historical objects that were Gustaf Mannerheim's personal property and parts of the decor of his home in Kaivopuisto. In addition to the movables, the museum collection also holds Mannerheim's personal library and archive materials, including Mannerheim's old photograph collection. When Mannerheim died, his estate remained intact aside from a few items inherited by his two daughters and some objects given to his friends and

relatives (Ojala 2001, pp. 34–35). The object collection, together with the house and its interior, form a coherent entity that is respectful towards Mannerheim's own vision. For this reason, the museum's collection policy states that collection acquisitions are made with careful consideration, and additions or changes to the decor of the house are nearly non-existent. Modifying this museumified home would be altering history.

The Mannerheim Museum can be classified as an example of a home museum. It is *a* documentary historic house museum, the home of a hero, a personality house or a key original, if chosen to be classified with the categories presented in the first chapter. In a sense, the Mannerheim Museum is a house museum easy to categorise; it ticks all the boxes of a home museum.

The Gallen-Kallela Museum

The history of the Gallen-Kallela Museum is more complicated. The museum is a former home and atelier of the artist Akseli Gallen-Kallela. The museum area consists of the atelier building, old summer house Villa Linudd, a smoke sauna and the grounds with a garden. Akseli Gallen-Kallela designed and built the atelier building Tarvaspää from 1911 to 1913. Additional changes to the building and interiors were made in 1926. Gallen-Kallela started planning and designing this second atelier building in 1908.[12] The idea of the atelier building being a public place, and even a museum, was part of the plan from the very start. The building shows signs of being influenced by museum architecture in Finland of that time (Wahlroos 2008, p. 22, p. 36, p. 46). The artist had continuity and history in mind, for he did not build his atelier just for him and his family, but for the next 500 years. Gallen-Kallela cared for his legacy and felt concern for his life's work disappearing and intentionally did what he could to preserve it for future generations (Gallen-Kallela 1956, p. 240; 1992, p. 624).

However, the sudden death of Akseli Gallen-Kallela in 1931 started a chain of events that affected the museum's evolving profile and derailed it from the artist's own vision. Complicated inheritance issues divided the artist's art works, belongings and houses among his wife, daughter and son. His estate scattered and the atelier building went through different stages in the following years. During the Second World War it was used as a base for the military's Intelligence and Reconnaissance Department and after the war for nearly ten years the building remained uninhabited (Raivio 2008, p. 80). When the Gallen-Kallela Museum was finally opened in 1961, the creation of a home museum like the Mannerheim Museum was impossible. Although, we might wonder, was it ever even really Gallen-Kallela's intention to showcase his life in the form of a home museum? Or is it in fact so that the current form, a sort of an autobiographical museum, is closer to the artist's vision? Today the museum functions as an Akseli Gallen-Kallela information centre and exhibition space for Gallen-Kallela's art and contemporary art. The museum's main function is to cherish the work of Akseli

12. Akseli Gallen-Kallela designed and built his first atelier Kalela in 1895 in Ruovesi, Finland.

Gallen-Kallela and maintain the public's interest towards him (Statutes of the Akseli Gallen-Kallela Museum Foundation). The collections are both a source of information and a vessel for achieving the museum's main goal.

The Gallen-Kallela Museum's collections are diverse. The collections consist of art, cultural historical objects and archive material, including old photographs and Akseli and Mary Gallen-Kallela's personal library. The collection base was formed at the same time the museum was founded and has grown mainly through donations during its years of operation. It is noteworthy to acknowledge the influence of the donors on the museum collection and their impact on the current collection profile. Acquisitions have been sparse due to the confined collection profile. The terms for acquisitions are described in the museum's collection policy and state that the museum collects and documents Akseli Gallen-Kallela's art, as well as materials and objects related to his life's work (the Gallen-Kallela Museum collection policy). The provenience and connection to Akseli Gallen-Kallela are the main criteria when considering acquisitions. The collection is movable in the sense that it is not tied to a preserved home interior. This allows collection loans and more freedom in exhibition planning. Yet interestingly, a preserved atelier or a home interior is what museum visitors sometimes expect. A biographical interest towards the artist and his family life is continuous.

In terms of classification, the Gallen-Kallela museum is a bit trickier. It is a documentary historic house museum, the home of a hero or a personality house, if classified with the categories presented earlier. However, it can also be placed in the category of *a* representative historic house museum in Buther-Younghan's classification*,* design in Linda Young's classification and as a house of beauty according to the DEMHIST categorisation. By Stefan Bohman's categorisation, the museum would be an exhibition space, which it is, but not solely for Akseli Gallen-Kallela related exhibitions, as it also has contemporary art linked to Gallen-Kallela. Because of the missing home interior, the Gallen-Kallela Museum does not entirely fit the presented home museum category, even though the main character is strongly present in the house.

Evaluating and Preserving Biographical Collections

Both museums are identifiably house museums, though their collection history and collection profiles are different. The collections of the museums can be described as biographical; the collections are remnants of lives lived. They act as narratives and witnesses of a person's life and experiences. The collections act as mirrors, of the original person and his or her views, but also of us, our ways of interpretation and re-interpretation. Intimate personal belongings carry emotional meaning and provide an essential humanizing effect and authentication to a house museum (Forgan 2012, p. 257, p. 261). The collections and singular objects that were once used by a historical person and story emanate a certain power that can create sensation and resonance in the viewer (Hancock 2009, pp. 114–115). Their personal connection to a historical person can give an object a vast amount of authentication and value. The shared history of an object

and a person create importance. A uniform that Gustaf Mannerheim used or a paintbrush that Akseli Gallen-Kallela painted with are laden with emotional charge and verification.

A former home tells us of the interests and values of the historical person. What sort of objects did this person think were meaningful enough to have in his or her life and home? The collections of home museums were curated by the museum's main character and for that reason hold a certain meaning and personality. Both museums, even though different in appearance, are in identity and even strategy, blessed with an asset that combines the building and the collections with the historical person. Their main character is identifiable and certainly reflects the origin of the spirit of the place. Both museums house the characteristic spirit of the person in question (Stanisforth 2014, pp. 60–61; Bohman 2010, p. 80).

With both museums, the identity of the museum is formed from various factors – the main character, the collection and the house or the building. Gustaf Mannerheim and Akseli Gallen-Kallela both had several other homes during their lifetime, so what makes these museums or their collections special?[13] For that reason, the museums' identities are also connected to a certain time period; the time spent in those particular houses. This confined time period and connection to a place influence their collection profiles and collection policies. For example, the Mannerheim Museum focuses largely on preserving and researching the collections linked to his home in Kaivopuisto, Helsinki. In the Gallen-Kallela Museum's collections, objects that have a direct link to Tarvaspää have a certain value added to them. Authenticity is ever stronger, when the mentioned factors fit together and form a coherent entirety.

Despite their differing collection profiles, both the Mannerheim Museum and the Gallen-Kallela Museum face the same difficulties when it comes to preserving a house museum. The Mannerheim Museum's collection is a stagnant collection in the sense that the museum objects have been in their places for almost 100 years, with little to no disturbance in nearly 70 years. Unfortunately, however, stagnation does not mean safety. House museums share a common risk, as the houses that hold the collections are not originally built to function as museums. The Mannerheim Museum building is an old wooden villa from 1873 with drafty corners. The Gallen-Kallela Museum is an artist atelier building, a cold stone building with large windows designed to let light in. Both houses react to the changes of the weather and seasons. The possibilities for creating ideal museological conditions for the buildings and the collections are limited. Museum professionals in house museums don't always have the luxury of storing museum objects in perfectly monitored collection spaces, where warmth and humidity can be controlled, nor can the items on display be changed when needed.

13. During his lifetime, Akseli Gallen-Kallela lived in various places, in Finland and abroad. His other atelier in Ruovesi still exists, but it is a private home rather than a museum. Gustaf Mannerheim likewise had several homes during his lifetime. The Mannerheim Museum, however, is the only one museumified.

In addition to preventive conservation and concrete measures in the maintenance of the house, house museums are required to manage the spirit of the place. This is an intangible attribute and in many cases the reason and warranty for a house museum's existence. It is not an easy task balancing between keeping collections safe and stabilised and at the same time trying to respond to the needs of the audience.

On the Authenticity in Home Museums

Authenticity – the level, interpretation and creation of it, are issues often discussed in the house museum context. Authenticity is one of the basic concepts of museology and the term authentic is often seen as related to the original and genuine. Traditionally, authenticity in museums has been regarded as an attribution of an object or set of objects and is associated with a sense of timelessness (Hohenstein & Moussouri 2017, p. 138). It is a difficult concept, because it implies that one thing is more genuine in comparison to another thing. But sometimes it may be difficult to define what the other thing actually is (Bohman 2010, p. 186).

In addition, authenticity is a relative concept, and it changes depending on who's decoding it. There is no one and only definition for authenticity, but interpretations and the way museums use authenticity in evaluating their collections offer a useful base on which to create one's view on authenticity. In one museological deconstruction of the concept, authenticity is formed from three main relations: the relation between object and maker, the relation between original and copy and the relation between factual and actual identity (van Mensch 1992, chapter 16; Savage 1976, p. 42). This way of interpreting the concept seems to fit the discussion of authenticity in house museums. Authenticity in a house museum could also be evaluated from different angles, such as authenticity linked to origin, to form, to provenance and state, and to the role and use of the place (Saule 2014, pp. 104–106).

Every material object eventually degrades. Wear and tear are symptoms and signs of age and the conditions that a museum object has been subjected to. Even though we like to talk about home (or house) museums as unchanging windows to the past, the truth is, that the past looked different from how it is presented today. The textiles on couches and curtains were more vibrant, the surface of the wooden desk shinier and the floors had less wear on them. Since visual change is eventual, every house museum is at one point faced with the question of authenticity in relation to conservation and restoration. The choices that are made should always be justifiable and based on research. Decisions regarding conservation and restoration procedures are done individually, case-by-case, and on the terms of the museum. A chosen level of restoration might be suitable for one museum but much too invasive for another, and might in fact work against the illusion of authenticity. Preventive conservation is of the utmost importance when dealing with historical houses; it decreases the need for invasive procedures.

Is the level of authenticity altered if the wallpaper of a house museum is a reproduction instead of original or if the furniture has been refurbished to look like new? And what is more important, authenticity in the sense of originality or authenticity in the sense of experience? In the case of house museums, the definition of authenticity is created not only by museum professionals, but also by the audience. Since authenticity as a concept is subjective and ambiguous, the feeling and sense of real and authentic have a strong influence on the perceived authenticity of a museum. We argue that in the case of house museums, and especially home museums, these factors are the most important features.

A museum visitor is immersed in history by an authentic setting. But authenticity is not to be confused with a time-machine, offering us a one-to-one impression of the past. Instead, it is a guiding principle to achieve a feeling that the appearance of a room is in balance, evokes a picture of the past and offers an impression of historicity (Horn & Wittwer 2014, p. 122). What matters is less an absolute standard of authenticity and more an understanding of the expectations brought by visitors to each site (Young 2014, p. 131).[14] Following these arguments, an interior in its original state is not necessarily more authentic than a refurbished interior, if the perception of authenticity is also achieved in the latter. A fresh and redecorated home interior might be authenticity of the decadent type, but when done well and based on research, might suit the cause better than a badly worn but original interior. The question of the time period chosen is also inherent to the discussion of authenticity. If a home museum is restored to a certain time period, it is important to notice why this choice was or is made. It should be assessed as to what information might be lost in the process and what matters are in turn emphasised.

Home museums are required to succeed at a certain level of authenticity, a level sometimes impossible to reach. Many of the same arguments on authenticity applied to house museums also apply to home museums. However, home museums are probably expected to deliver the highest kind of authenticity, uniqueness and a past frozen in time. The spirit of the place is an essential part of discussion also in matters of authenticity. In a home museum, the perception of authenticity is created from three different angles: the historical person (his or her relation to the collection and the place), the collection (its relation to the person and the place) and the place (its relation to the person and the collection). A home museum is at its most authentic level and has a qualitative richness when these components correspond to each other. The level of authenticity in a home museum is affected by various pieces of the puzzle:

> How well the person, the collection and the place are conjoined
>
> How well the original intention of the historical person is followed
>
> How well the collection profile is defined

14. For more on authenticity and visitor perceptions, see for example Hohenstein & Moussouri 2017, pp. 136–169; Morris Hargreaves McIntyre 2015; Peirce et al. 2014.

How well the place is preserved

How much of the place has been reconstructed and how true to the original the reconstructions are

How truthful and objective the museum is in its presentation.

The original intent of the historical person is also something to contemplate in relation to authenticity. Let us look at the case studies again. Gustaf Mannerheim would not have had his home looking worn or untidy. He would have changed worn-out curtains and kept his silver polished. But he did enjoy the antique style of his home. Should the museum follow this example or is the upholstery on the furniture more valuable when it is the actual textile that Mannerheim himself sat on? The Gallen-Kallela Museum today functions mainly as an exhibition space and the present exhibition rooms are former atelier or gallery rooms of the artist. Gallen-Kallela designed his atelier to be flooded with light from the large windows, but today's museological requirements of museum lighting restrict the amount of light allowed in an exhibition space. The original, and in its way authentic vision, must be superseded for the benefit of the museum. Would Gallen-Kallela agree with this change? We cannot say.

In the end, the level of authenticity in each house museum is a product of several factors. The definition and level are created from the starting point through to the care, use and public's views and expectations. The desired authenticity level is not always possible for a museum, and one has to make do with what is available. Every house or home museum deals with shared, but at the same time very distinctive issues, and decisions on conserving and redecorating are as unique as each home and the historical person in question.

Conclusions

In this context, it is problematic and unnecessary to speak about home museums in geographical or national terms. The Finnish home museum does not in itself differ from the European home museum. All museums are of course unique – one Spanish home museum can be more like a Finnish home museum than another Finnish one might be, if the significant lives who lived in them had common political, professional, economic or other features. An artist's house might raise similar questions whether it's in the quiet countryside or in a vibrant metropole. The division lies crucially in how professional the museum is, what kind of identity it has and if it is run by an academic visionary or a staff just taking care of the home. We have also argued that the attitude the museum staff takes regarding its main figure is essential.

With some exceptions, however, the Finnish museum field does not, for example, so eagerly concentrate on the great men per se, and instead tries to extend and enlarge the focus from the person himself or herself to larger topics such as literature, societal debate or historical contemporality. This can be a problem, if the museum deviates too far from its core mission and artificially wants to recreate

a new identity to serve not its own logics, but rather the demands of the outside world. European home museums seem to have a little less problematic identity when it comes to the underlying *raison d'être* of the museumified home of a remarkable person, and uses this as a vehicle for transmitting cultural heritage.

Museum studies are – or should be – about the philosophy of history. If museums used to be positivist collections of certain things, today their role is as much pedagogic as schools, universities and training programmes. Despite this common belief, home museums are not sanctuaries of objective truths, but always remain interpretations and constructions of the past. Home museums are subjective in at least two regards. They consist of a collection of a particular historical person and the home that he or she created (or lived in) – but it also consists of multiple choices made after the person's death, which take place in the process of museumification.

A third subjective layer would be the choices that have to be made every day in museum work – to repair, conserve or reconstruct? The high demand of authenticity is hard to fulfil, and full authenticity is impossible. Even a home museum is a changing home; neither homes nor museums are static.

The (professional) home museums have a two-fold advantage: both the impressive quality and quantity of authentic collections, and a self-awareness about the many issues connected to the status of an *illuster*. Moreover, and perhaps as the most important factor, they attire with their *genius loci* the entirety of a private home made accessible to a visitor. Historical home museums add certain insights to the explanation of history that cannot be found in academic studies alone. They present and represent both knowledge and a strong emotional experience of the past. In fact, the process of getting to know a historically important figure should begin, but certainly not end, with the acquaintance of his home.

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The TAKO Network – Developing collections together

Teemu Ahola

Abstract

This chapter sheds light on some of the main challenges that museums in Finland and elsewhere face regarding the development and management of their collections. How museums are able to manage the accumulating mass of potential museum objects has been the most important question for a while. Museums have to find sustainable solutions to this matter in order to maintain high-quality collections and efficient processes. At the moment museums are more or less struggling with unclear collection profiles and overlapping collecting with other museums. This leads to inefficient collection management and lower-quality collections. Museums are not able to tackle these large-scale challenges by themselves. National co-operation in collection management is the key issue for improvement of collection processes. In this work, the nationwide network for collections management co-operation and contemporary documentation, TAKO, has played a central role. Established in 2009, TAKO is an open network for all professional museums in Finland. The information regarding the network and its operations is public and available to all (http://tako.nba.fi). This chapter examines the processes and development of collection management in Finnish museums through the TAKO Network and its operations. The chapter concentrates on the two main modes of operation regarding the TAKO Network: contemporary documentation and the nationwide division of collecting duties. The latter in particular is designed to improve the quality of collections and collections management through co-operation.

Keywords: collection management, contemporary documentation, collecting duties, networking

The Main Challenges in Collection Management

Many of the main challenges regarding collection management are linked with the acquisition processes. The first issue is the huge volume of potential museum objects that our modern mass-production society has produced for decades. Long gone are the days when regionally produced, hand-crafted objects were unique and few in number. Contemporary museum objects are most often mass-produced items that have no unique features based on regionality, independent manufacturer, etc. This overflow of diverse objects makes it demanding to execute planned and high-quality acquisitions. The need for clarified acquisition policies is thus clear.

From a historical perspective, many museums in Finland have had quite loose principles concerning obtaining material for their collections. In many cases,

there have not been any specific predefined acquisition guidelines. Eventually, this has led to the point where the physical storage of objects has become very limited, a common problem both in Finnish museums and globally. High-quality storage space is expensive to maintain and therefore there are quite strict economic limitations to purchasing more storage for persistently growing collections. The historical trend of loose acquisitions, combined with the massive numbers of contemporary potential museum objects, is extremely challenging for the management and development of museum collections. This problem was recognised already at the beginning of the 2000s by professor Janne Vilkuna (2000, p. 92).

Unplanned acquisition activities have left museums in a situation where they are not fully aware of the contents of their uncatalogued collections. Many museums are struggling to get a handle on the unidentified and unprocessed parts of their collections. The amount of work resources that has to be directed to managing old collections, such as inventory, cataloguing and disposal tasks, is significant. These resources are inevitably taken away from managing new acquisitions and other collection management tasks.

The missing information regarding the contents of uncatalogued collections makes it very hard to perform planned acquisitions. The other issue to emphasise is the level of knowledge regarding collections among museums. Traditionally museums have not been that keen to exchange information regarding collections and their contents with each other. The main reason has been the lack of tools for exchanging information, not the fact that museums would protect or hide information. The exchange of information has usually been linked only to exhibitions and loan agreements. In order to execute high-quality acquisition policies, museums should be very interested in what other museums are preserving in their collections. This is one of the key features for raising the quality of collections on the level of individual museums, as well as on the national level. Museums need to see the overall picture of collections and the activities linked to them. This has an effect on almost everything regarding collections management – acquisition decisions, deaccession and disposals, collections relocations and storage space rearrangements, to mention a few. As Susan Pearce has stated, collections policies and their operations play a key part in the process in which museum meanings are constructed. Collections policies are not passive or neutral tools that are decided elsewhere. They are the most crucial elements for active and developing museums (Pearce 1992, p. 136). In this process an increased level of shared knowledge is key when pushing museum collection management to the next level in Finland (see also Sarantola-Weiss, this volume).

Developing collection management and getting rid of unclear and loose policies is clearly linked to sustainability and a sustainable economy. For their part, museums have to actively seek solutions for a sustainable future. Museums have great potential to be more significant actors in society. As Nina Robbins writes in this volume: “The task is to make the heritage sector matter in a society where the turnover of themes and circulation of events is accelerating”.

Striving towards a sustainable future is a critical point for museums regarding being a significant actor in and contributor to society. This is also a critical issue for collection management in order for it to succeed in the future. I argue that museums will not succeed in this without co-operation.

National Collection Networking in Finland

The discussion regarding the development of collection management has been increasing in Finland since the beginning of the millennium. The museum policy programme published in 1999 stressed the need for collection policies (Komiteanmietintö 1999, pp. 52–53). This gave a boost to the first round of new collection policies. These collection policies gave museums an opportunity to explore and examine the processes of collection management in different museums. These policies were the first opportunity for museums to create nationwide benchmarking, learn from best-practice solutions and get to know the other museums better.

The published collection policies also generated dialogues and new openings regarding deaccession and disposals. These issues had been very problematic in the museum field, mainly because of the lack of general discussion and written guidelines. Especially with deaccessions and disposals, the written guidelines and best-practice solutions were extremely important for museums when developing their collections management. The various challenges of deaccessions and disposals procedures were central to current collection management topics (Kostet 2009, pp. 157–160).

After collection management had surfaced in the public realm of the museum field, the next phase of the process was the question of co-operation among museums. Museums were creating collection policies and developing their procedures actively, but mostly in isolation. There were no actual tools or forums for developing collection management together or sharing thoughts and practices. The need for collaboration was obvious.

The Birth of the TAKO Network

The National Board of Antiquities, now known as the Finnish Heritage Agency, acknowledged the need for a forum of co-operation, and in 2009 established a national network that would deal with issues of collections management and co-operation (Hakomäki & Metsänkylä 2009, p. 9). This network was named *TAKO: Tallennus- ja kokoelmayhteistyöverkosto* (The Nationwide network for collections management co-operation and contemporary documentation).

The network is led by a steering group that consists of the chair and seven board members. These seven members act as chairs of the contemporary documentation groups, or pools, as they are called by the network. In addition, there are two secretaries in the steering group. The chair and the rest of the steering group come from different museums, where they have their full-time positions. This also applies to the secretaries who come from the Finnish Heritage Agency. The

network is run on a voluntary basis; nobody is paid a salary by the network. Running a nationwide network in this manner is a strong indication of how important this work is seen to be by museum professionals and their organisations. Museums clearly see the cumulative benefits of TAKO when they give their own work resources to the network. Museum professionals themselves are highly motivated, which is the main reason why they give their limited time to this networking and development work. All this results in active and flexible operations.

There are no fixed terms for the chair or members of the steering group. This allows the needed flexibility for the voluntary network. Over the years, this has been quite an ideal situation, where the formation of the steering group has been handled in a controlled manner. One may say that it is important for the network to get new ideas and visions to develop further. Yet at the same time, the network needs its senior members, with their experience and perspectives. The members of the steering group have changed over the years but there have always been senior members included as well. The chairs have also been rotated. Johanna Jakomaa, the current chair from the Satakunta Museum, is the third chair in the TAKO Network. She was preceded by Minna Sarantola-Weiss from the Helsinki City Museum and Teemu Ahola from the Tampere Museums.

The fundamental purpose of the network is to develop collections management and bring collection professionals together. TAKO is a hub for new openings regarding all kinds of collections activities. The network has two main modes of operation for development work: contemporary documentation activities and the nationwide division of collecting duties.

Contemporary Documentation

The steering group was elected by members of the museum field in a constitutive meeting in 2009. After its organisation, the steering group began working to establish network structure and operations. When establishing a new network, building up enthusiasm with the museum community is extremely important. The steering group had many options regarding how to initiate co-operation. It was realised that the first modus operandi should be something museums felt important, but also fun and natural to do. Therefore, it was decided that its first action would be the creation of a concept for contemporary documentation (TAKO Annual Report 2009, pp. 1–2).

With contemporary documentation, museums together would record themes from the present day and preserve them in their collections. Documentation may be done in various ways, including photographing, video recordings, interviewing people (figure 1), making observations of the documented themes, making drawings and collecting objects. The fundamental idea is to grasp important and interesting contemporary themes and phenomena for collections.



Figure 1. Executing contemporary documentation. Photo: Saana Säilynoja.

When creating the system, Sweden was a role model. In Sweden, museums had worked together in the area of contemporary documentation activities since the 1970s. We examined their system, called SAMDOK (the name SAMDOK derives from Swedish words *samtid* (present time) and *dokumentation* (documentation), and we decided that with some small adjustments it would be appropriate for Finnish museums as well.

SAMDOK had a structure where social and cultural topics were divided thematically into several categories that were called pools. In these pools, museums operated together by documenting certain themes in joint projects (Fägerborg 2008, pp. 14–15).

The pool structure was therefore adopted from the Swedish model and further developed. The Finnish version included seven pools. The pool structure was introduced and explained to the museum staff and they were invited to join the pools of their choosing. The idea of networking, contemporary documentation and the pool system received very positive and enthusiastic feedback from professionals in the museum field (Hakomäki 2008). The network began to grow rapidly, and pools began their operations.

The Pool System

Museums are free to join any pool they wish. They can be part of one or of several pools, and they are free to change between pools as they wish. Therefore, it is possible for a museum to take part in one individual documentation project, be a long-term member of a pool, or take a position somewhere in between. In this way, joining a pool has been made as easy and intriguing as possible.

The pools are:

- Pool 1: Human and Nature

- Pool 2: Individuals, communities and the public sector
- Pool 3: Everyday life
- Pool 4: Production, services and working life
- Pool 5: Communications, traffic and tourism
- Pool 6: Art, education and the personal experience
- Pool 7: Trends, prominent figures and national turning points.

As with the SAMDOK model, the pools in TAKO try to represent the most essential themes in society, culture and human life. Although the pools are far from all-inclusive, they have served their purpose well.

Each pool has a chair who is also a member of the steering group. In this way, information inside the network and among the steering groups and the field is coordinated as efficiently as possible. The pool decides independently what themes they want to document and how the documentation will be carried out. A pool is also free to join projects other than just contemporary documentation. There have been very versatile projects regarding collections management and development. Pools have, for example, created guidelines for deaccession and disposals and have created guidelines for firms and corporations on how they can preserve their histories (TAKO Webpage http://tako.nba.fi/verkkonayttelyt/hankkeiden-raportteja). Pools apply for funding for projects independently, from different sources. The TAKO Network does not finance any projects, but instead it has a yearly budget for travelling costs and the arranging of two seminars per year. This means that members of pools are able to travel to pool meetings at no cost to themselves (figure 2). This has made it possible, especially for members from small museums and those who are in remote locations, to travel and meet colleagues around the country.



Figure 2. Recollecting food-related memories from the 1970s in pool 7. Photo: Reetta Lepistö

Creating a Model for the Nationwide Division of Collecting Duties

Contemporary documentation activities were a success and gave a nice start to the co-operation. Museum staff was brought together, and they got to know each other quickly. This resulted in active interaction, with quite steep learning

curves, and an exchange of best-practice solutions. Bonding and mutual trust were being built, which are essential for successful networking (TAKO Annual Report 2010–2011, pp. 1–2).

After three years of active co-operation, in 2012 the network was ready for taking the next step in development. From the beginning, there had been an ambitious goal to create a system that would divide collecting responsibilities and deepen collaboration within the field. The work of establishing a model for the nationwide division of collecting duties began (TAKO Annual Report 2012, pp. 1–2).

What are the purpose and main features of this model? Firstly, the model tries to create an overall picture of the field of collecting activities in Finland. The model influences the central themes that museums preserve in their collections. This is essential when trying to understand the structure of museum collections on a national scale. With the model, it is possible to grasp the big picture of active collecting themes in Finland.

Secondly, with the model it is possible to determine any overlapping areas of collecting. Overlapping means that there are exactly the same themes that two or more museums are involved in regarding collecting. Pinpointing and reducing these areas is extremely important in order to save work resources and collection storage space. Furthermore, with this kind of optimisation, the quality of collections will eventually rise.

The third feature is identifying the themes that no museums are preserving systematically in their collections. In the model, these missing themes are nicknamed as the *musta aukko* (black hole) of collecting. With the model, it is possible to point out these black holes and arrange for museums to take care of them. By eliminating overlapping areas and filling in any black holes, the field of collecting is getting more balanced and inclusive. As an example of a black hole, the health care sector is a huge and very important area that is not currently systematically preserved. Museums that work in this area have joined efforts to ensure the preservation of this field. Plans on how to preserve the health care sector in co-operation with dedicated museums are in process (Sinisalo 2017, pp. 6–7). The lists of different black holes can be found in the TAKO-museums' shared intranet. There, museums are able to add new missing areas of collecting they have found or pick a theme from the list to take care of.

The fourth major purpose of the model is to make an overall change in the mindset of museum staff and encourage them to be more open. Traditionally, the distribution of information regarding one museum's own collection has been quite limited and restricted. It is extremely important that museum staff members are as open as possible towards their colleagues regarding collection information. This is the key when raising the quality of collections and collection management nationwide.

Since 2012, this model has been in development. It is an ongoing process that will never be fully completed, as museums will continue to fine-tune its contents.

This was not the first time that such a model was constructed, however. The Finnish Heritage Agency appointed a working group to create a similar model in the 1980s. The layout of the end result was very nice and balanced, but for some reason museums did not adopt the model. Finally, the model withered away. Some of the museums still acknowledged the system years later, so it did not completely vanish, but on a national scale it was not in active use anymore (Museovirasto 1987, pp. 1–8).

The approach of the new model was quite different compared to the older one. In the 1980s, the work group defined the structure and contents of the model in a top-down way. In 2012, it was the museums that did the defining work, along with the coordinator of the project. The fundamental idea was to advance from the grass-roots level upwards. Museums were guaranteed that they had a voice in the process. Furthermore, the responsibilities that museums were given were as concrete and realistic as possible regarding their own collecting activities. This had probably been the largest obstacle for why the 1980s model did not succeed. It lacked a proper voice in the museum field and therefore museums did not adopt the concept.

The target group of the TAKO model was all of the professional cultural-historical museums in Finland, 114 museums altogether. Teemu Ahola, the head of collections from the Finnish Labour Museums Werstas and member of the TAKO steering group, was appointed as the coordinator of the project. He contacted personally all of the museums presenting the idea of the concept, discussing the role of the particular museum in the model. The approach was so time-consuming that other types of museums were left out as target groups at this point. Therefore, art museums, natural history museums and non-professional museums did not participate in the creation of the model. It was seen as easier to begin with cultural-historical museums and later expand the activity to other types of museums (Ahola 2012).

The end product was not as balanced as its predecessor, but it was done in co-operation with museums. To let museums be an integral part of the model's creation was essential. It took lot of working hours to discuss and design the concept but by doing this, museums were ready to adopt the model. It was designed by museums, for museums.

Features of the Model

The fundamental idea of the model for a nationwide division of collecting duties is the same as that of contemporary documentation pools, i.e., to create a scheme that includes the main areas or features of our society and human life as comprehensively as possible. The model is a hierarchical entity divided into seven main categories. Within every category, there are two or three hierarchical of sub-categories; under them the actual collection duties can be found.

The topics of the categories are nearly identical to the pools of contemporary documentation. The categories are:

- Category 1: Human and Nature
- Category 2: Individuals, communities and the public sector
- Category 3: Everyday life
- Category 4: Production, services and working life
- Category 5: Communications, traffic and tourism
- Category 6: Education, art, culture and exercise/sport
- Category 7: Trends, prominent figures and national turning points.

The only modification can be found from category 6, where sport and exercise are included in the topic and personal experience has been taken away. The exercise/sport theme was seen as a large and important theme, which therefore should be already mentioned on the category level. At the same time, personal experience was seen to be included in the themes of the topic without the need to express it on the category level.

The core of the model consists of individual collecting duties. They are the specific duties for which individual museums have chosen to take nationwide responsibility. When a museum signs up for a certain duty, other museums are able to leave that theme out of their own collecting activities. This reduces overlapping collecting and releases resources for other uses.

When collecting duties were discussed with the museums, two issues were strongly emphasised by the coordinator. Firstly, the duties that different museums choose should be from the core themes of the museum's collection profile. This means that the duties museum chooses should come from the core themes of the museum's collecting activities and collection identity. Otherwise, the end result would be inoperative and superficial. Secondly, the number of collecting duties per museum is not relevant or important, according to the model. What matters most is the realistic number of duties for which each museum is willing to take responsibility. When taking nationwide responsibility for a theme, a museum must be sure that it can carry out that responsibility, so that other museums may be assured that the theme or themes will be taken care of. Therefore, quality over quantity was the underlying message given to the museums.

A central feature of collecting duties is the nationwide nature of them. There are different kinds of museums; some of them operate on the national level, but most of them have physical regional boundaries where they carry out their collecting activities. Being a part of the model does not change this basic setting. The museums that operate regionally continue to also do so in the model. The basic assumption is that contemporary objects are not tied regionally, if thinking about their physical composition or appearance. For example, a cellular phone or an iPad is the same, no matter where it is collected. In the model, the regionally collected objects are examples from nationwide cultural phenomena that certain objects are linked to.

An important notion is that with the model, museums are not prohibited from collecting whatever they want. Museums are free to execute their collecting activities as they wish. Naturally, museums collect many themes that they have

not included in the model. The collecting that museums do outside the model is their private decision, and does not show as part of this national activity. For example, there are certain local themes that regional museums want to preserve outside the model, without including them in their national responses. This is quite natural for regional museums and therefore very acceptable.

It is also noteworthy that it is not mandatory to fulfil every collection duty every year. Museums are allowed to also do zero collecting regarding their duties. It is only natural that there are years when certain themes are not relevant.

There are total of 402 individual collecting duties in the present version of the model. At the time of writing the total number of museums committed to the model is close to one hundred. There are also certain duties that are divided between two or more museums. In these cases, museums have discussed the matter together and made agreements on how responsibilities are divided within that particular duty. Duties like these are typically very large-scale in nature, for example different branches of manufacturing and industry. In cases like these, it is only good to have more than just one actor collecting themes and sharing responsibility. An example of a large branch of industry would be that there are several museums taking care of the textile industry, with different types of production, product lines, raw materials, etc. It would be impossible for one museum to cover all these large areas. Therefore, it is better, for example, to have some museums take care of the linen industry, while others take care of cotton. Some museums concentrate on documenting industrial processes and manufacturing, while others take care of research and design.

Presenting the Model

There are different options to explore this quite large and complex model. The first option is to explore the main categories and their contents. All the collection duties are hierarchically listed with categories and sub-categories linked to duties. Within each duty the responsible museums are listed as well.

The second option is the museum-based viewpoint. All the responsible museums are listed alphabetically, and within each museum one can find information about what the collection duties are, for which a particular museum has taken responsibility.

Furthermore, there is a visual tool that combines these two options and gives a variety of filters for arranging data and information. All the material is free for everyone to explore and can be found from the network's website: http://tako.nba.fi/tallennustyonjako.

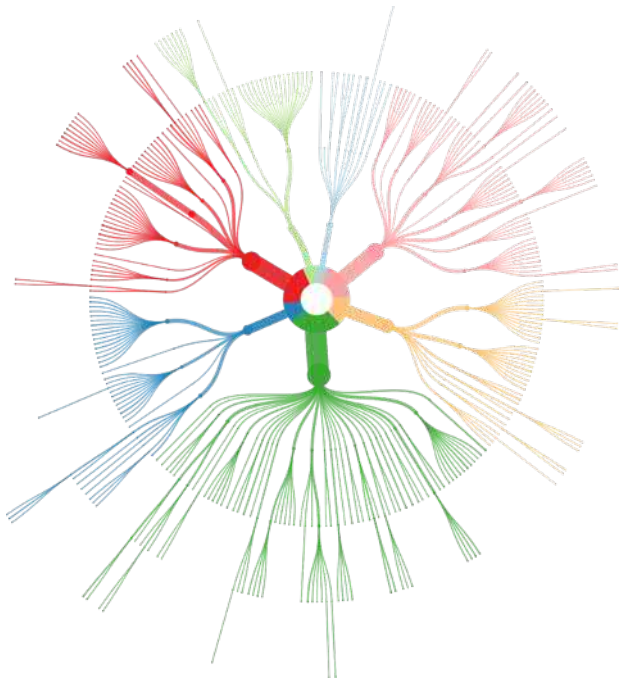


Figure 3. Visualisation of the model. Image: Roope Tahvanainen

Using the Model

When the nationwide division of collecting duties was launched into operation, all participating museums signed a contract with the Finnish Heritage Agency. In the contract, museums stated that they would take responsibility for the duties specified in the model. In this way, the model received an official status among the museums and their activities. The idea with the official contract was also to support museums. Small regional museums in particular often find themselves in a situation where they may have to justify their existence. Being part of nationwide division of collecting duties, they are able to show that they have national responsibilities within the museum field (TAKO Annual Report 2014, p. 1).

It is essential to mention that the model is a constantly developing entity. Museums and their collection activities are not stationary, and the world around us is in constant change as well. The model must be able to face this ongoing change. Therefore, it will never be complete or finished. The coordinator for developing the TAKO model acts as an administrator of collecting duties, also having reporting responsibilities.

Although the model is under constant development, all new modifications to it are done through planning and coordination. It is hoped that museums would modify their collecting duties as little as possible, so that the model could stay consistent, especially on a long-term basis. There is a certain time period every

year, from September to December, when the model is opened for modifications. During this time museums are able to adjust their collecting duties by adding new duties and modifying or removing existing ones. All modifications are executed by first discussing probable changes with the administrator of the model. After their approval, modifications are published in the next update of the model. The annual update is published in January in a change log, where everyone is able to see the new modifications. The change log is open to the public on the network website: http://tako.nba.fi/tallennustyonjako/muutosloki.

The publishing of the new update also opens the reporting period regarding collecting activities of the previous year. All museums involved in the model must report their activities of the previous calendar year. The reporting period is from January to May/June. The reporting is done through a dedicated online survey tool that was created especially for the model. Museums report the contents of the collecting duties of that particular year. Reporting must be done in a concise manner, with the emphasis on the qualitative rather than the quantitative. There is also space for numeric information regarding the contents. The online survey tool posts all the material to the administrator, who assembles the data. The results of this are presented in the network seminar every October. After the results have been published in the seminar, all the data are open to the public. Material is published on the network's web page: http://tako.nba.fi/tallennustyonjako/raportit.

The reported material is presented with Excel sheets and also visualisation. The Excel sheets are a compact way of browsing the material, but also a quite restricted approach. This is especially the case if one would like to look at the contents from a wider point of view, for example by taking a glance through a whole category with sub-categories. For this there is a visualisation tool created especially for the model. This tool presents the model as a tree-shaped entity. With such a tool it is relatively easy to have an overall view of the model and its contents. There are several filters to shape the data, opportunities to make different kinds of queries and other methods for processing the data. There is the possibility to examine the data over one year or up to four years in a row. This gives an insight into different kinds of trends within the collecting activities. For the administrator, the visualisation tool also gives information on the same trends as to how active or healthy they are. If certain collecting duties give zero results many years in a row, it is a sign that those activities should be monitored and discussed with the responsible museums. The visualisation tool can be found at http://bit.ly/2KgFxVV (in Finnish).

Experiences from the Model

The model for the nationwide division of collecting duties was introduced to the Finnish museum field at the beginning of 2013. There have been four cycles of reporting and several years of adjustments so far. The model has proven to be useful and, in general, needed. When introducing the model to the museum field, the greatest fear was that museums would not adopt the model and modus

operandi, and that it would thus fade away. Fortunately, museums adopted the model and have engaged very actively with it from the beginning.

The other fear was that the model would turn out to be non-functional or that it would have some major flaws in mechanics or design. This fear was also in vain, luckily. There are still some challenges with the model. The model lacks some integrity and proportions. Some of its collecting duties are very narrow and really specific, while others can be very broad and complex. An outcome like this was to be expected from the beginning, since the model was created together with numerous museums. With strict guidance from above, the outcome would have been more balanced, but also more superficial. This is, however, a rather small defect that can conceivably be at least partly fixed by further development of the model.

Museums have taken a very active role in taking the concept further. They have explored the structure and started to search for partners preserving similar themes. This has led to a vivid dialogue among museums, and it has also produced fine tuning of the model.

Especially with their large and complex collecting duties, museums are making adjustments and taking their shared responsibility further. Pool meetings have been one very important forum where museums discuss roles and responsibilities within the model. One very visible outcome of the model has been the revelation of different overlapping areas of collecting. Museums have taken steps to reduce these areas by rearranging their collection profiles and using of existing resources. Collection relocations among museums has been one other very visible outcome. For example, Tampere Museums donated their indigenous Sámi people collection to the Sámi Museum and Nature Centre Siida. Anni Guttorm examines this particular relocation case in this volume. The relocation of Sámi objects was also noticed by the news media at the time (Haapanen 2015). The case was also a great way to present some activities of the museum collection management processes to the general public.

The identifying and taking care of any missing areas or black holes is one important activity of the model. It must be stressed that through black holes, museums are able to see any blind spots and weaknesses of our collecting activities on a nationwide scale. Therefore, it is extremely important to see not only what we collect, but what is not taken care of at all.

The fundamental issue with the nationwide division of collecting duties, as well as with contemporary documentation activities, has been the increased level of shared consciousness. Museums are getting familiar with each other's collection profiles and interests. This is the starting point, when developing collection management nationwide. This must be done in co-operation, and the level of knowledge regarding different collections must be adequate.

After the model was up and running museums approached the TAKO Network's steering group with the idea of further development. In addition to the existing

model museums, they wished for a platform where they could present and share information regarding summaries of the specific collections or thematic entities within their main collections. These would be collections that are not included in the nationwide division of collecting duties, but collections or sub-collections that a museum would like to present. Museums felt that sharing this kind of information would push co-operation to the next level and raise the shared knowledge of collections nationwide (TAKO Annual Report 2014).

The platform was created similar to a wiki site. Museums had their own pages where they could publish their collection summaries and other information regarding their different collections. The information they put onto the site included the history and formation of the particular collection, a brief description of it, the types of objects it included, the number of objects and whether the collection is digitalized and accessible online. With the platform there was also a link to Finna, the national collection portal. By creating a link between the TAKO platform and Finna (An open access search service for finding material from archives, libraries and museums. https://museot.finna.fi/), they could link information on a collection level and on an object level relating to those collections. This is assuming, of course, that the objects regarding the particular collections are digitized and published in Finna.

The fundamental idea of sharing this kind of collection information was excellent and clearly needed; museums greeted it with excitement. It was, however, a bit of a failure due to technical issues in the end. The platform format was too complex to use, even with written instructions. Museums had trouble filling in the information and due to that, the collection platform tool was not used very much.

In 2018, the TAKO steering group appointed a new work group that had a mission to create a new digital platform for sharing collection information. The idea was to create a platform with similar content to the former platform. This time however, the outcome was to be more visual, with advanced options to search for and filter information. The new platform is very easy and quick regarding the input of information. There is a simple web page where museums are able to feed their collection information. The possibility to link collections with the objects located in Finna is also included. The new platform has the working title Collections Chart, and it is in its early stages at the time of the writing of this chapter.

The model for nationwide division of collecting duties greatly affects deaccession and disposal activities. With the model, museums get new tools for arranging these activities. When museums are able to find out the collection profiles of their fellow museums there are new possibilities, for example, for collection relocations.

The model has had quite an impact on acquisition processes as well. Today, museums are together able to coordinate acquisitions better. When a donor offers an object to a museum that is not responsible for the collection of that kind of objects, museums have the knowledge to forward the them to the right

museum. The level of activity among museums on this matter has greatly increased lately. It is making things clearer for museums, and for donors it is good customer service.

One might say that the model has increased the level of co-operation outside the themes of the division of collecting. As museums have got to know each other and have had chances to discuss different matters, they have begun to do all kinds of collection management projects together. They have created manuals for how to write collection policies, conducted surveys and given instructions regarding deaccession and disposals and had projects regarding various open data issues and its usage in museum environments. They have created and tested the concept of the communal cataloguing of objects. This sharing of information targets those situations where similar objects are housed in different museums, for example, those mass-produced objects that are catalogued and owned by several museums, but have unique context stories. Communal cataloguing brings these context stories together, thus enriching the museum value of an individual collection item (Hakkarainen & Salonen 2014).

Future Aspects of the TAKO Network

The TAKO Network celebrated its ten-year anniversary in October 2019. The network has done a lot for developing museum collections management in Finland. It has brought museums together like never before, and museums are still very excited to work together. The nationwide division of collecting duties is a unique model that has been presented to colleagues in several European countries. In Finland, museums have realised that the only way to tackle contemporary challenges regarding collections management and collecting activities is through co-operation.

The Network has reached many of the goals originally set in 2009. Yet there is still a lot to be done. The world is constantly changing and museums need to be ready to respond to change and adjust their operations. This naturally also applies to the TAKO Network. A critical development regarding the future planning of the network was the creation of the first TAKO Network Strategy in 2017, which presents the strategic outlines and key points of the network. The current strategy was created for the years 2018–2021, and will be evaluated after that (TAKO strategy 2018).

One of the major developmental issues is to broaden the TAKO Network to art museums. There are a few art museums operating in contemporary documentation activities, but not in the nationwide division of collecting duties. It would be essential to develop the model so that we could welcome art museums to take part in the concept. This requires, however, discussions with art museums on how to execute this the best possible way. This was one part of the discussion of the “Nationwide division of collecting duties version 2.0”, launched in spring 2020. The model had served us well since 2013, but needed to be put under critical evaluation. There are certainly themes and areas that could be

developed further and executed better within the model. The same goes with the contemporary documentation and general activities of the network. The network received its first external evaluation in 2019 and the recommendations based on that evaluation were executed in 2020 and onwards.

It is a great joy to see that the future of the network looks very bright. After ten years the network is still proactive, ambitious and constantly adapting to achieve the next level of professionalism. This would not be possible without museum professionals across Finland who are very passionate and open-minded regarding the co-operation and collection management.

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3D Imaging in Museums

Visa Immonen and Ismo Malinen

Abstract

In this chapter we give an overview of technological issues related to 3D modelling in museums, but also discuss the broader impact that digitalisation has on collections, research and public engagement. Although the technology for 3D digitisation of heritage sites and objects has been available since the 1990s, it is only in the 2010s that its use has boomed. This development has received institutional support by, e.g., the European Commission and the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture. Through the 3D modelling of museum objects, the primarily public institutional set-up of cultural heritage becomes integrated into both commercial and non-commercial international platforms. In museums, 3D modelling is typically used to create accurate and widespread documentation of heritage objects, conducting novel academic research and enhancing public engagement. Much of the published work on 3D modelling of heritage focuses on describing and developing a technological framework. Nonetheless, from the point of view of heritage work, the most important issues are related to the selection of the museum objects for digitising and the use of the models in heritage institutions.

Keywords: 3D digitisation, digital workflow, heritage sites, metadata, museum collections

Technical Issues and Heritage Discussions

The documentation of archaeological and other heritage sites with 3D modelling began in the 1990s, and the first digital models of museum objects were created in the latter part of the decade. One of the earliest and best-known ventures was the Digital Michelangelo Project in 1998–1999 (Levoy et al. 2000). It scanned ten sculptures made by the Renaissance master and produced such precise models that tool marks on their surfaces could be examined. In spite of the technology being available, however, 3D modelling had its breakthrough in museums only once the technology gained more of a foothold in other venues of modern life, becoming less expensive in the latter part of the 2010s. In Finland, this development culminated in 2018 when the Ministry of Education and Culture started granting special subsidies for the 3D digitisation of museum collections. The European Commission expressed similar official interest by producing the Declaration of Cooperation on Heritage Digitisation, signed in spring 2019. The declaration stressed the importance of 3D digitisation and launched a pan-European initiative for the 3D digitisation of heritage artefacts, monuments and sites (European Commission 2019). The European Union is

also investing in many projects, which develop 3D modelling of heritage or are based on applying the technology.

Although setting up and using the technological framework of 3D modelling remains an important concern for museums, more and more emphasis is now placed on questions specific to museums and heritage, such as what museum items are chosen for digitisation, in what ways the results are made available to different audiences and how 3D models affect the experiencing of museum objects and heritage in general. Diane Zorich (2018, p. 75) argues that museums tend to digitise in "a way that reflects the past", but the actual challenge is to digitise in a way that is oriented to the future. In this chapter we give an overview of technological issues related to 3D modelling in museums, but also discuss the broader impact that digitalisation has on collections, research and public engagement.

The technology of 3D modelling was not specifically created for heritage institutions, and its advancement takes place largely outside museums. Global giants such as Apple, Google and Nokia, as well as the video game industry, invest huge sums in developing digital technology, while its use is gaining more and more importance in the construction, design, entertainment and health industries, as well as in the visual arts (Ahlavuo et al. 2016). Subsequently, the technology is commercially ingrained, from the basic tools of digitisation to making the results available and accessible online. Although Nanna Bonde Thylstrup (2018, pp. 5–6) writes of the mass digitisation of cultural heritage, such as the scanning of books, her remark that through digitalisation the primarily public institutional set-up of cultural heritage becomes integrated into international commercial platforms is also applicable to the 3D modelling of museum objects. This technology brings with it a multiplicity of interests, including the processes of standardisation and globalisation, which was previously not necessarily well recognised in cultural heritage institutions. These processes have to be faced and negotiated within museums and heritage settings.

Before Starting 3D Modelling Activities

In museums and the heritage sector, 3D modelling is seen as one of the key solutions for documenting, analysing and presenting cultural heritage. The term refers to the use of computer-based tools to capture and represent physical objects in virtual space, allowing a free manipulation and rendering of the model (Dey 2018, p. 5). 3D modelling constitutes a form of documentation which, when done correctly, does not cause any damage to the digitised items. Here, we concentrate mostly on 3D modelling of museum objects and other heritage collections. Besides objects, however, monuments and sites like buildings, archaeological remains and other immovable tangible heritage are usually key priorities for 3D digitisation. For instance, according to the European Commission's (2020) basic principles for 3D digitisation, it "is a necessity for tangible cultural heritage at risk, for preservation and restoration purposes; 3D digitisation can provide

virtual access to cultural heritage that is difficult to access or inaccessible, e.g., underwater".

Converting collections into virtual objects offers much more than just digital 3D copies of original artefacts. The 3D model produced is something other than the physical object; it is a representation, or rather a digital surrogate of the museum artefact (Häyrinen 2012, pp. 19–21, p. 24). Not only has the physical appearance of the object been transformed into digital data, some parts of the model are always created by software and, depending on the original artefact or site and its level of complexity, the dataset never covers all of the aspects of the original object. On the other hand, as an entity of the virtual realm, a 3D model is not subject to the physical and temporal constraints of its material counterpart, such as inhabiting only one location in the physical world.

In museums, the purposes of modelling usually fall into one of three major categories. Firstly, as an accurate and pervasive means of documentation, 3D models help in the preservation and conservation of physical artefacts (Fay-Leino 2016). Secondly, they allow new ways of conducting scholarly research on collections and sites. Thirdly, 3D models offer novel opportunities for public engagement in exhibitions, at heritage locations and online.

Despite the advances in digital technologies, 3D modelling is still a very time- and labour-intensive undertaking. Compared with traditional photography, it requires much more resources in terms of space, time, labour, skills and technology, as well as experience, in order to be performed properly and sustainably. While professional photographers can create and process 2D images of about 30–40 objects in a day, depending on the artefacts, in the same amount of time, they can produce only one to three 3D models. Consequently, before even commencing 3D digitisation, museums should be certain that the effort is actually worth the required investment (Malinen 2019).

If a museum wants to produce 3D models on its own, it needs to invest in adequate digital equipment and software. Like many digital technologies, 3D modelling evolves constantly and will probably become cheaper and more efficient in the future. However, the resource intensiveness of 3D modelling becomes more problematic by the rapid development of digital tools. The high-quality equipment needed for laser scanning is in particular evolving swiftly, which also means that it becomes rather quickly obsolete, and requires new investments in infrastructure. Producing large amounts of 3D models of museum objects may thus be a waste of resources, unless there is a sustainable plan for using the models, or other relevant reasons for modelling.

An alternative to acquiring expensive 3D scanning equipment is to use commercial services. This is a particularly attractive option when 3D modelling is required only temporarily and for a limited number of objects. Outsourcing the scanning activity, however, also has drawbacks, as the museum always loses at least some control over the scanning process and the results. Museum objects might end up handled and transported by persons not trained for the task.

Moreover, inexperienced museums might not take into consideration all the issues related to the standards of scanning and file formats, the metadata accompanying the models and intellectual property rights, which cover both the raw data and the final products (Riksantikvarieämbetet 2019).

When a museum lacks previous experience in 3D modelling, usually it is best to start with small projects. Even when a very limited number of objects are selected for digitising, the museum has to address fundamental questions of both a technical and heritological nature. With small sample sizes, making incorrect decisions is not fatal, and the production processes can be altered with relatively small consequences. Nevertheless, planning remains crucial. The Swedish National Heritage Board has compiled a useful checklist, which museums can follow when planning their 3D modelling activities (Riksantikvarieämbetet 2019):

- What is the overall goal of creating and publishing 3D models (e.g., conservation, documentation, increased availability, replacing or supplementing physical objects, printing copies, digital exhibition, teaching aids, etc.)?
- Does the museum have a vision with which the production and publication of 3D models can be linked?
- What kind of resources, staff, expertise, technical equipment and funding does the museum have for creating 3D models?
- What are the main target groups and what needs do they have?
- Does the museum already have a publication policy, including, e.g., free use, and for whom and why are the 3D models published?
- What channels will the museum be using in publishing the 3D models?
- Does the museum have a plan and facilities for long-term maintenance and updating of 3D data?

The museum should be able to answer this series of questions, at least provisionally, when commencing its endeavour to produce 3D models. In 2020, the European Commission published a document titled *Basic principles and tips for 3D digitisation of tangible cultural heritage*, which was compiled with the help of experts on 3D modelling. It contains ten principles, along with further instructions, to help heritage institutions, museums, authorities and professionals in increasing their use of 3D digitisation (European Commission 2020). The document contains many aspects similar to the Swedish National Heritage Board's list, and should be consulted when planning any form of 3D digitisation of heritage objects.

Since digitising is such a strain on resources, the museum should be able to articulate what added value 3D modelling would actually bring to different end-users instead of, e.g., publishing digital photographs of the same objects online. A justifiable reason might be that through 3D models audiences can visually access museum objects from different angles and observe details which

would not be possible in photographs or by looking at the actual object through a protective glass in an exhibition.

Selecting Objects for 3D Modelling

Much of the published work on 3D modelling of heritage focuses on describing and developing a technological framework. Nonetheless, from the point of view of heritage work, the most important issues relate to selecting the museum objects for digitising and the use of the models in heritage institutions. In fact, the selection of objects and sites for 3D modelling should be the cornerstone of any heritage digitising process, and it is largely determined by the intended audience and the types of 3D models that are relevant to it.

To some extent, the selection of objects for 3D modelling is conditioned by the technological framework, as different digitising techniques pose different kinds of limitations. For almost all the available techniques, there are some materials and shapes that are extremely difficult or almost impossible to model. Data capture has difficulties with such reflective surfaces as lustrous metals, glass and marble, with their translucent and heterogenous structures (Frischer 2016), and, conversely, with very dark surfaces. Thin or otherwise small objects, as well as artefacts with complex and movable parts, can also be problematic. There are some procedures to circumvent such situations. For example, the surface of a shiny object can be sprayed with pigment to create a matte coat for better scanning results, but such techniques might not be suitable for museum objects.

As is typical of the introduction of new technologies to museums, the objects chosen for digitising are often well-known token items, which institutions like to use for their publicity. Sometimes a selection based purely on the popularity of certain museum objects is justified by the reduced handling of such objects. However, as Jacob L. Dahl (2018) points out, the continual development of new and more precise documentation technologies, as well as the unavoidable physical change of all museum objects, means that the same objects are actually documented and digitised again and again, and consequently their handling is not necessarily reduced. Yet, 3D modelling can be pivotal in minimising the need to move and touch very fragile objects after they have been digitised. The frailty of objects and sites as a selection criterion can coincide with the difficult accessibility of the artefacts and locations for visitors. For instance, wrecks and other underwater sites remain unattainable for most.

Besides the criteria of popularity, fragility and accessibility, scholarly research can also be a principle in selecting objects for 3D modelling. Digitisation can bring otherwise inaccessible objects within reach of a larger community of scholars, or enable them to examine objects hosted in different museums at the same time. By the same token, fragments of the same object dispersed in different collections can be reunited, and partly destroyed objects reconstructed by digitally combining documentation from different periods (Dey 2018, pp. 28–30). In some cases, 3D models can also be used for measuring objects precisely.

Increasingly, however, the most exciting applications of 3D models in scholarly research use digital means such as reflectance transformation imaging (RTI) to virtually enhance, manipulate and analyse objects and their properties (Jones et al. 2015; Tolksdorf, Elburg & Reuter 2017).

The selection of objects for 3D modelling in heritage institutions has largely been based on criteria defined and measured by heritage professionals, even when public engagement is the foremost motivation (Jones & Rapley 2018, p. 82). This seems problematic, since the empowerment of communities as part of heritage endeavours and management has a growing impact on the role of museums and how they see their mission. However, many museums are still testing and learning 3D modelling, and probably with more experience the selection process will become more inclusive (Jeffrey et al. 2020). Freya Roe (2014, p. 42) suggests that opening up the selection processes and engaging communities in every step could turn one-off visitors into long-term users. In the future, local communities will perhaps also have better access to 3D modelling infrastructure (Lowe 2018, p. 56), and be able to utilise their own devices, such as smartphones, to digitise heritage objects and sites in crowdsourcing campaigns.

3D Modelling Techniques

The creation of 3D models can be accomplished using various techniques, but in heritage work, there are three main techniques: photogrammetry, laser scanning and structured light scanning. They all have different benefits and shortcomings, and the quality of the 3D models depends on the technical equipment and software, as well as the operator's skills and experience. The best technical result is reached when the geometry of the models, their textures and optical material properties are as high quality as possible. Going for the highest resolution might sound tempting, but as Diane Zorich (2018, p. 75) points out, this creates huge processing and storage demands, which can be impossible to meet. Hence the resolution should be decided based on the actual use of the model. For instance, will the 3D model be part of the scholarly documentation of the object, where the resolution should be high, or is it to be used for public engagement in which lower resolutions are better suited for the task?

The first one of the three techniques, 3D photogrammetry, is a relatively old technique based on converting two-dimensional data obtained from digital photographs into three-dimensional measurements and the final product. In this method, known as structure from motion (SfM), tens or hundreds of overlapping photographs of the object are taken from different angles, and then matched and compiled into a digital model. The photographs can be shot with ordinary digital cameras, but special software is needed to process the image data and generate a dense point cloud, which is a set of spatial coordinates sampled from the external surfaces of the physical object.



Figure 1. Creating a 3D model of a piece of prehistoric pottery with photogrammetry. The item to be digitised is placed on a rotating platform, while the camera takes digital photos of the piece from different angles. Photo: Annukka Debenjak-Ijäs.

Photogrammetry has quickly become easier, faster and cheaper than other forms of digital imaging, especially as the different software tools needed for creating the final products have evolved. Presently, it is the best and least expensive way to start creating 3D models, although it still requires a trained person, preferably a professional photographer with an interest in IT. It is recommended to use advanced shareware or commercial products, of which there are usually trial versions available for free (Agisoft 2019; CaptureReality 2019; Historic England 2017).

Nowadays it is no longer that difficult to do basic 3D photogrammetry using ordinary smartphones with a modelling application. Most of these apps are based on photogrammetry, and many of them are free. The quality of the models and the ease of using the apps vary, but smartphones nevertheless offer a useful way to learn some basic 3D scanning and can create models for temporary use (Obudho 2019). They can also be easily used in crowdsourcing campaigns.

A step up from smartphones is using a digital camera with appropriate lenses and lightning (Etienne 2018; Historic England 2017). When artefacts are being photographed, a tripod and an external lightning rig are a must, and for smaller objects a light tent can be especially handy. In addition, a turntable lessens the need to move either the object or the camera when the required number of images is taken. For terrestrial photogrammetric imaging, a fixed or extendable tripod or mast is needed, while aerial photogrammetry requires a camera drone or other remotely controlled aircraft.

The second technique, laser scanning, also shows great variation in its operating principles, precision, accuracy and price (Artec3D 2019). This technology is based on active data collection, where a laser beam is emitted and received to determine the distance to a surface. In addition to a stationary tripod, the collection of data can be carried out from a vehicle or from the air; even handheld and backpack systems are available, allowing data collection while walking around a site or an object. Many museums have acquired handheld laser scanners, as

prices have become more affordable and their use is quite easy to learn, though some of the devices may not be of the highest quality or have other limitations.

Like photogrammetry, laser scanning has many applications. It is routinely used in archaeological and architectural documentation (Debenjak 2015; Savolainen 2019), as well as in creating 3D models or 2D illustrations of portable artefacts and collecting data for 3D printing. The technique nonetheless has its limitations, and the desired outcome usually requires expensive equipment to attain the highest quality, as well as a significant amount of time for scanning and processing the data.

Most importantly, unlike photogrammetry, laser scanning cannot record the colour data or texture of the surface, which must be added by other means. One solution is to integrate laser scanning data with point clouds created by means of 3D photogrammetry. This kind of hybrid approach to producing high-quality 3D models gives the best results in terms of resolution and texture, especially if the sites and objects are difficult to digitise with a 3D laser scanner alone (Historic England 2017).

Like laser scanning, the third technique, structured light scanning, requires specialised equipment (Dey 2018, p. 24; Historic England 2018). Such a device projects a structured light pattern of stripes and grids onto a surface that is then recorded by an infrared camera. By measuring how the pattern is transformed by the surface, the device calculates variations in depth. The measuring device is often accompanied by a digital camera, which records the colour data of the scanned surface. Structured light scanning is a safe and quick method, as models are often generated in real time on a computer screen. The disadvantages include the need of a controlled environment, as ambient light can affect the quality of the scan, and it produces a low quality of resolution and surface detail compared with the other two methods.

Regardless of the chosen method, a high-performance computer, such as a state-of-the-art gaming computer, is needed to run the software and process the raw data. Usually, the computer should have as much memory (RAM) as possible and run a high-speed multi core CPU for processing the data. Specifically, a dedicated 3D graphics card or graphic processing unit (GPU) is essential. Lastly, ample amounts of data storage space are needed to assist the processing and storing of large data sets (Agisoft 2019; CaptureReality 2019; Historic England 2018).

In addition to the basic recording hardware and software, many manufacturers offer equipment needed for automating the whole process of 3D digitisation (Cultlab3D 2019; Santos 2017). Automated or semi-automated processes may integrate several components. For example, CultArc3D comes with an automated conveyor belt system, glass carrier disks and a scanning station, while other products utilise robotic arms. Some of these solutions were originally designed for the needs of e-commerce and were offered to museums only later, while others were designed and tested from the start to suit the requirements of heritage institutions.

Archiving and Distributing 3D Models and Data

After the 3D model has been processed and finalised, another set of issues emerges regarding the distribution, use and archiving of the results. In fact, for heritage institutions, these are crucial concerns that should be resolved before digitising begins. Firstly, it should be decided how much of the raw material and related datasets are to be preserved alongside the actual model. The final 3D model comprises only a small part of the data collected during the digitising process, and ideally a portion of the other material is also stored. The raw data includes a series of digital images or other digital information. Since digitising technology evolves rapidly, some of this raw data should be preserved for reuse in the future, when the same datasets can be utilised to make 3D models of much better quality and accuracy. Moreover, the preservation of the datasets allows examining the process later and increases its transparency and openness. However, the more datasets kept in digital archives, the larger the storage capacity has to be.

Secondly, transparency and usability of 3D models in heritage institutions requires that they are accompanied by adequate metadata. The term metadata refers to data that is affixed to the actual content to provide information about the model, including the technical framework of the production process, but also the heritage context and content of the model. Each different digital genre usually has specific standards, which define the information that should be provided along with the data, but because 3D modelling is a relatively recent development in heritage institutions, there is no widely acknowledged framework for its metadata. Some museums and organisations, however, have already developed metadata models and offer them for open use (DPO 2018; Europeana Network Association Members Council 2020).

Thirdly, while some of the 3D models are intended for use only in museums, more and more of them are put online for public viewing and use, often under a Creative Commons licence. There are several websites offering free services for publishing, sharing and viewing 3D models. Among the most popular are Sketchfab and Thingverse. In addition, such public platforms for digital cultural heritage as the European Union's Europeana and Finna in Finland are being developed to provide content management and sharing for 3D models as well.

Fourthly, archiving and distributing 3D data requires plenty of storage space and dealing with various interfaces and items of software. It is problematic, however, that supercomputers and cloud-based data storage consume a lot of energy, which goes against the principle of sustainable development. Consequently, when 3D digitisation is planned, sustainability and reducing CO_2 emissions should be taken into consideration. A good starting point for this is the document *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDG) published by the United Nations for 2015–2030 (United Nations 2015).

Uses of 3D Models in Heritage Institutions

Since digitising collections has become popular in heritage institutions, numerous 3D modelling projects are in progress in various parts of the world. Here we present three different Nordic projects, each with its distinct characteristics. The first one is an example of how an archaeological find can be digitised for conservation and public engagement purposes, the second is a project that aims at establishing best practices for 3D modelling and the third shows the successful digitisation of entire museum interiors.

Firstly, in 2019, the Finnish Heritage Agency launched a project to pilot and develop 3D processes in digitising its collections. Even though this was not the first time the Finnish Heritage Agency used 3D methods and created 3D models, the project revealed that embedding 3D modelling into collection management is time-consuming and still requires a lot of experimentation and mistakes to ultimately be successful.

Unlike in many other 3D modelling projects, the artefacts chosen for digitisation varied substantially in size, age, material and significance. A representative example of the chosen artefacts was a portion from a 1684 shipwreck, known as the *Hahtiperä wreck*, found on dry land in the centre of Oulu, Northern Finland in 2019. The find was 3D modelled with photogrammetry before its conservation started, which involved disassembling the remains (Museovirasto 2019). The 3D model could be used to visualise the construction of the ship, but most importantly to reassemble the wreck after the conservation. This and similar 3D projects in Finland and internationally have produced experiences and data which are being developed into best practice guidelines.

The second project is based at the Department of Archaeology at the University of Turku, and was one of the recipients of the Ministry of Education and Culture's special subsidies for the 3D digitising of museum collections in 2018. In collaboration with the Aboa Vetus Ars Nova Museum in Turku and the Turku Museum Centre, the project aimed at digitising archaeological finds from the collections of the three institutions (Immonen & Ratilainen 2019; Turku Museum Centre 2020). In addition to testing and comparing a range of 3D modelling techniques, equipment and practices, the project has also designed and held a university course on 3D modelling with lectures and workshops, and eventually it collected and put all of the latest know-how into an open access guide on best practices in the 3D modelling of archaeological finds (Debenjak-Ijäs 2020). It is common for commentators on heritage 3D modelling to state that the aims and audiences of digitisation should be defined clearly before starting the actual activity, but one of the observations of the Turku project was that many ideas for inventive ways of using 3D models emerge only during and after the actual digitisation. Perhaps 3D modelling projects should have some space for experimentation and making adjustments throughout the process, in order to better reach novel and original outcomes.



Figure 2. A 3D model made of a piece of prehistoric pottery. The item is part of the collection of the Department of Archaeology at the University of Turku. Photo: Annukka Debenjak-Ijäs.

Thirdly, creating 3D models of heritage can bring advantages to both museums and wider audiences, some of which the heritage institutions might not have even imagined. Since 3D models have the potential to allow better access to heritage, regardless of one's location and background, they can reach out to entirely new audiences. A case in point is the Hallwyl Museum in the historical Hallwyl House in central Stockholm. The house, built from 1893 to 1898, belonged to the Count and Countess von Hallwyl, but was donated to the Swedish state in 1920 and opened as a museum in 1938. The house's sumptuous interiors exhibit an extensive art collection. Recently, the museum produced various high-quality 3D models of the museum's interiors and published them online under Creative Commons licences, allowing free re-use also for commercial purposes. The virtual 3D exhibition includes not only the documentation of the museum space and its artworks, but also textual information on individual exhibited items and internet links to other websites.

With the help of 3D modelling, the Hallwyl Museum became available to everyone with internet access, which raised general awareness of the museum, but which did not reduce the number of physical visitors. In 2018 the Hallwyl Museum had a total of 309,434 visits to the physical museum, while the 3D models of museum interiors on Sketchfab alone were accessed over 117,000 times (Hallwyl Museum 2020; Lernestal 2020). As a further benefit, the Hallwyl Museum's 3D models on Sketchfab were utilised in many virtual reality and other projects. Through these secondary applications users and players in virtual reality around the world came into contact with cultural heritage of the Hallwyl Museum (Lernestal 2020).

3D Models as a Heritage Phenomenon

The introduction of 3D models in museums involves many technical and practical problems, as well as imposing infrastructural demands. Importantly, the digitisation of heritage objects and sites also brings up issues of a more conceptual and cultural nature. These require further research and analysis, and remain to be fully addressed by future scholarship. However, in this concluding section of our article, we have identified three areas of particular interest which should be taken into consideration when museums engage in 3D modelling of their col-

lections. The first is the relationship between museum objects and their digital surrogates, the second is the user experience and engagement with 3D models and the third is the role of museums as digitising institutions.

From a technical point of view, the relationship between museum objects and their digital surrogates is largely defined by the 3D model's accuracy and precision in representing its physical original. The situation is more complicated, however, if this relationship is seen as also affecting our culturally and socially conditioned relationship with objects. Like the artefacts in museum exhibitions, 3D models are encountered and seen in a historically conditioned framework, mixing our real and virtual encounters with artefacts. In fact, 3D models bring together very different kind of audiences to experience museum objects in digital space, which is very dissimilar to the museum environment. For instance, unlike physical objects, which are affected by continual, although not necessarily rapid change, 3D models are frozen images from the material itinerary of their real counterparts (Jones & Rapley 2018, p. 83). This forms a stark contrast with the way modern conservation and preservation of heritage objects embraces the continual physical change of artefacts and sites.

It is revealing of our historically conditioned relationship with museum artefacts that the objects chosen for digitisation are almost always finished products and usually of high material value, not half-finished products, tools of manufacture or otherwise less valued items. Tiia Suorsa (2017) argues, in contrast, that 3D modelling should take more into consideration the actual production and use processes of which the heritage objects have been part. Digital models should allow heritage items to be seen as unfinished and perpetually changing. Nevertheless, although 3D modelling could open up novel ways of thinking about our relationship with museum artefacts, and some scholars have called for a radical reconsideration of digital heritage, presently the applications of 3D digital technology tend to reiterate ossified conceptions of heritage objects and their valuation.

Among the applications of 3D modelling is a physically accurate reproduction of the original artefacts with 3D printing. This is a process in which some raw material is joined or solidified under computer control to create a physical 3D object. 3D printing makes it possible to manufacture copies of heritage objects for the commercial market, but there are also more inventive applications, like the creation of tactile replicas, which museum visitors can touch and handle. Printing physical copies of objects can even help heritage institutions to address issues of repatriation and the decolonising of collections (Samaroudi & Rodriguez Echavarria 2019). Moreover, instead of exact copies, 3D printing has been used to create physical puzzles or puzzle-like objects to engage audiences in museum exhibitions (Rodriguez Echavarria & Samaroudi 2018; Samaroudi et al. 2017).

Besides the object-focused approach, the second area of interest in 3D modelling involves the users of the digital surrogates. It is slightly misleading, however, to integrate the terms user and user experience from a commercial context into the analysis of 3D models in a heritage environment. The terms problematically cast

the variety of encounters with 3D models into an abstracted notion of a uniform user and his or her stereotypical experiences. Whatever terms are chosen, there are pivotal questions of 3D modelling to be studied in museums (Li et al. 2018). On the one hand, the questions are relatively uncomplicated, addressing, e.g., the user profile. Is the intended audience of the 3D model already experienced with heritage institutions, i.e., regular museum visitors, or are they members of the public who rarely go to museums? On the other hand, 3D modelling raises rather intricate questions regarding the technology's cultural implications. How do 3D models change our understanding of the past and ancient artefacts, as well as our experiences of heritage? Museums have traditionally controlled visitors' behaviour in a highly assertive manner, thus creating homogenous embodied experiences of heritage spaces. However, digitisation, including 3D modelling, potentially challenges the idea of a passive, obedient body in the museum environment, offering fresh means for "mapping and remediating the tangible and intangible heritage encompassing embodiment" (Kenderdine 2016, p. 23). How do these digitally created virtual environments alter the embodied interpretation of heritage? The effects of heritage digitisation are manifold, covering various factual, emotional, institutional and individual spheres of life. Despite the importance of questions concerning the impact of digitalisation on heritage, research on the variety of encounters between 3D models and people is still more limited than studies on the technological aspects of 3D modelling.

Thirdly, 3D modelling, along with other forms of digital technology, necessarily alters museums and other heritage institutions. Digitising creates new demands for the museum infrastructure in terms of both equipment and online presence, as well as for personnel with practical knowledge of how to use the new technologies (Roe 2014). Some of these technical challenges can be mitigated by establishing new forms of collaboration among individual museums, as well as among museums and other actors in the heritage sector. Museums could, for instance, share their equipment and experiences of 3D modelling among themselves. There are, however, even broader institutional challenges. For instance, as Suorsa (2018) points out, digital heritage calls into question the established distinction between heritage institutions and audiences, epitomised by the glass case which separates the heritage object and its viewer. In contrast, 3D models are potentially available to everybody and allow equal access to heritage, whether you are a professional, amateur or even just passingly interested in some item of heritage.

As digital and cultural phenomena, 3D models are highly flexible and multifaceted objects (Fay-Leino 2016, p. 15), and unleashing their potential requires not only technological know-how, but also a historically sensitive approach. If these two aspects of 3D modelling are successfully combined, it will potentially break new ground in heritage institutions. At their best, 3D models could help turn single-visit museumgoers into persons with an enduring interest in heritage and culture.

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Between Private and Public – Corporate art collecting and collaboration with art museums in Finland

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Abstract

In this chapter, I discuss corporate art collections as part of national cultural heritage and semi-public collections. Corporate art is seen through the lenses of collecting, various professions and corporate social responsibility (CSR). I highlight the motives and the meanings of visual art in the context of business and practices of collection development, with the similarities and differences to museums and the museum profession. The essence of corporate art collecting is connected with business objectives, and thus this field of collecting differs in many ways from the objectives of museum collections and ethics. The main motives for corporate art collecting are aesthetics, well-being, CSR, corporate image and branding.

Professionalisation of Finnish corporate art took place during the 2000s, but it is not as widespread as it is in large companies in North America and Central Europe. Art-field professionalism generally indicates an increased focus on clarifying collecting polices, questions of displaying art and audience engagement. Sometimes a semi-public collection becomes public. Collaboration between profit-making companies and museums is also discussed. In Finland the public sector is still the main patron of the arts, and corporate art collecting and partnership deals with museums are supplementary means of financing of culture. The time span of the chapter covers mainly contemporary culture.

Key words: corporate art collections, corporate social responsibility, private patronage, professionalisation, semi-public collections

Introduction to Corporate Art Collecting

During the last three decades corporate art collecting has been discussed by scholars and some research has been also carried out in Finland. Different aspects of corporate art, such as the motives for collecting, nature of collections, professionalisation of corporate art and communication possibilities of fine art in business, have been researched, mainly by Western scholars.[1] Despite the

1. See for example Barendregt et al. *2009;* Becker 1994; Behnke 2007; Hoeken and Ruikes 2005;

increasing literature and publicity of collections and collectors, it is still difficult to picture an all-inclusive understanding of corporate art because of the diverse development of collections and their parent companies. Research is often case-specific and access to private materials may be limited, or documents may be fragmental. There are no domestic catalogues of companies which maintain art collections. Information on Finnish collections is also scarce in the *International Directory of Corporate Art Collections,* which is the leading source publication for the topic.[2]

This chapter is based on my PhD thesis, *Corporate Art Collections in Finland – Collecting policies, practices of displaying art, and meanings of art in business* (Luukkanen-Hirvikoski 2015) and selectively updated case studies relating to collection disposals and corporate partnership with museums. The case studies in my PhD were 25 Finnish and four European corporate art collections. The companies represented various branches of business, from manufacturing to services, and the size of the collections ranged from 200 to nearly 7500 works of art. These Finnish companies altogether owned around 29,000 works of art. The research was multidisciplinary, with three different theoretical frameworks: the theories of collecting, various professions, and corporate social responsibility (CSR). The fieldwork was carried during 2006–2007 and updates continued until 2014. The data were collected through thematic interviews, on-site observations and a short questionnaire. The informants were responsible for art purchases and collection management (Luukkanen-Hirvikoski 2015). Fine art and economics are not seen as being opposing dynamics in this chapter.

Some concepts of museum studies can be applied to research on corporate collecting, such as the concepts of collecting and collections. I discuss collecting as a social process introduced by Susan Pearce. Referring to Pearce's three modes of collecting – collecting as souvenirs, as fetish objects and as systematics – I regard corporate collecting being closest to systematics. The selection process and the role of the corporate curator is important, but without the objective of "filling a gap in the collections" (Pearce 2005, pp. 14–18, pp. 28–33). Due to the special context of business, collecting has differences when compared to the collecting practises of families and individuals. Corporate collecting is generally based on written rules and values of business organisations instead of private passions. Compared with the private consumption of art, the corporate curator spends the company funds on art purchases, not his or her personal funds or tax revenues.

Jacobson 1993; Kottasz et al. 2007 and 2008; Landensperger 2002; Leber 2008; Lindenberg and Oosterlink 2011; Luukkanen-Hirvikoski 2015; Martorella 1990; Ullrich 2004; Wu 2003. MA theses on corporate art have also been completed in many countries, two of them in Finland, with a third forthcoming.

2. Despite fragmented information, the *International Directory of Corporate Art Collections*, that has been published since 1983 by The International Art Alliance, is the major source of information on companies that have collected or has collected art. Nowadays the catalogue lists nearly 800 companies worldwide and is updated regularly. The publisher has both printed and online editions.

Quoting previous research on corporate art (Martorella 1990, p. 4; Witte 2009a, p. 34) and applying the definition of collection by Susan Pearce (2005, p.15, p. 159) it can be concluded that corporate art collection consists of all art in a collection which is founded by a company or corporate foundation. As Arnold Witte notes, there is no universal understanding of corporate art collections, since the concept of art varies and sometimes the products of the company or other artefacts than works of art are included in a collection (Witte 2009a, p. 34). The element of displaying should be added to the definition of corporate art, since a collection is displayed on the company's premises (Luukkanen-Hirvikoski 2015, pp. 58–59), as seen in figure 1.

Today a typical Finnish corporate art collection comprises around 400–800 works of art created by canonised Finnish and regional artists. The largest Finnish corporate art collection currently numbers around 3000 works. The focus in many companies is on maintaining and displaying the collection instead of acquiring new. This means that corporate support in the form of art purchases of the latest Finnish visual art is currently modest.



Figure 1. Works of art in the collection of Fortum Art Foundation in Espoo 2017. Photo by the author.

Differences With Museum Collections

There are a few essential differences when comparing corporate collecting with museum collections and collection management practices. Business activities and profit-making objectives impact companies' interest in launching and maintaining art programmes. Corporate collections are highly fluctuating, which is the main difference to public collections, especially in regard to collection disposals. Permanence is essential for museum management (see also Levä, this volume). Business enterprises do not have any public liabilities relating to the collecting or preserving of tangible and intangible cultural heritage. That is the role of a public museum. Companies can even disregard the ICOM's *Code of Ethics for*

Museums but of course they abide by national and international legislation on cultural properties (see also Eero Ehanti, this volume). Without the obligation to follow museum ethics, this means, for example, that collection disposals can be made quickly and decision-making may be based on one person's vision or a sudden change in collection policy. But as Nina Robbins shows in her research on collection disposals in Finnish art museums, disposals are multidimensional questions and burning issues in the museum field too (Robbins 2016).

Another example of ethics and differences to museum collections relates to collection management and the expertise involved in it. Apart from corporate foundations, the people responsible for collection management in Finnish companies seldom hold degrees or have work experience in the arts and culture. Their expertise is usually in economics, communications, human resources or business administration. There are a few external curators and art advisors who assist boards of directors and art committees of companies, but professionalisation in the area of corporate art is not widespread in Finland. In 2015 nearly one third of the 25 Finnish corporate art collections were professionalised, meaning that companies had employed a curator or had established a non-profit foundation (Luukkanen-Hirvikoski 2015). When a company or foundation recruits a specialist in the arts and culture, ethics and museum practices are applied to daily work. There are case-specific differences in the professionalisation of corporate art, but generally speaking, professionalisation in corporate collecting started to take place in North America and Central Europe in the 1980s to the 1990s (Behnke 2007, p. 228; Jacobson 1993, p. 9; Leber 2008, p. 284; Martorella 1990, pp. 140–141; Witte 2009a, p. 38, pp. 46–48; Wu 2003, pp. 212–213). In Finland the same development began slightly later. External art market professionals and interior designers are sometimes involved in decision-making, for example when new facilities are finished, monumental art is commissioned and questions of financial values or authenticity are seen as important.

The general economic situation affects on corporate art collecting (Barendregt et al. 2009; Martorella 1990; Wu 2003). When the economy is booming, corporate art programmes are developed, and during a recession collecting declines. When essential changes take place in the business environment, such as mergers or changes in market position, these are usually reflected in collection policy and practices. According to Christophe Behnke (2007, p. 231) museum collections have a more secure existence than does corporate art. Some companies have established art or cultural foundations to take care of their collections and to provide a more stable environment for them. Today several corporate art foundations in Finland co-operate, and they have established the Association of Finnish Fine Arts Foundations (*Suomalaisten taidesäätiöiden yhdistys*, STSY), which is a similar network to, e.g., the Netherlands Association of Corporate Art Collections (*Vereniging Bedrijfscollecties Nederland*, VBCN).[3] In contrast to companies with the objective of profit maximisation, corporate foundations are non-profit

3. Further information on STSY available at http://stsy.fi/en/home/ and VBCN: https://vbcn.nl/EN/ [Last accessed 28 June 2019]

organisations aiming for the public good. Corporate foundations operate closely with their parent company in regard to financing and the composition of board members (Minciuollo 2016). Sometimes there is a division between corporate collection and the collection managed by a corporate foundation, although both collections are displayed on the same premises and the same personnel is responsible for collection management. In such cases, art of low economic and art historical value is managed by the company and the foundation takes care of the more valuable art. In-house hierarchies within a collection refer to the appreciation of art, and sometimes the most valuable part of the collection is defined as museum quality. These works of art are loaned to public exhibitions and are the collection highlights (Luukkanen-Hirvikoski 2015).

Usually the whole collection, or at least the majority of it, is displayed at a company's premises. This is one of the differences to museum collections. Small storage areas exist for damaged works of art or art that will be relocated or disposed from the collection. Only two Finnish collections out of 25 were located in permanent storage, because of new facilities and changes in architecture. Questions of public vs. private, especially from the point of space and patronage, concern corporate collecting. The origins of public and private dimensions are political in nature (Ruohonen 2013; Wu 2003), but in corporate art collecting these are practically linked to accessibility and funding of the arts. I discuss corporate art collections as semi-public collections. From the perspective of space and financing they are collections that can be seen as something between public and private. On the one hand, working places are usually places with limited right of access. On the other hand, corporate art involves different kinds audiences, such as personnel, owners and clientele, or even wider audiences in cases when the collection is displayed on the internet or in a public exhibition (Luukkanen-Hirvikoski 2015, pp. 104–105). It should be noted that companies have no obligation to display their collections in public or to support the arts, but many companies have an interest to do so, or have commissioned or donated site-specific public art.

Documentation and contextual information separates museum collection from other collections (Robbins 2016, p. 69). All but one Finnish corporate collection out of 25 were inventoried, but there were many differences in the quality of information. Basic information, such as the name of the artist, title of artwork, the year it was completed and acquired, size, materials and location, was recorded. Financial values or purchase prices were generally included. Collections were photographed, but in many cases the inventory data and photographs were kept in separate databases. Only corporate foundations and a few other companies had web-based or tailored databases similar to museums. Sometimes there was additional information, such as exhibition history and conservation details. Except for corporate collections that are professionalised, it is a common practice that the inventory is conducted by secretaries or assistants, and updated by students of art history. When financial values are needed or are updated, there is an external art advisor or art dealer recruited for evaluation. When compared to these valuations and art market databases, it can be noted that sometimes financial values of corporate collections are either undervalued or overvalued

(Luukkanen-Hirvikoski 2015). That is because some art lacks a resale value. The other problem is that updating financial values usually takes place on a long-term basis, when short-term changes in the art market might be ignored.

From Wallpaper to Corporate Social Responsibility Programmes

The majority of Finnish corporate art collections were established and developed during the 20th century. A few financial, insurance and wood processing companies had made their first art acquisitions at the end of 19th, century but collecting became more systematic only later. The roots of early corporate art were in commissioned Finnish landscape paintings and portraits of top management. Some companies even had a role as patrons for individual artists, and their works of art became the origins of corporate collecting. After Finnish independence in 1917, corporate art, as well as fine art, generally had national dimensions. Nationalism had an impact on art for many decades (Pettersson 2012; Robbins 2016). Finnish landscapes, mainly rural and sometimes depicted with production estates, agricultural work and figures and scenes of Kalevala mythology, as well as national and business heroes, were at the core of early corporate art. Corporate art collecting quickly increased during the economic boom in the 1980s and after the years of domestic recession at the beginning of the 1990s. In the 2000s, collecting slowed down and collection management, as well as collection policies, are under reassessment in many companies. Some companies showed more interest in displaying their collections and gaining other publicity for their art programmes, rather than expanding the number of artworks in their collections (Luukkanen-Hirvikoski 2015, pp. 300–302).

What are the motives for corporate collecting? As table 1 shows, there are several overlapping motives for it among Finnish companies. The reasons for collecting are similar to what has been found in previous international research on corporate art (Barendregt et al. 2009; Becker 1994; Jacobson 1993; Kottazs et al. 2008; Leber 2008; Martorella 1990; Wu 2003) but there are differences among the emphases of various motives. In summary, corporate art is mainly linked to human resource management, corporate social responsibility, communication and branding. These motives indicate that there are practical reasons for corporate art collecting, with extrinsic values of art being emphasised.

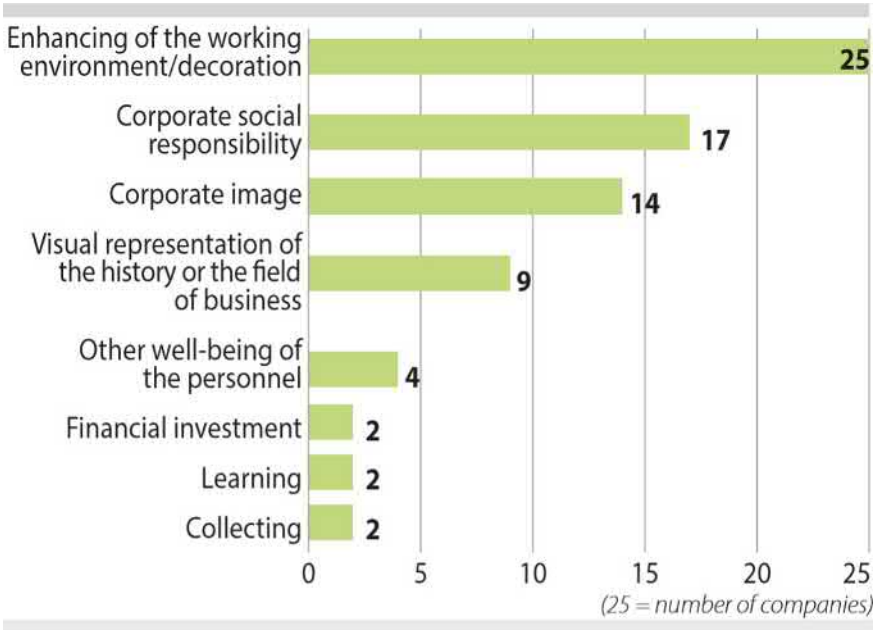


Table 1. Motives for corporate collecting in Finland 2006–07. ©Teija Luukkanen-Hirvikoski.

According to Finnish respondents, the most important motive for corporate collecting is to create an inspiring and comfortable working environment. This has been the main reason for corporate collecting over the decades, and this is connected to the well-being of personnel and corporate image. But does corporate art enchance individual performance, well-being or competitive advantange? It is widely assumed, especially among scholars of arts-based learning, that art has a positive impact on people and business performance. The impact of art on well-being or business performance is difficult to evaluate, since it is implicit and may appear only in the future.[4] Regarding personnel, further research on art's impact at workplaces is needed.

In the future, the aesthetic and well-being aspects of corporate art may have different emphases, at least in some branches of business, due to open-plan office designs, digitalisation and branding. Some companies that operate nationally or globally tend to design all their premises similarly, so that the experience and brand become familiar to customers in different cities. This development is happening in Finland, for example, on some customer service premises, where there used to be corporate collections on display. When aiming at visual similarities in an office design, original works of art do not fit anymore with branding objectives. However, this is only the Finnish case. For example, the front offices in many European financing businesses look both different and extravagant, since collection highlights are located in spaces where clients enter, and these spaces and art are tools for building and communicating a corporate image. Referring to

4. See also Denise Sumpf's research (2005) on Siemens long-term art programme *Kulturzeiten*.

table 1, Finnish respondents reported that other aspects of well-being relating to personnel were provided outside the collection, in the form of in-house art clubs and corporate support for art hobbies, such as compensation for entrance fees.

Some 17 out of 25 Finnish respondents reported that they wanted to support young or local artists and local galleries by purchasing and displaying their works of art. They also said that this aspect of collecting is part of their CSR activities. CSR, corporate image and representing the history of a company or branch of business can be discussed together, because they all have a connection to reputation, which is intangible capital. The origins of CSR are in the idea of sustainable development and corporate philanthropy. In Finland corporate philanthropy related, for example, to health care and children's day care, as well as to the leisure time of workers, before the welfare state became stronger in the 1960s. There are many definitions for CSR, as well as arguments for and against it. In short, CSR is generally understood as business ethics and voluntary activity towards society and the environment that goes beyond what is required by legislation. It is a self-regulating activity with economic, environmental and social dimensions. Some examples of CSR are corporate support for the arts, climate protection projects or humanitarian aid. It should be noticed that despite the terms philanthropy and responsibility, corporate art programmes are not charity work. As many researchers of CSR have noted, an understanding of responsibility is time-, culture- and case-specific. Critics of CSR see it mainly as a marketing tool (Buchholzt & Carroll 2009; Carroll 1999; Dahlsrud 2006; Fleming & Jones 2013; Garriga & Melé 2004).

Permanent and temporary exhibitions of corporate collections on the internet with open access are rare in Finland. Copyright fees and the slow professionalisation of corporate art are the main reasons for this. Many large European companies present their collections and art policies on their websites and in the social media. In Finland, mainly corporate art foundations have information on collections and foundations on their websites, and curators usually communicate in the social media. Gaining positive media attention and publicity are important for any business. Corporate collecting and displaying collections are ways to show that a company is interested in its surroundings by supporting the local and national art worlds, and that it takes care of the well-being of its personnel. Art collection also communicates values such as creativity, risk-taking, prosperity, diversity, humanity, nationality or internationality (Luukkanen-Hirvikoski 2015). There are lots of differences in practices regarding how companies apply corporate art in branding, but since the focus of this article is on Finnish corporate collections and collecting, it is not possible to discuss corporate image and branding issues in more depth.

As table 1 shows, investment value, learning and interest in collecting art were minor motivations for Finnish corporate collectors. Surprisingly, art was not considered a financial investment, although some valuable Finnish corporate art collections do exist and commissioned monumental art requires a lot of funding. Some Finnish respondents were reluctant to discuss the economic

value of their collections. This aspect also came out also in Rosanne Martorella's research on North American corporate art. According to Martorella, companies avoid discussing the economic value of art because they have to ensure their stakeholders and the public that all decisions have been carried out on solid ground, and thus it may be more comfortable to mention well-being or support for local artists than to speak of art that has a low financial value (Martorella 1990, pp. 43–44). In Finnish collections there are also works of art with hardly any financial or resale value, for example, the portraits of top management and amateur art. The majority of the portraits depicting top management are commissioned from canonised artists, and according to the archive materials, the prices paid to these artists are sometimes higher than, for example, other works of art by the same artists. The values of portraits are usually linked to a corporation's image and history, and sometimes to local or national histories, which have other values than just financial.

As others have noted, tax deductions sometimes motivate companies to collect and run art programmes (Jacobson 1993, pp. 13–17; Higgs and Salzmann 2012, pp. 111–115; Kottasz et al. 2008, pp. 239–240; Martorella 1990, pp. 25–26; Wu 2003, pp. 23–24, pp. 218–219). This economic advantage can be considerable, since the prices of fine art on the international art market are much higher than in Finland, and large companies invest in sponsorship programmes from six to eight figures in euros or in US dollars. Finnish tax legislation is different compared, for example, to France, the UK or the United States. So far, there are no tax deductions for business or individuals on art purchases or donating funds to public collections.[5]

Aesthetic values and the autonomy of art were important for respondents who represented family-owned companies and co-operative businesses. Even during recessions, these companies continued to make new art acquisitions. This suggests that these types of companies are more open to using art as part of their CSR programmes. Two CEOs representing family-owned companies reported that their art purchases were based mainly on aesthetic reasons. However, few respondents working in co-operative business regarded the quality of art or the artist's position in the art world as the most essential criteria when considering new works of art, with this being the case in only one fifth of the 25 Finnish companies.

Outside the White Cube and Public Obligations

In the following sections, I briefly introduce what kind of art Finnish companies collect and how collection management, including disposals, is managed. This information is derived from interviews and archival material from my PhD. At times, personal taste and ideas of good Finnish art were starting points for collecting. The concept of good Finnish art was mentioned by respondents, and

5. Finnish tax legislation enables tax deductions on sponsorship and philanthropy for arts and science, but not on art purchases by private companies.

it referred to canonised art and themes representing Finnish landscapes and culture, as well as traditional techniques of art such as oil paintings and bronze castings, along with stone and wooden sculptures.

Today most companies, and all Finnish corporate foundations, have collection policies and written rules, which generally follow the values and visions of the parent company. Art is supposed to communicate these values, and at the same time help make the company unique (Kottazs et al. 2007; Martorella 1990; Wu 2003). For example, financial and insurance companies highlight financial strength and modernity, so these companies have traditionally collected works of art with high economic and art historical values. In Finland this means canonised art, for example by Helene Schjerfbeck, Akseli Gallén-Kallela, Pekka Halonen, Eero Järnefelt and other artists representing so-called the Golden Age of Finnish art at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Financial and insurance companies are good examples of the changes in corporate image and business activities. After the 1960s and 1970s, non-figurative art became important in Finnish financial companies because of its connotations to modern times, without an emphasis on nationality. Today diversity, creativity and internationality are values of many large companies. In many European countries this means that international contemporary art is the core of collecting, but Finnish corporate art is mainly Finnish modern and contemporary art, because companies do not purchase as much art as they did two or three decades ago.

Few Finnish companies have adopted the example of IBM developed in 1937–1940 to collect art of all the countries they do business with.[6] These collections have artworks by international artists, but the focus of the international part of the collection is mainly on Scandinavian, Baltic or Russian art, and the collection is usually exhibited in the headquarters in Finland. For example, there are two corporate collections representing the wood processing industry that comprise a substantial part of international contemporary art. The first one is the result of a merger with a German company and the collection developed by a German CEO, while the second one relates to the anniversary year of the company, that was purchased by it. The latter collection is on display in the company's headquarters in Finland, and the German collection is located at the company's German branch. Art as a cultural ambassador, meaning that art of the company's country of origin is displayed in foreign offices, along with artists of that country (Wu 2003), is not widely favoured by Finnish companies. Corporate art navigates a complex combination of national legislation, different cultures and religions (Horowitz 2011; Rectanus 2002). Transnational companies have especially taken these regulations into account in their collection policies since, for example, displaying nudes is forbidden in many Arab countries. Besides culture, there are safety issues, such as fire safety relating to staircases, that do not allow the use of certain materials and mountings.

6. See further information on IBM's art programme in Jacobson 1993, pp. 10–13.

I have grouped the 25 Finnish collections into two main categories based on their contents, which is one way to classify collections. The first category is eclectic, and the majority of Finnish corporate art collections fall into this category, because of diverse collection development and changing collection policies. The second category is thematic. These are usually based on regional or emerging art or themes linked to the business of the company or certain artistic movements, such as naïvism.

One interesting difference within the culture of collecting contemporary art relates to photography and media art. Despite its recognised status as being collectible (Horowitz 2011) and the international success of much Finnish photography in the art world, the majority of Finnish companies avoid collecting photography and media art. Referring to the interviews with Finnish corporate art curators, this avoidance of photography was based on the traditional concept of art favouring oil paintings, stone, metal and wooden sculptures and works on paper, such as drawings and prints. Video art was regarded as difficult because of the moving images and loud voices. Still, there are screens in the entrance halls and lobbies of large companies where business presentations or news are running. Besides the traditional concept of art, it can be interpreted that those respondents without art-field expertise do not know all the possibilities for displaying media art, and their understanding of media art is limited. Avoiding collecting photography and media art in Finnish corporate collecting is deliberate, and is thus one difference when comparing corporate collections to museum collections. Art made of very fragile materials and materials that will vanish is avoided in corporate collecting because of security reasons and the context of collecting.

Sometimes regional, uncanonised art or even amateur art is regarded as collectible. Uncanonised art is favoured among companies that concentrate on young, emerging artists or on regional art. Currently there are two annual corporate art awards awarded in Finland. Both companies purchase the winning work of art for their corporate collection. Each year the awards are connected to a specific theme, such as innovation, networks or an artistic medium such as sculpture. In both cases, the collection is linked to corporate social responsibility programmes and participation. Participation in these cases means that either the personnel or exclusive clientele can vote on their favourite work of art, but the jury makes the final decision as to the winner. Both companies co-operate with external art-field professionals in organising these awards. One company designates the award for young visual artists under 30, the other for all visual artists.

When doing business outside the art world, the workplace is a different kind of context for art experiences than are museums and galleries (Rectanus 2002, p. 49). Besides security, there are matters of individual taste and visual perception. People usually visit museums and public art exhibitions voluntarily and do not spend years or decades looking at the same art while working. Nor do all employees share the same concept of art as do corporate curators. Among personnel and management there are people that enjoy art, hate it or simply ignore

it. As noted before, there is very little research regarding empirical material on how personnel experiences corporate art (Becker 1994; Martorella 1990; Witte 2009b; Wu 2003). This applies to the Finnish context as well.

Corporate art collections are sometimes characterised as conservative. Due to the context of collecting and displaying art, certain themes are deliberately avoided in corporate collecting (Martorella 1990; Wu 2003). Certain themes are regarded as difficult to display in museums too (see also Thomas, this volume). In companies, overtly sexual, political and religious artworks are generally disregarded because companies avoid possibly creating controversy among their key stakeholders. This policy may be changing with the increasing professionalisation of corporate art, and in cases where art is an essential part of the company's image, as well as a platform for entertainment. There are already examples of this among large transnational European companies that organise worldwide touring exhibitions of their collections. In their projects, they take various clients into consideration or collect art that deals with social problems or sexual identities. It is difficult to communicate diversity and show serious interest in contemporary art if some themes or techniques are neglected. There is only one Finnish corporate collection that includes, for example, a single artwork by Robert Mapplethorpe. However, line drawings and naïvism with sexual or political themes are regarded as acceptable. This interpretation is based on the formal qualities of artworks and on their distance from realistic representation. Finnish sauna (bathing) culture depicting nudes at their summer cottages or on the beach is considered decent to display at workplaces. Bathing nudes are often linked to nature or garden themes, which are usually regarded as acceptable.

The majority of the 25 Finnish companies acquired new works of art, either from galleries, other exhibitions or directly from the artist's studio.This is different from Behnke's findings, where art fairs were regarded as an important source of art for corporate curators (Behnke 2007). Only a few corporate curators visited art fairs, and only five out of 25 Finnish companies purchased art from auction houses. Besides explicit collection policies, things such as mergers, gifts, exchanges and coincidence characterise the shaping of many Finnish corporate art collections. Works on paper in large editions, small size sculptures, design objects and craft products have been popular business gifts. These are usually included in corporate art collections, and they generally are the first items considered when disposals are discussed.

The Phase of Large-scale Disposals

According to Susan Pearce (2005) the selection process is fundamental in collecting. It has an even more fundamental role when disposals are carried out. As Nina Robbins argues, collection disposal has been a delicate and debated subject in Finnish museums. In principle, the idea of a collection disposal conflicts with the objectives of a publicly-funded museum. A lot of tacit information and questions of ethics are involved in this last phase of collection management. However, attitudes of museum professionals towards collection disposals have

recently changed. Active collection disposals are regarded as part of collection management, and deaccessions and disposals have also been carried out in Finnish art museums (Robbins 2016). Collection disposals not involving economic problems or bankruptcy are a quite new phenomenon in Finnish corporate art as well. There are, however, many examples of disposals from European and American corporate collections, and some corporate collecting policies stress the constant circulation of artworks. Christie's and Sotheby's have corporate art departments, which also conduct private sales, but Finnish auction houses do not have special departments for corporate art. Businesses have different reasons for disposals than do memory organisations. The criteria for collection disposals in companies follow mainly case-specific interpretations of CSR, as well as changes in top management, business operations or environments with revised collection policies (Higgs 2012; Leber 2008; Luukkanen-Hirvikoski 2015; Martorella 1990). Instead of ethics, questions of corporate image and finances are more relevant when collection disposals are considered in companies.

Traditionally, only single or small groups of artworks have been disposed of in Finnish corporate collections, but during the 2010s several large-scale disposals were carried out. What were the motives for these large-scale disposals? I will briefly introduce some recent cases of disposals in corporate art. The first regards portraiture. Portraits of board members and CEOs are examples of the changing nature of preferences of corporate curators. Finnish business has a long tradition of commissioned portraits, which are in most cases displayed in boardrooms, corridors and auditoriums, as figure 2 shows. Large collections often comprise dozens of portraits representing CEOs or other board members. Today, a few of them are usually on display in each collection, and the rest are either put into storage, donated to other collections or sold. Some respondents who were working as CEOs or board chairs said that they did not want the company to invest in portraits anymore. This culture of displaying business heroes, which are mainly males in formal suits with an office view in their background, seems to be changing. As noted in previous research, the tendency to separate ownership and leadership sometimes results in collection disposals or terminating a corporate collection altogether (Barendregt et al. 2009; Betts 2006; Leber 2008). Alongside changes in organisation culture and people who are responsible for corporate image, the legitimisation for disposals is gradually taking place.



Figure 2. Portraits of top management in SOK's Art Collection. SOK is a co-operative with a long art collecting history. The portraits are permanently displayed in the conference room of the headquarters in Helsinki. Photo by the author.

In 2017, Finland celebrated its centenary of independence, which also increased corporate art activities. There were many public art exhibitions in Helsinki, but also touring exhibitions elsewhere in the country. One exhibition organised by

the Finnish Chambers of Commerce even displayed hundreds of portraits of past and current business figures, and it was designed to be experienced online. The pictures with context information were collected from various companies. This was a kind of counterattack to the prevailing attitude of hiding the portraits of top management. Due to copyright fees, it is not available online anymore.

The second case represents a financial institution and the largest scale of collection disposals in the history of Finnish corporate art. The information of this case is based on unpublished annual reports in 2013–2016 and the minutes of the board meetings of Art Foundation Merita in 2015–2017. Art Foundation Merita was founded in 2002, and the foundation is linked to Nordea Bank Finland. This collection, together with its predecessors, is one of the oldest corporate art collections in Finland. At times, the collection numbered more than 10,000 works of art, while today the number is around 1000.7 During 2013–2015 the foundation disposed of thousands of works of art, retaining the art objects with the highest economic, historical and art historical values. Selling was the major way that these disposals were put into practice. When collection disposals are carried out in companies, there are no disposal hierarchies, as there are among Finnish museum professionals, who consider donations to other public collections as the most acceptable, and sales as the least desirable method of disposal (Robbins 2016, pp. 174–175). Art Foundation Merita established a pop-up sales room at the Nordea premises in Helsinki, and sales were also organised in bank offices. These sales were advertised in newspapers and on the internet. The prices of artworks were set deliberately lower than the prevailing price level of the Finnish art market. In addition to these public pop-up sales, about 100 works of art were sold at auction houses, based on their high economic value, and a few works of art were donated to charity.

During the last two decades, the number of bank offices and employees has decreased, as many financial services and operations have been digitalised. Open-plan office design has reduced the number of walls. Together with these changes in the business environment, and according to the minutes of Art Foundation Merita, new branding objectives of Nordea Bank were the reasons for large-scale collection disposals. Disposals from the collection of Art Foundation Merita gained plenty of media attention, since the collection is well-known and appreciated in Finland. Some journalists were even a little confused when reporting on sales of artworks seen to have national importance, but local people loved to purchase art at modest prices from a well-known collection. When corporate art is sold to anyone who is interested, interpretations of national heritage may reawaken, as happened among journalists in this case. The sales reached the financial objectives set by the board of the foundation. After this large-scale disposal, Art Foundation Merita has extended its scholarship programme, and the foundation collaborates with the Academy of Fine Arts in Helsinki.

7. Further information on Art Foundation Merita available at http://www.artmerita.fi/en/foundation [Last accessed 28 June 2019]

The third case of collection disposals relates to museum collections. Instead of numerous new acquisitions, Finland's centenary year 2017 made corporate art more accessible to the public. One case of corporate contribution to museums, and a result of active collection disposal, was Nokia's donation of 27 works of art to the Espoo Museum of Modern Art. According to press releases and the museum's own exhibition information, this donation related to the centenary year, and was a manifestation of Nokia's CSR programme. An interesting point in the donation is that the company disposed of art that was mainly created by canonised international artists such as Bill Viola and Anselm Kiefer, whose art is very rare in Finnish collections. My interpretation is that this donation comprised such contemporary art that could make Nokia's collection somehow blue-chip and unique compared to other Finnish corporate collections, which mainly lack international contemporary art.

Disposals from corporate collections are usually made by three different types of gatekeepers, which relate to the phases of professionalisation of corporate art. The first group consists of individuals without any art field background. The second group is a board or art committee including an art field professional or professionals. The third group is corporate curators specialised in the arts and culture. As the motives for collecting are multidimensional, so are the reasons for disposals. Collection disposals result from changes in the business environment and top management, office architecture, taste, fluctuating attitudes towards the idea of corporate social responsibility and professionalisation *(*Barendregt et al. 2009; Leber 2008; Martorella 1990; Wu 2003).

Business Collaborates with Art Museums

Corporate art is a visible phenomenon in-house, but also outside a company's premises in the form of collaboration with art institutions and events. Typical forms of corporate support for art museums are loans of artworks for exhibitions, donations to museum collections, sponsorship and partnership programmes (Luukkanen-Hirvikoski 2015; Oesch 2002; 2010). For example, in Frankfurt the Städel Museum displays collections of German corporate art, and the museum has received numerous private and corporate donations.[8] In Finland the STSY and the Amos Anderson Art Museum (now Amos Rex) in Helsinki have collaborated for over ten years. This partnership has produced seven public exhibitions with art education programmes, exhibition publications and numerous corporate social events. From 2017 onwards, the STSY has changed its exhibition policy, and today it aims to organise touring exhibitions in various Finnish cities and art museums, as figure 3 shows. In Finland, the increased number of corporate foundations has influenced the growth of public exhibitions of corporate art, based on the objectives of the foundations.

8. Further information on the Städel Museum's private support and corporate partnership available at https://www.staedelmuseum.de/en/support [Last accessed 28 June 2019]



Figure 3. The STSY's exhibition *One Hundred Years, A Thousand Meanings* (2017) with online publication and numerous art education activities, was organised in collaboration with the Jyväskylä Art Museum. This exhibition was the most-visited one in 2017 at the Jyväskylä Art Museum. Photo by the author.

If museum ethics can be avoided in corporate collecting, companies do follow the ethics of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC). The ICC has published guidelines for marketing and advertising, and principles of sponsorship and corporate social responsibility are included in the guidelines.[9] There is a lot of literature on sponsorship and different definitions of it (Lewandowska 2015; Olkkonen 2002). Below is the definition by ICC:

> The term "sponsorship" refers to any commercial agreement by which a sponsor, for the mutual benefit of the sponsor and sponsored party, contractually provides financing or other support in order to establish an association between the sponsor's image, brands or products and a sponsorship property, in return for rights to promote this association and/or for the granting of certain agreed direct or indirect benefits. (ICC 2011)

Corporate partnership with art institutions refers to co-operation, communication and shared expertise, as Kaija Kaitavuori shows in her chapter on corporate partnership agreements carried out in the Finnish National Gallery. It is a more profound activity than corporate donating or putting company logos on the walls of an exhibition hall. It is a relationship that implies the combination of resources and expertise for maximising kinds of outcomes. Results can be, for example, exhibitions, art education programmes or other kinds of audience engagement (Lewandowska 2015; McNicholas 2004). Since the 1990s, corporate sponsorship

9. Further information on ICC's guidelines for sponsorship available at https://www.icc.fi/wp-content/uploads/ICC-Consolidated-Code-of-Advertising-and-Marketing-2011-English.pdf [Last accessed 28 June 2019]

and partnership programmes have become frequent in Finnish museums (Oesch 2010), which is about a decade later than elsewhere in Europe.

The fear of losing the autonomy of art or an art institution is one of the main obstacles to developing partneship programmes in museums (Alexander 1996; Borchardt 2009). Sometimes this fear is justified, but as Victoria D. Alexander shows in her research on American museums, the sponsor usually does not put pressure on exhibition programmes or other functions of museums, because they are interested in audiences and good publicity (Alexander 1996). Such fear rarely exists in companies, because collaboration with art museums and events is seen as part of the marketing mix. Companies are interested in well-educated, middle and upper-class audiences, which are frequent museum visitors too. But as Wu (2003) notes, corporate sponsorships and partnerships bring one's brand outside the museum to exhibition halls. Besides artwash (Evans 2015), CSR programmes have been criticised for their emphasis on short-term activity. The general economic situation also impacts corporate partnerships with art institutions. As project work has become more frequent, companies constantly search for new projects to support for their CSR programmes, and thus support for art institutions may be short-term (Borchardt 2009, p. 71).

During the last two decades there have been many international examples reported regarding ethical problems relating to corporate collaboration with art institutions. These are usually related to the financing of art institutions, public exhitibions of corporate art collections, especially sponsorship. For example, the Liberate Tate movement and its interventions in London (Evans 2015) ended some sponsorship agreements. So far in Finland, similar public criticism and activism are almost absent regarding corporate partnership with art museums. The reasons for this may be that the funding of arts is mainly based on state patronage and other public sector funding, and the support of oil companies is not so visible in Finland as in the UK. As Pekka Oesch (2002 and 2010) notes, Finnish companies do not have enough information on culture and possibilities for collaboration. According to the cultural economist Ruth Towse, the mixed economy of public and private ownership is typical of the cultural sector in developed countries. The main difference between countries is the balance of public and private funding, and how the funding of arts is provided (Towse 2010).

According to the annual museum statistics published by the Finnish Heritage Agency,[10] the Finnish National Gallery in Helsinki, for example, has established and renewed sponsorship and partneship programmes for many years. However, few other museums in the capital city region have regular corporate partnership activities, with some museums doing this only occasionally. The majority of Finnish museums do not have any corporate support. In recent years, the annual sponsorship support varied from thousands to half a million euros per museum, which means under 1% of annual budgets of Finnish museums (Finnish Heritage Agency 2019). Usually the department of communications or the museum

10. Further information available at https://www.museotilasto.fi/ [Last accessed 28 June 2019]

director take care of corporate partnerships, but compared to large art museums in Central Europe, personnel specialised in corporate partnerships in Finnish museums is virtually non-existent. As Wu (2003) notes, the museum director is a key figure between the museum and business initiatives.

There are many motives among companies to support the arts and heritage. Some of them are CSR programmes, growing globalism, competition among companies, neoliberal economics the privatisation of culture and the experience economy (Borchardt 2009; Lewandowska 2015; Pine and Gilmore 2011; Rectanus 2002; Wu 2003). The Western debate on art vs. economics has a long history and still exists, but at the same time many successful partnerships have also been carried out in Finland, based on win-win objectives and shared expertise (Luukkanen-Hirvikoski 2015). New audiences and funds are the major advantages for museums, but there have been failures as well because of incompetence and conflicting objectives of partners. Corporate collaboration with art institutions definitely requires further research.

Conclusions

In the business context, fine art goes beyond decoration. The motives for corporate art collecting are linked to prevailing organisational culture and case-specific dimensions of human resource management, corporate social responsibility, communications and branding. Corporate collections can be discussed as part of national cultural heritage. Due to changes in the business environment, the nature of corporate art is constantly fluctuating, which involves crucial questions of power, expertise and ethics. In business, the values and appreciation of art are generally based on practical needs and the external values of art instead of on altruism. As semi-public collections, the accessibility of art and available information on collections are resticted.

The public discussion on privatisation of culture and research on sponsorships and corporate partnerships indicate that corporate art programmes will also concern many Finnish museums in the future. Donations, exhibitions, art education and sponsorship agreements are some examples of corporate interventions in art museums. Corporate support for the arts is supplementary financing for culture in Finland. Successful partnership programmes with business require new competences and leadership in museums, due to the of different values and activities of partners.

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Section III

Communities and Audiences

Audience engagement has gone through a vigorous change in recent decades. The question Whose Museum? has been asked in many countries. The chapters in this section highlight work done in Finland in this sector – how Finnish museums have engaged audiences and answered the question. No doubt this section and the next one are very closely connected to one another, since it is often through exhibitions that museums speak to their audiences. In addition to these traditional channels, museums have expanded their comprehension to exhibitions and audiences and are showing a multitude of approaches to keep museums relevant. Museums produce pop-up events, co-operate with various other institutions or grassroot programmes and organise satellite functions, to name a few. Eventually, it is through audience engagement programmes that museums are able to show contemporary impacts as one way of measuring the importance of museums in our society. Museums need to be ever more sensitive and inventive, engaging themselves in various participatory projects in order to make their work matter for current and future audiences. Furthermore, we might legitimately ask which audiences museums should try to engage with: is it the local community or the enjoyment of tourists that is more important economically to a museum? Similarly, are certain corporate connections, which often bring with them new potential and actual funding streams, to be encouraged or put under careful scrutiny? At the same time, the global trends of participatory practices within museums and museum research, with notions of co-production and co-creation, are coming to the fore (*sensu* Connolly 2015; Simon 2010).

Kaija Kaitavuori's chapter highlights the developments in museum education in the Finnish National Gallery through her case-study article. She looks at both the benefits and drawbacks of corporate sponsorship, suggesting that sponsorship deals do not necessarily guarantee inclusive museum experiences for all audiences. Mari Viita-aho's chapter studies the trend of participation in museum work as expressed in the literature, especially within Finland and the wider Nordic context. She reviews the different kinds of participatory practices used in the Nordic countries, and considers the challenges these practices present for the refined work done in the museums. This exploration of participation also reveals some of the expectations towards future museums, and widens our understanding of social museology.

Erja Salo draws similar conclusions in her case-study chapter. The example of the *Vuosaari – In Other Words* project illustrates the reasons that the museum wants to operate outside of its own walls and do regional cultural work. What are the goals of the art institution and how do they relate to the goals of the residents/local communities and funding? Is there two-way action? What does the art institution gain? What is the impact of the activity on the organisation, and is it reasonable to think that regional inclusive/participatory projects will be a permanent form of audience work for all art institutions one day? Dorothea Breier writes about the citizen activism point of view, working closely with a grassroots community in the Helsinki district of Kallio, thus making the voice of so-called non-visitors (and the barriers they experience) much more visible. Both chapters emphasise the important role of museums in making public spaces

more inclusive. The final chapter is written by a former visiting Fulbright scholar, Benjamin Filene, from the North Carolina Museum of History (who has subsequently moved to the Smithsonian National Museum of American History). He brings his personal insight to the Finnish museum scene, gained from his time spent at the University of Helsinki and the Helsinki City Museum. In his essay he describes how the concept of public domain, which includes museums, allows a multitude of questions to be presented, and various approaches to be valued, in order to allow visitor experiences to flow freely. This requires trust and the ability of museum professionals to share some of their expertise for the common good.

The concepts of co-creation, active participation and taking museum work outside the institution's walls are all presented in this section. In the spirit of life-long learning, museum professionals are reaching out to new audiences and extending their expertise to new areas. These are factors that will leave a mark and make museums significant in the future. These new audiences, with their new innovative approaches, will help carry knowledge from the past to the future.

Kaija Kaitavuori
The Museum and its Audiences – A configuration of interests, the case of the Finnish National Gallery

Mari Viita-aho
Participating How, Why and in What? – Analysing Nordic museum research case studies 2008–2018

Erja Salo
Outside Museums' Own Walls – Experiences with participatory projects as part of the Helsinki Model

Dorothea Breier
Accessibility Means More than Ramps – A critical approach to the (in-)accessibility of museums, galleries and cultural institutions

Benjamin Filene
What Finland Taught Me about Doing History in Public

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The Museum and its Audiences – A configuration of interests, the case of the Finnish National Gallery

Kaija Kaitavuori

Abstract

Various professional groups within and around museums are interested in their audiences. Curators, of course, produce exhibitions for the visitors, but the specialists dedicated to working for and with audiences are museum educators. Communication and marketing specialists also work for current and potential audiences. Funders, for their part, have a keen interest in who comes to a museum and how the museum is experienced.

Although an educational ethos has been integral to the DNA of the public museum from the start, the current attention to audiences stems from somewhat different aspirations. This chapter explores the history of educational programmes in the Finnish National Gallery since the 1980s, particularly in relation to various educational and economic interests guiding audience orientation. In some instances, these interests support each other, in other cases they conflict.

The research shows how funding structures have had an effect on programming and education work since the early days of the museum. Using some specific projects from the past and present as examples, I further discuss both the common and differing concerns of the various actors working for and with audiences, and how they affect the ways in which museums conceive, study and classify their visitors.

Keywords: museum education, audiences, new museology, corporate funding, the Finnish National Gallery

Introduction

While an educational ethos and an interest in its visitors have been integral to the public museum's DNA from the start, the reasons behind this interest and the ways in which museums have conceptualised their audiences have varied. The current attention to audiences reflects rather different aspirations from those of the 19th century, as the interest groups who run and fund museums have multiplied.

The birth of the public museum was firmly associated with state-building and the cultivation of public taste (Bennett 1995; Hooper-Greenhill 1992; see also Pettersson, this volume). These civilising functions were defined by the ruling classes with the aim of educating citizens, as well as creating a sense of nationhood and cultural heritage (Duncan 1995). It can therefore be said that the museum has served as an instrument for public education, as well as having a disciplinary function in regard to its constituencies.

In post-war Europe and America, museums' relationships with their publics started to change. In the late 1960s and 1970s, the role of the museum in society was questioned, and it was argued that museums should be more responsive to the needs of the public which they serve (Davis 2008, p. 398). The new orientation has been theorised as new museology, a discourse around the social and political roles of museums (McCall & Gray 2013). According to Peter Vergo, this reflected "a state of widespread dissatisfaction with the 'old' museology, both within and outside the museum profession" (Vergo 1989, p. 3). The new conception and practice entailed significant changes as to how museums were conceived and in activities that they undertook. The focus shifted from collection-based and object-centred organisations to visitor-oriented museums. The motivation for engaging audiences is to give a more active role to visitors, to encourage self-directed learning and generally to offer wider access and representation to various sections of the population. The change was characterised as, e.g., a move "from being *about* something to being *for* somebody" (Weil 2002, p. 28) or re-imagining the museum "beyond the Mausoleum" (Witcomb 2003). Concepts that are used to describe museums' new relationship with the public include empowerment, dialogue, inclusion and social change (McCall & Gray 2013; Rodney 2019).[1]

The changing ideas of the museum were accompanied by the specialisation of museum work, leading in the 1970s to what Vera Zolberg calls the post-professional era. It is characterised by the introduction of new professional groups, particularly what she calls managerial specialists, into the museum, alongside traditional museum professions (Zolberg 1981, pp. 103–125).[2] Among these new specialist areas are human resources, development, finances, marketing and communications, as well as new ancillary activities, such as shops, cafés and events. The post-professional phase is marked by a separation between artistic and administrative control, together with a huge increase in the size and number of museums.

Zolberg describes the situation in North America, but a similar development has also taken place in Europe (see also Paunu, this volume). New museology

1. Whether a real change has also taken place in practice, is studied by McCall & Gray (2013).

2. Zolberg identifies three stages: the pre-professional era, characterised by lay collectors, donors and amateurs. This was replaced by a professional era that gave prominence to academic professionals; the museum profession was defined in cognitive and scientific terms, collections and exhibitions followed art-historical principles (as opposed to taste) and only academically-educated experts had a legitimate say in the affairs of the museum. Finally, there is the post-professional era.

discourse appeared in several languages and countries, with subtle differences in the ways in which it was understood, and its implementation is affected by respective national cultural policies (Ballé and Poulot 2004). For example, in the Francophone and Hispanic worlds, the idea of the communal or ecomuseum grew particularly strong (Davis 2008, pp. 398–400). In Britain, audience orientation got an additional boost with the advent of New Labour to power in 1997 and its active policy regarding education and inclusion. In Finland the discussion is largely based on the Anglophone debates.

This necessarily cursory overview of museums' public orientation serves here to introduce a reflection on similar questions of who, today, is interested in museum visitors – both within and outside museums – and why. The investigation evolves through two case studies of visitor-oriented activities in the Finnish National Gallery and analyses the driving forces behind them. The cases span a period of twenty years, the first located in the early stages of educational activities in the museum and the second in the new millennium, in a profoundly altered cultural, economic and political landscape. The connecting point between the two projects is that they were each funded by a corporate sponsor, thus introducing into the process an actor from outside the museum. The questions leading the investigation are as follows: Who is interested in audiences? Whose interest matters and on what grounds? (see also Pettersson, Myllykoski, Salo and Viita-aho, this volume).

Museum Education in the Finnish National Gallery

The first museum educators in Finland were appointed at the beginning of the 1970s, in the National Museum and the National Gallery. Before that, teaching in museums, mostly in the form of guided tours, had been the responsibility of museum directors, researchers, collection officers and curators, and occasionally of temporary guides who were employed for short periods, especially for the summer months. The main target group of the first museum educators or museum lecturers (Fin. *museolehtori*), as they were called, were schools, in response to the demand, identified in public discussions, that museums should complement school teaching (Salo 2010). Following the example of national museums, the 1980s saw a few more educators being appointed, although much of the education work, particularly in smaller museums, was still carried out by other professionals as part of and in addition to their other duties. It was not until the turn of the millennium that a specialised audience worker became an indispensable member of the professional team in all big, medium-size and even smaller museums. In 2005, staff working in different capacities within museum education felt the need to become more connected and organised, and The Finnish Association for Museum Education, Pedaali, was founded, first among art museum educators and then expanding to include the whole museum field.

The proliferation of specialised museum educators conformed with the growing attention paid to the visitor experience, as opposed to the previous emphasis on collections, objects and the distribution of expert knowledge. This, obviously,

did not happen overnight, and was not totally without problems. Focusing on lay visitors was not always appreciated by professionals (Salo 2010) and there was a differing, even conflicting, understanding of why, how and which audience groups should be served. For the pioneers, important factors affecting the possibilities of carrying out work successfully were support from the director on the one hand, and sufficient resources and an independent budget on the other (Salo 2010, pp. 28–29). At the same time, Finnish museums joined the post-professional era, with an increase in managerial, financial and administrational jobs that also had an interest in audiences and attendance.

The National Gallery was among the first museums to appoint an educational worker, in 1973. In addition to the usual guided tours, along with some new target groups and activities, such as nursery group visits, an exceptionally large and visible educational effort was realised in connection to a major contemporary art exhibition, *Ars83*. This show was the fourth in a series of international contemporary art exhibitions, arranged at irregular intervals since 1961, that take over the whole museum building. The exhibitions have had as their mission to introduce to the Finnish audience the most recent trends and movements in contemporary art. In 1983 the museum faced a new situation and an economic challenge: it was no longer a question of just transporting studio-made works to Finland, but a large number of the artists were to come in person to install or create their work in situ. Ars83 was the first major exhibition to introduce in Finland the new art forms of site-specific and installation art. The term installation (Fin. *installaatio)* is hard to find in Finnish art writing or literature before 1983, but it proliferated quickly after this show. The new way of producing art and art exhibitions demanded more economic resources than the museum could afford and so, for the first time, it approached a private corporate funder, specifically a bank. The choice was made based on the previous contact by the curator (or commissaire, Fin. *komissaari,* as the position was then called), who had been the advisor regarding the bank's art collection. The bank accepted the invitation and gave not only financial aid, but also help with, for example, communication and marketing, while making clear it would not have anything to do with decisions about the content and the programme.

Partnering with a bank brought a new element to the exhibition-producing process. A coordination committee was set up for the task, including members from the museum and bank. It was in charge of creating and monitoring the budget, and all communication and marketing had to be approved by the committee. The collaboration meant a noticeable change for education within the museum. The bank was actively concerned with the audiences for the show, and for the first time an important investment was made to support an educational programme. The bank's aims were made explicit in their marketing plan, in which they explained that the decision to support the exhibition "reflects the emphasis put on the soft values of the 1980s and the bank's endeavour to stay in touch with the customers in their free time as direct banking contacts become less frequent" (SKOP Bank's staff notification).

The sponsorship deal, the first of its kind in Finland, attracted considerable attention among the press and created a small scandal in the art field, so much so that one of the invited contributors to the catalogue withdrew his article in protest. For education, the deal represented an unforeseen boost from the private side. The programme was built on existing work, but was expanded to a new scale. For the bank, it was particularly important to reach families, so a special programme called *Children's Ars* was created. It included a separate youth catalogue, a rich programme of nursery and school visits, and even a special opening arranged for young audiences.

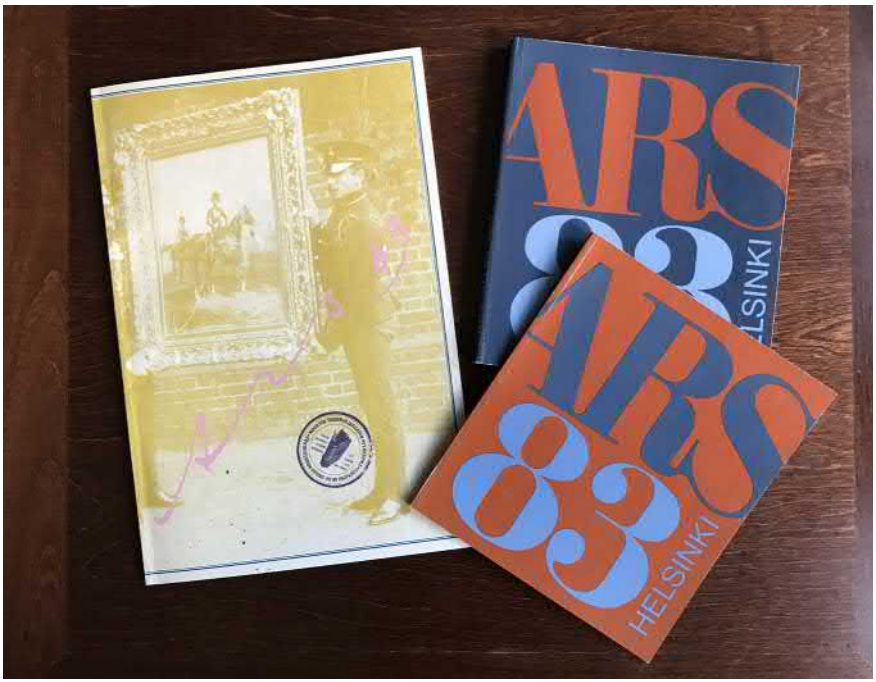


Figure 1. Ars83 exhibition catalogues. The special youth catalogue is on the left. Photo by the author.

For museum education, the new sponsorship deal undoubtedly had a positive effect. It was given more importance, resources and visibility than before. At the same time, it was set apart from the exhibition's core: in the exhibition documents, *Children's Ars* is dealt with under the title marketing operations, separate from the exhibition content planning. Hence new audience orientation at the Finnish National Gallery did not grow entirely from within the museum, but was introduced by an external player. Education work was positioned under the wider heading of public relations. This reflects the position and status of educational work in (art) museums as the interface between the museum's expert area and the public, at the cross-section of several interests (see also Kaitavuori 2011 and Paunu, this volume).

The novelties of Ars83 – transporting artists instead of artworks, creating projects in situ and raising funds from the private sector – have since become standard

practice. This also means more network-based ways of working and combining various actors and their interests in the same project. An increasing number of both old and new professionals (or, in Zolberg's terms, post-professionals) come together to produce an art exhibition: curators, artists, educators, technicians, producers, lawyers, funders (both public and corporate), administrators, editors, communicators, marketers, front office staff, etc.[3] Regarding audiences, this means a multiplication of groups and actors, all of whom have a slightly different approach to them, stemming from their various interests.

From Sponsorship to Corporate Collaboration

During the 1990s, the Finnish National Gallery went through an organisational change as it became part of the state administration and began to apply state-imposed New Public Management methods, such as management by outcome and net budgeting. Needless to say, the process brought the museum into a managers' and administrators' era. At the end of the decade, the contemporary section of the National Gallery moved to its own purpose-built premises and became known as the Contemporary Art Museum Kiasma.[4] As a new museum, it looked for and indeed attracted a good deal of corporate funding. Private fundraising was evolving and started to be seen as business partnerships rather than sponsorships. It was no longer a question of simply giving money to the museum in exchange for logo exposure, but of a dialogue in which the needs of the two parties are negotiated and put into practice. (In this chapter, corporate arts funding is viewed in connection with educational work; see also Luukkanen-Hirvikoski, this volume).

The new museum's first educational project funded by a sponsor was the *Kiasma School on Wheels*, a three-year-long project running 2003–2005. The project was funded by the electric company Vattenfall, which had already been Kiasma's business partner for the previous three years, and was now looking for a new type of collaboration for the second three-year term. The concept and the programme were developed by the Kiasma educational team and approved by the company. The School on Wheels was a large-scale programme that toured schools in chosen areas remote from the museum. It travelled in a specially customised van and stopped for one or two days at each school, depending on the number of students. In the morning, it gathered all the 9th graders (14- to 15-year-olds) for a 90-minute performative and interactive session taught by two artist/educators, who took them through various school subjects by using artworks as material, original ones as well as reproductions and images. The

3. In the early 2000s, the Finnish National Gallery conducted a collective mapping of its exhibition-making practices and processes. This was deemed necessary in order to better coordinate the multiple actors involved in the process (Kaitavuori & Roine 2006).

4. The Contemporary Art Museum was founded in 1990 as the contemporary section of the Finnish National Gallery, but it was first located in the same Ateneum building as older Finnish art. It moved into its own building in 1998. At the same time, Kiasma got its own education team, consisting of three members.

afternoon programme consisted of a session with a local artist and an art-making workshop based on a school subject, such as history, biology or home economics. The programme was built on the idea of learning various school subjects – except art – via contemporary art. A teachers' manual with examples and tasks was given to each school that they visited.



Figure 2. *Kiasma School on Wheels* art van in a schoolyard. Photo by an unknown project participant.

Without external funding, an outreach programme on this scale would have been beyond the means of the museum. It allowed the museum to cater to audiences outside the capital area – a mission that it had as a national museum. The methods drew on and helped to further develop the multidisciplinary approach that the museum education team had already been using with school programmes inside Kiasma.

The project made the national news and was well covered by local newspapers. It even gained international interest and was presented at three international conferences, as well as making a tour of three cities in Estonia. The Vattenfall communications director, however, complained that the company did not get the media attention it deserved; the media were reluctant to mention the company's name, even though it gave ample exposure to the project and to Kiasma (Raitmaa & Venäläinen 2006, pp. 10–11).[5] Yet, the project was invited to a number of events and seminars on the topic of collaboration between both the museum and schools, as well as the museum and companies. The case also served as a successful example of a new kind of cultural sponsorship in marketing literature (Rosti 2004, pp. 43–45). For the company, the project was a way of being recognised for unusual and innovative cultural sponsorship. Their business partners were envious of the idea and its implementation. According to the CEO, the company wanted to invest in youth and bring art to areas in which their customers were

5. Isohanni (2005) challenges this in her MA thesis: on the contrary, she says, two thirds of her data that analyse media coverage of arts sponsorship (including articles about Kiasma School on Wheels) mentions the name of a sponsor.

located. The partnership built their reputation as a responsible actor in the local area and helped their collaboration with communities (Rosti 2004; Raitmaa 2003). They saw the project equally as internal marketing; School on Wheels workshops were also arranged for the staff. They strengthened team building and created "brain energy" (Rosti 2004, p. 44). The collaboration was enacting their motto of "putting energy into life".

Discussion

Has private funding done a service for museums in general, and for museum education in particular? The two cases – and more could be presented – show that corporate sponsorship has allowed museums to set up projects that they would not otherwise have been able to realise. Furthermore, it can be said that, particularly in the first case, it was the external sponsor that gave the audience orientation a new impetus, as it was important to the sponsor that the exhibition could gain maximum attention. We can assume that after this experience the status and importance of educational work slightly changed within the museum. Some of the activities – such as a separate exhibition publication for a specific audience group – were repeated in subsequent exhibitions. Audiences and the way they experience exhibitions are important to sponsoring companies. Therefore, it could be said that corporate sponsorship worked for new museology; it was in favour of opening up the institution to the general public, in opposition to the image of cultural authority, exclusivity and the isolation of museums from the modern world.

At the same time, education – already aligned with lay audiences as opposed to experts – gets distanced from what is predominantly considered the professional core of the museums: collections and specialist knowledge of them. Particularly with art museums there is a strong tension between experts and lay audiences (Bennett 1995, pp. 170–173), and education practice is often questioned regarding its position in serving the interests of their respective needs. Bennet (1995) explains this in relation to art museums' particularly high investment in the economy of invisibility as the mechanism that distinguishes art and museum objects from the rest of the material world. As nothing visible distinguishes museum objects from the world of objects around them, their status is based on cultural knowledge and recognition that allow for those in the know, those appropriately educated, to appreciate the objects. The division between those who can see and those who cannot is at the core of the art museum. Therefore, it is fundamental to keep unqualified lay interpretations and instrumental interests at a distance. Museum education, particularly with regard to art, challenges art's specialism by critically exposing some of the background assumptions and mechanisms by which such a distinction operates, therefore inviting suspicion from the inside. In this respect, it has features in common with sociology, which according to Bourdieu (1993, p. 139) makes an odd bedfellow with art. These reservations also reflect the ambiguous status of education, which is simultaneously at the core of the museum and counteracting its protective segregation. Marketing and

the pragmatic ambitions of sponsors further blur the boundaries that guard art against the common world.

For corporations, the sponsorship process is part of marketing (Olkkonen 2002). This was clearly expressed by the Vattenfall CEO, who explained the relationship between corporate citizenship and responsibility towards shareholders: "When we invest in young people, we are also investing in their families, which means we are investing in our customers who are the basis of our success" (Raitmaa 2003). Even when the expressed motive is corporate citizenship and social responsibility, it touches upon the question of reputation and visibility. Companies look for image enhancement: connecting their brand with positive associations. It is an exchange with monetary value. Other desirable returns on their investment are media visibility, promotion, networking, contacts with interest groups (staff, customers, clients, investors, media, sub producers, etc.), goodwill, cultural competence and new ways of marketing (Rosti 2004, p. 32).

These aims obviously set limits as to the kinds of projects that get sponsored. Despite the above-mentioned encouraging examples of privately-funded educational projects, we can also ask about what is left in the shadows and what kind of projects are not picked up by corporate sponsors. Certain audiences are more popular than others. Children, for example, are always a good target group; they bring along their parents and generate goodwill.

After Ars83, the next important sponsor connection in terms of education was a relationship of several years with the main national newspaper, *Helsingin Sanomat*. The format for this collaboration was twofold: family-oriented publications and children's weekend events. Through the newspaper, these events got a lot of marketing and were hugely popular and well-attended. Again, from the funder's perspective, the educational programme was understood as marketing, and collaboration was managed by the newspaper's marketing department. For the education team, such collaboration allowed the development of new activities and the organisation of a programme for families, on a scale that would not have been otherwise possible.

More challenging groups (or those who have lower potential as consumers), however, have to be addressed with public funding. Public funding, on the other hand, is tied to policy targets. Increasingly, these targets have been defined by social criteria: health, well-being, social cohesion, etc. According to McCall and Gray, "this instrumental policy rhetoric is very much in line with the 'new museology'" (McCall & Gray 2014, p. 22). Many of these expectations are directed to education services, tasked with serving various audiences. Education departments, as I have argued elsewhere (Kaitavuori 2011), work at the intersection of multiple, often contradictory demands regarding the audience. Corporate interests, the focus of this article, are only one set of demands among many. For the administration and management, it is important to show that publicly-funded institutions interest and serve the public widely and efficiently. They also channel and monitor governmental policy interests, according to which museums and galleries must demonstrate their social relevance and

use. In addition, educational activities are accountable in terms of academic quality at the core of the institution, as discussed above.

The varying interests meet in the multiple meanings of the term audience development and in discourse about new audiences. How are audiences developed and are the developments more qualitative or quantitative? Marketing goes for numbers, sponsors also prefer large audiences, but of the right kind, art professionals tend to think about their peers and education may have very specific and narrow targets. These varying needs and different standards can lead to internal tensions among professional groups (Zolberg 1981; McCall & Gray 2014) and to double-speak as museums translate their work into policy form (McCall & Gray 2014).

Different interests also generate different knowledge about audiences. Visitor surveys in the Finnish National Gallery coordinated by learning departments, collect demographic data and information about visitors' needs and experiences. Qualitative research is also conducted occasionally about specific visitor groups or themes. In 2006, Kiasma commissioned a new kind of study in which it sought to identify audience segments for marketing purposes. The study defined five segments based on their perceptions and attitudes about culture in general and contemporary art in particular. The respondents were also asked, among other things, how they spent disposable income, whether they were familiar with certain shops and what media they followed (Dagmar 2007). According to Ahola and Uusitalo (2008), market segmentation of audiences is rare in Finnish museums and should be used more. They also conducted a segmentation exercise of art consumers in the three museums of the Finnish National Gallery.

Without going into the studies in more detail, it becomes apparent that the various museum functions ask different questions about audiences and consequently create different pictures of them. Whereas museum education looks at, for example, age-specific or special-needs groups, marketing seeks "devourers of high culture" and "contemporary art-averse friends of popular culture" (Dagmar 2007), or "traditionalists" and "art enthusiasts" (Ahola & Uusitalo 2008). The concepts they operate with – market segments vs. target groups, consumer behaviour vs. learning styles – come from different contexts, carry different meanings and construct the institution's audience relationship on different terms. Needless to say, both have their strengths and weaknesses.

Conclusion

At the beginning of the new millennium's third decade, we have come a long way in the development that was launched by the *Ars83* exhibition. Would the strong reaction of the catalogue writer who felt it was necessary to withdraw from the bank-sponsored project and not perform "as an advertising pole" (Sandqvist 1983) be understood today? What would be a valid reason to now do such a thing? Corporate sponsorship as such hardly awakens strong feelings nowadays, but occasionally ethical questions provoke reactions, such as the controversial

BP partnership with the Tate and the British Museum (Evans 2015), or the scandal around the Sackler family, who have a number of education facilities in museums and galleries named after them in recognition of their sponsorship (Goukassian 2018).

Funding structures have affected programming and education work, as we have seen above. In addition to these concrete consequences of sponsorships – increased visibility and weight for education, internal tensions and new hierarchies concerning which audience groups should be approached and how they are evaluated – there are more subtle changes in the ways in which museums understand their role in society. Maybe the most important effect has been a cultural change in the ways in which we look at and understand museums and their ethos.

As companies, museums today are treated as brands. A prime example of professional branding is of course the Tate – or just simply *Tate* as it was rebranded in 1998 (Stallabrass 2013; Dewdney, Dibosa & Walsh 2013). Kiasma was, to my knowledge, the first Finnish museum to treat its identity as a brand and to conduct a brand awareness study in its opening year of 1998. A brand is meant to be an assurance of quality, immediately and visually recognisable throughout the organisation's products. Brands not only sell products, but also experiences and life-styles. Through brands, museums and businesses, in a way, speak the same language and understand each other – they are on the same wavelength (Olkkonen 2002).[6] This allows for private-public brand alliances, such as Nokia and Kiasma, or the Finnish aviation company Finnair and Kiasma. Logo-marriage, however, can also turn sour, as demonstrated by the above-mentioned cases of BP and Sackler.

With the advent of businesses into the museum world, a new secretive culture has gained a foothold in the operations of cultural institutions (Wu 2002, p. 116). In the case of the Finnish National Gallery, the museum declined my request for information about the first brand awareness research regarding the Kiasma brand twenty years ago. The request was declined on the grounds of business confidentiality (email message on 22nd August 2019 from the Business Information Manager). A state-funded cultural institution is thus viewed as part of the corporate field, and obeys its operational logic.

This perhaps reflects the central change and the question that we should be asking: what is the game that museums believe they are part of? There are various signs that tell about changing standards. For a long time already, museums have seen themselves as competing with commercial attractions, thus aligning themselves with the entertainment or edutainment industry. "Competition for people's spare time" is frequently mentioned in the Finnish National Gallery's planning documents. In economic terms, the pressure of fund-raising pushes museums to arrange gala parties and other private occasions outside public hours.

6. In fact, Olkkonen's research shows that when it comes to norms, values and beliefs, sponsors and sponsees most of the time were not "on the same wavelength" (Olkkonen 2002, pp. 235–253).

This recreates the museum as a private club for which you need a VIP invitation and formal attire. Curatorial and the sponsor's statements appear side-by-side in exhibition catalogues, speaking about art and products with the same voice: Nokia and Kiasma are united in cutting-edge creativity and innovation, Vattenfall and contemporary art radiate energy and Finnair builds an air bridge to the Far East, bringing to Kiasma art from their newly opened flight destinations in China, Japan and Korea (exhibition catalogues in 1998–2009). These and other changes, such as the conceptualisation of the visitor as consumer (Rodney 2019) or public spending being referred to as investment (Belfiore 2012) reflect the shift from the state to the market, from the political sphere to the economic sphere, as the value base for policy choices. This new game has indeed become so natural that it is hardly conceivable how or why any of this would have been considered so inappropriate in the early 1980s.

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Participating How, Why and in What? – Analysing Nordic museum research case studies 2008–2018

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Abstract

Ever since museums shifted their focus from collections to visitor engagement, participatory practices have become increasingly widespread in the museum field. Discussions about participation have mostly focused on museum visitors: how to design exhibitions, how to make other museum content more relevant and how to make visitor experiences more rewarding. Outcomes, benefits and challenges for museums when using participatory approaches have been less studied, as are the ways participation might be changing museum work and knowledge production.

In this chapter, I argue that participation is often seen as a practical tool for engaging with the public. Thus, it is treated as public engagement or exhibition design, when in fact, implementing participatory practices substantially changes a museum's everyday work and their institutional objectives. Using participatory practices challenges museums to be more dialogic and to consider their practice from a more democratic perspective. Hence, thinking about participation opens new perspectives for museums when defining their societal role. By studying Nordic museum research published from 2008–2018 on the topic of participation, this chapter offers an overview of participatory practices in the Nordic museum field and points out some of their challenges.

Keywords: participation, democracy, museum institution, knowledge production

Introduction

At the beginning of the 21st century two processes occurred in Europe that changed society profoundly. The first of these was the strengthening of neoliberal governance, which affected the managerial styles of institutions, as they strove to become more focused on strategies and result evaluations (Harvey 2005; Löppönen 2017). Another change occurred in communications, mobile technology and social media. Along with this second change, i.e., the process of digitisation, the communi-

1. This chapter has been peer reviewed.

cation habits between individuals and institutions changed. Participation is an outcome of these policy and communication processes. It is discussed widely, yet the practice itself seems to be ambiguous, holding a variety of meanings. In this chapter, I investigate what is being referred to when talking about participation in a museum, particularly in the context of a Nordic museum.

Participation seems to have become a buzzword of museum policies in the 21st century. In Finland, the latest museum policy programme, *The Museum of Opportunities* (Mattila 2018), strongly emphasises participation of individuals and communities in museum work. In Denmark, Anne Scott Sørensen notes that cultural policies have gone through a strategic shift from the dissemination of knowledge to emphasising user engagement and experiences, something that was already visible over a decade ago, in 2008, in the Danish Ministry of Culture's programme for cultural policy *Reach Out* (Sørensen 2016, p. 190). Besides the Nordic countries, participation is widely discussed in cultural policies all over the world, the UK and the USA being the strongest cases.

In this chapter, I explore different ways to approach participation in museum research. I have reviewed nine Nordic museum research articles from 2008–2018, which mostly handle case studies of participatory projects in museums. In them, participation is approached as:

- a practical tool for improving the visitor experience in museums
- a way of creating exhibitions collaboratively
- the museum's inner management process
- an act of democracy.

These case studies show how participation can be defined as a practical or theoretical concept, depending on the objectives.

Museums define and develop cultural heritage by following international and national cultural policies, general progress within the museum field and their own ideals and objectives. Participation, however, is a wider phenomenon than cultural policies. It is used increasingly in city policies, for example. In this chapter, I consider different approaches to participation found in the research, and challenges related to them. I ask what kind of practices are referred to as participation, and what the objectives of these practices are. Based on the analysis, I consider what kind of challenges are there for museums when using participatory practices.

The chapter is divided into sections. First, I explore theories of participation, after which I present the research articles I have used as data. Second, I elaborate on four approaches to participation, based on my analysis, and finally, I make a summary of the results and discuss them.

Theories of Participation

During the 2000s, participation became a popular topic in museum practices, as well as in cultural policies in the Nordic countries (Saurugger 2010). It has also been discussed in other public sectors since the 1990s (Lane 2005). The growing movement of inviting the public to participate in institutional practices has been called the participation paradigm (Livingstone 2013). It has been noted that museums' orientation has shifted from collections to the public (Weil 1999). Participation is a widely explored topic in multiple research fields. Here, I look briefly at the different perspectives on participation and how it has become such a diverse topic.

An often-cited, older but still relevant study about participation comes from Sherry Arnstein (1969). In *A Ladder of Citizen Participation*, Arnstein divides participation into three main categories: degrees of citizen power, tokenism and nonparticipation (1969, p. 217). Arnstein's ladder is a useful tool for thinking about qualities of the practice and level at which decision-making power is being shared. Even if Arnstein does not discuss museums per se, she does discuss institutions, along with their possibilities for and challenges in sharing power.

A more detailed interpretation, concentrating on the role of the participant in the art field, is offered by the art historian Kaija Kaitavuori. She offers four categories for the visitor: target, user, material and co-creator. The different categories depend on the extent to which the visitors are able to make choices on how to participate (reactive versus active), and how much they can influence the outcome (participation in display or in production) (Kaitavuori 2018, p. 17).

A somewhat similar categorisation can be found from Nina Simon, a former museum director and founder of the non-profit organisation OF/BY/FOR ALL. However, while Arnstein and Kaitavuori are writing from the perspective of the agency of an individual user or a citizen, Simon focuses on museums. She divides participation into four categories, according to what kind of role is wanted for the institution in relation to the participants: contributory, collaborative, co-creative or hosting (Simon 2010, pp. 190–191; see also Salo, this volume). It must be noted that almost all the research case studies reviewed in this chapter referred to Simon's book *The Participatory Museum* (Simon 2010). For Simon, the participatory museum allows visitors to interact and to co-produce contents in diverse ways. It also enables encounters and encourages conversations. Taking part in co-creative content production is highly emphasised in her approach. She sees participation as providing a toolkit for museum professionals to interact with visitors. Simon might be cited so often because of her pragmatic way of writing. Practicalities are useful when planning everyday practices. While most theories on participation stay on a theoretical level, pointing out flaws and giving few if any actual suggestions on how to proceed, Nina Simon does the opposite. However, she emphasises that before implementing participation, museums should take a moment to consider their strategy, and determine what they want to achieve with participatory practices (Simon 2010).

Another way to approach participation is to consider the terminology museums use when referring to the public. The audience, a customer or a consumer all refer to a more passive museum visit, while a user, visitor, or citizen might describe a more interactive visit. The nature of participation hence evolves from whatever possibilities the museum opens up for the public, whether visitors are able to play a part in the exhibition production process, or whether the choices for interaction are determined by the museum beforehand (Carpentier 2011b). Participatory practices can be considered tools for fulfilling different kinds of goals. They can offer some interaction and involvement as a way of enhancing the museum experience, but can also create a feeling for people to be able to engage in and to influence their own cultural heritage.

The recent shifts in the relationship between museums and their publics can be traced to the theories of new museology. New museology is often thought to have begun with Peter Vergo's (1989) book. However, since the 1970s, social issues have been increasingly raised in museum discussions and in the field of public engagement (see also Smeds, this volume). After the introduction of new museology, relevance, inclusion and democratic practices have become valued terminology and perspectives in museum work. For whom are the contents produced, and how is institutional power shared? These are core issues in today's museums (Marstine 2006, p. 5). Introducing participation to cultural policies has also been a big influence on practice. In the Nordic countries, for example in Denmark, participatory practices seem to have increased notably in everyday museum work ever since the cultural policy programme emphasising participation and outreach was published in 2008. I assume something similar might also be expected in Finland, for the latest Museum policy programme (Mattila 2018) also strongly emphasises participation, dialogue and communities. However, during recent lockdowns, museums have been obliged to rethink their social roles and actions, and in many countries, using digital platforms and social media has as much as doubled. The availability of online contents has increased the number of distance visits and seems to be attracting new kinds of audiences, but at the same time, visiting durations have shortened (see for example a case study from Italy, Agostino, Arnaboldi & Lampis 2020). What the impact of the pandemic on participatory museum work will be in the future, is yet to be fully seen. A closer look into Nordic museum research before the pandemic gives us a perspective on how the concept of participation can be implemented and developed in years to come.

Producing and sharing are key concepts relating to participation. Media and communication scholar Nico Carpentier sees participation and democracy as being deeply connected (Carpentier 2011b, p. 15). In Carpentier's approach, participation means participation in decision-making. This is a truly democratic practice because the equal sharing of decision-making power with the public is the actual definition of democracy. Thus, Carpentier differentiates full participation from interaction and accessibility. The latter he classifies as tools for practice, while full participation cannot have an additional purpose, for the power to make decisions concerning outcomes should be in the partici-

pants' hands (Carpentier 2011a, p. 14). Carpentier's interpretation is strict, and applying it to public engagement could prove to be difficult. Museums usually have precisely defined procedures, e.g., on how to make decisions concerning exhibitions. Carpentier states that the term participation can be used to justify a variety of practices, not all of them aiming to increase democracy. In this sense, the nature of participation remains unanalysed and unacknowledged, and as Carpentier notes, the concept is "used to mean everything and nothing" (Carpentier 2011a, p.14).

Finnish social scientist Teppo Eskelinen (2019) is also interested in the developing role of democracy and democratic practices. He presents the concept of democratic experience, stating that often when practices are intended to increase democracy, they instead end up producing only the illusion of democracy. This happens when the factual power to make decisions is not really shared, and only minor decisions are allowed for the public from pre-selected choices. Often these pre-selections might be introduced as part of the democratic process. Eskelinen's approach to democracy resembles Carpentier's concept of full democracy. Both of these views separate participation and interaction from each other in theory and in practice.

A similar theorization of participation can be found from museum researcher Bernadette Lynch, who writes about how participation comes to fruition in the museum environment (Lynch 2014; 2016). She interviewed people involved in participatory projects. While realising the prospects of participation in democracy, with potentials for sharing ideas and also sharing decision-making power, factual participatory practices have not convinced her. On the contrary, Lynch's research points out the inequalities of intended participatory projects, and she introduces the concept of empowerment-lite. According to Lynch, it might often happen that when a museum invites participation in a project, both the direction and the outcome of the project are often pre-determined. A museum takes an expert position, giving participants a set of choices from which to choose. Based on her findings, Lynch asks what the reason for inviting people into the museum is, if the conclusion is that this is "a way to legitimize museum intentions under the guise of consensual approval" (Lynch 2014, 11). In this way participation becomes participation-lite (Lynch 2014).

In the literature, participation has been seen as a tool within cultural politics, often with the objective of justifying a museum's impact on the policy field, the funders and the taxpayers. Among others, John Holden (2004) argued in the UK, that during neoliberal governance a need to measure the impact of culture has become more common. Measurement is not focused on cultural values, but on statistics; culture is considered an instrument towards achieving something else. The instrumentality of culture has been a hot topic (Belfiore 2002), and participation can be used as a measuring tool to justify the relevance and impact of culture. After all, it is easier to argue for the importance of museums if 100 000 people have been involved, than if only 10 people have, regardless of what the long-term impact might be. Having a large number of participants, regardless

of the small impact which practice has on individuals, can also be discussed as tokenism (Arnstein 1969), i.e., making a minor effort for formally complying with policy requirements. In the field of general policies, participation can be viewed as a wider trend, which emphasises consumer behaviour and individualism, but also takes into account communality, collaboration and dialogue. If defined as collaborative planning for common goals, participation can be a democratic act, with the objective of building dialogue and mutual understanding (Eskelinen 2019).

The Australian museum researchers Fiona Cameron and Lynda Kelly state that museums are on the verge of a new era in their institutional forms. This is an opportunity to involve communities more in decision-making processes (Cameron & Kelly 2010, pp. 53–75). Museums should engage people with controversial topics as much as needed, and participation and dialogue are seen as functional ways of doing this. In fact, participation appears in Cameron & Kelly's writing as a form of dialogue, aiming for concrete practices and societal change. Museums' prospects in creating societal change are realised on the everyday level of museum work. This refers to all of the designed activities and various novel experiments (Cameron & Kelly 2010, pp. xi–xv). Cameron & Kelly's social museum research confirms that museums have better prospects than other institutions for exploring controversial and difficult matters. They note that handling controversial topics and being relevant to the public support each other as practices. Additionally, museums have a critical role in contemporary knowledge production, and they need to acknowledge this by developing novel ways of operating in the global risk society (Cameron & Kelly 2010).

Danish museum researcher Britta Tøndborg, on the other hand, seems to be more pessimistic about the opportunities of participatory practices for creating change. She reviewed three studies considering museums and societal change, concentrating on exhibitions approaching difficult issues. Participation was considered a tool for enhancing discussions and raising sensitive and difficult questions on safe grounds. Even though the studies Tøndborg addressed handle difficult social issues in museums, her research concludes in a rather pessimistic position towards museums' role in bringing about social change. Powerful and potential, or just the opposite, Tøndborg sees participation as a strong trend in the present museum field and one in definite need of further research (Tøndborg 2013).

Institutional perspectives on participation and museums can also be found from the Estonian museum researchers Pille Runnel and Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, who studied participation and its implications for the museum institution. They created a categorisation for it, which is used as an analytical tool to reflect practices, i.e., museums as cultural, economic and public institutions. These categories are roles that museums use in different contexts. Cultural, economic and public institutions provide a tool for considering different rationales museums utilise in their everyday practices. According to Runnel & Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt (2014), museums function in contested and intersecting fields. Thus, museums' roles in their operational fields vary according to the objectives they pursue. As cultural

institutions, museums can fulfil the traditional purposes of preserving, collecting, interpreting and mediating heritage for the public. As public institutions, their purpose is to educate and to increase democratic practices and social wellbeing, when economics demand competing in the market-society and providing attractive leisure activities to customers (Runnel & Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt 2014, pp. 40–41). Runnel & Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt note that participation has the potential to both support the commercialisation of the museum institution and to strengthen its democratic potential (Runnel & Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt 2011).

The theories elaborated above were often referenced in the research articles I inspected. It can be stated that in the Nordic research regarding participation issues in social responsibility, the purposes of the museum institution, changes in those purposes and everyday practices are the most discussed themes. These theories form the background for participation research. Next, I elaborate on how I selected the articles to study for this chapter.

Selection of the Articles for This Review

The data for this chapter consist of journal articles published on museums and participation. I wanted to look at how these themes have been approached in the Nordic countries, especially since most of the research on museums and participation comes from the Anglophone world, namely the UK and the USA. Therefore, I decided to concentrate on case studies regarding participatory museum practices. I set the time frame to research publications from the past ten years, after the economic decline, which is also a period when participatory practices have increasingly been taken into use.

For mapping the literature, I limited the data to peer-reviewed journal articles, published in 2008–2018, which mention both participant*[2] and museum in their title. I wanted to find research handling actual case studies that implement participatory practices. For searching the articles, I used ProQuest, Web of Science, Google Scholar and the University of Helsinki's Database Helka. All search engines gave slightly different results,[3] but in total the hits were less than 90 from any specific one. From these articles, I selected the ones published on research in the Nordic countries. In order to include the articles that had influenced the field most, I selected articles which had been cited more than once.[4] At this point, I had seven articles from Denmark, one from Norway and one from Finland. To equalise the situation by giving a broader scope than primarily Denmark, I then included another Norwegian article,[5] which had been cited once, and two

2. By using * it was possible to include different forms of the word.

3. Web of Science: 39, Proquest 46, Google Scholar 63 (participation + museum) and 86 (participatory + museum), Helsinki University Database Helka 81. Search performed on 20.5.2019.

4. Knudsen 2016; Smørdal 2014; Mygind 2015; Tøndborg 2013; Querol 2017; Rudloff 2012; Riber Christensen 2010; Söderqvist 2010; Giersing 2012.

5. Ogundipe 2018.

Finnish articles, which were parts of dissertations finished in 2009 and 2016.[6] Next, I eliminated three Danish articles, which appeared only in Google Scholar and had not been published in museological journals. Instead, I included one[7] article published in *The Journal of Inclusive Museum*, discussing the topics of participation and democracy, even though it had not been cited.

Titles (chronologically)	**Key themes**	**The context of the case**	**Participation is defined as:**
Salgado, M, 2008 *The Aesthetic of Participative Design Pieces: Two Case Studies in Museums*	Participatory design, digitization, aesthetics, co-experience	Two case studies: *The Sound Trace* and *The Conversational Map*, in which participatory objects were added to exhibitions, with an emphasis on aesthetics	Enriching the visitor experience, making an exhibition more appealing and a tool for creating engagement
Rudloff, M, 2012 *Extending museum walls. Reaching out with site-specific, digital, and participatory interventions*	Outreach, digitization, professional and experience knowledge	An outreach project, *The Wall*, in which participants added their own images to a digital wall brought to the city environment	Inclusive, dialogic and enabling the sharing of knowledge networks
Bhowmik, S, 2013 *Light is History: A Community Participated Museum Installation in Helsinki*	Participatory exhibition, sustainability, artistic research	A participatory light installation, *Light is History,* exploring public and private space and influencing people's energy consumption	A possibility to combine research and art and to surpass the conventions of a traditional museum
Holm, H, 2014 *The Democratic Future of Museums: Reflections on a participatory project named gipSMK – The Royal Cast Collection Goes to Town*	Democracy, museum futures, collaborative curating	During participatory process *gipSMK*, high school students curated an exhibition based on the Royal Cast Collection of the Danish National Gallery	An act for increasing democracy in society, emphasising the process over the outcome

6. Salgado 2009; Bhowmik 2016.
7. Holm 2014.

Smørdal, O, 2014 *Experimental zones: two cases of exploring frames of participation in a dialogic museum*	Actor-network theory, experimental zones, digitization, communities of interest	Visitors explored and created contents in two experimental spaces, which were built inside and outside of the museum: *Akerselva Digitalt* and *My Commitment*	A dialogue and museum communication, happening between visitors and staff in an exhibition space
Knudsen, L V, 2016 *Participation at work in the museum*	Participatory processes, actor-network theory, digitization	Two participatory processes, during which a digital platform titled *The Map of Danish Rock Music* was developed collaboratively with participants and the museum	A pragmatic, inclusive, collaborative process and a situationally networked phenomenon
Høholt, S, 2017 *The Art Museum Today – Participation as a Strategic Tool*	Museums as cultural, public and economic institutions, visitors as co-creators or prosumers	*The Model* exhibition in Arken, Copenhagen, and an overview of the *Participationist* research project in 2015 in Denmark	A practice through meaningful, empowering spaces can be created
Sancho Querol, L, 2017 *Born to be OPTI – A new model for participatory museum management*	Museum management, sociocultural networks	The *OPTI* model was developed collaboratively with the staff, for the use of the Finnish Labour Museum Werstas in Tampere	A potential managerial tool for museums for systematising their organisational structure and crystallising their strategy
Ogundipe, A, 2018 *How Digitized Art May Invite or Inhibit Online Visitor Participation (and Why It Matters for Art Museums)*	Socratic dialogue, visitor experience, digitization	Two online platforms, *DigitaltMuseum* and *Thingiverse,* were used for exploring the visitor experience and the possibilities for deepening the understanding of art	A practice for prompting experience-based knowledge from participators and increasing understanding through personal experiences

Table 1. The Nordic museum research articles chosen for this review presented in chronological order.

Additionally, I included an article published in the Danish *Arken Bulletin* regarding participation, even though it was not visible in the databases. Finally, I excluded two Danish articles, which reviewed research cases. These choices gave me all together nine peer-reviewed articles, of which four were from Denmark, two from Norway and three from Finland. Sweden and Iceland didn't appear at all in my searches. Besides the one article published in *Arken Bulletin*, the articles included in the data were published in *Nordisk Museologi*, *International Journal of the Inclusive Museum*, *Museum Management and Curatorship* and *Digital Creativity*.

The articles included in this review had some similar qualities. Most of them handled practical museum activities or case studies. Digitization was one of the strongly emphasised themes. Museum spaces were discussed through outreach, the democratic nature of practices and diverse forms of knowledge were considered and experience-based knowledge compared to professional knowledge, was emphasised. Most of the cases were pilot projects, aimed at reaching a small number of participants. Only a few projects were open to the public; most were by invitation only.

Denmark was strongly represented in the searches. As mentioned in the introduction, the cultural policies in Denmark have strongly emphasised participation for well over a decade, which could explain why outreach and participation have appeared as well-presented themes in Danish museum research since the beginning of the 2010s. It must also be noted that my literature searches concentrated on articles published in English, and thus publications targeted only to a local audience were not included in my data. Additionally, it can be asked if Denmark is targeting research more to an international audience, through policymaking and funding of research, than are the other Nordic countries, and whether searching in the various Nordic languages as well would have yielded substantially different results.

Four Approaches to Participation

Participation is an ambiguous concept, holding a variety of opportunities for realisation. In this section, I take a closer look into the concept, and categorize four different approaches to it as revealed in the articles, discussing the qualities emphasised in each of them. The first category approaches participation as a tool for improving the visitor experience. The second considers it as a way to produce exhibition contents, while the third looks at it as a longer process, one that can also take place in an organisation's internal strategy planning. The fourth approach emphasises participation as societal practice, and as a democratic act. Often these approaches overlap, with more than one objective identifiable in all of the reviewed articles. Through identifying different approaches to participation, I elaborate on a diversity of understandings about the concept itself.

1. Participation is a way of improving the quality of the visitor experience

Visitor studies is a growing field in museum research. The quality of the museum visitor experience has been discussed a lot in recent decades. The most known is probably John Falk's studies on identity and its construction through the museum visit (2009). Falk bases his research on interview material, just as design-led museum scholar Tiina Roppola (2012) does. Both Falk and Roppola approach the visitor experience from the perspective of visitors and their personal lives. The articles in my study differed from this approach by concentrating mostly on exhibition design. Here, participation is understood as improving the experience by deepening it, designing it to be more interactive, more accessible and more aesthetically appealing.

As an example of an aesthetic approach, doctoral researcher Mariana Salgado (2008) sought to improve the experience through design and with it the aesthetics of the experience. She introduces two case studies, *The Sound Trace* and *The Conversational Map*, both of her own design as part of her doctoral research. The Sound Trace was an audio recording device that the visually impaired could take with them and record their experiences of touchable sculptures in the exhibition in the Finnish National Gallery Ateneum. Afterwards, the recordings were open for other visitors to listen to. The Conversational Map, on the other hand, was a platform on a wall imitating the exhibition visitors had just seen, which allowed them to attach online comments and observations to the artworks. When designing these participatory installations, she concentrated on building a visual appearance, which would be tempting and invite more visitors to contribute. Salgado notes that in order to attract a visitor's initial interest, the participatory piece must be aesthetically interesting and appealing, inviting interaction. Aesthetic experience is thus not merely a surface design, but it offers a possibility to communicate the exhibition's message in an additional way.

Participation as a way of making the exhibition's message more understandable was discussed by Anne Ogundipe (2018). She performed two case studies intended to study participants' reactions to digital art presented in online platforms. She also observed how interacting with digitized art would enhance the visitor's understanding of it. The platforms that Ogundipe used, *DigitaltMuseum* and *Thingiverse*, were designed for exploring digital artworks. Ogundipe was present when participants explored the platforms and interviewed them afterwards about their experiences.

Aside from the fact that participation can be used to create a deeper understanding of the art, Ogundipe states that often, participatory practices refer to activating visitors by offering several tools for interaction. Actively taking part and interacting with a museum or artwork can of course improve the experience, and, as noted in the theoretical section, the number of active participants is easy to measure. Therefore, by designing easy-to-approach environments, in which people are invited to interact, the impact is easy to justify. The bigger the number of visitors is, the bigger the assumed impact of the practice is. Therefore,

Ogundipe asks, what kinds of experiences are we talking about, if the emphasis is only on active participation, interaction and visible improvement of the visitor experience? What is excluded from these practices? She answers by exploring ways of deepening the experience by using dialogue as a method, emphasising the quality of the experience (Ogundipe 2018).

An interesting observation about the museum's changing role is made in an article by Danish museum curator Stine Høholt. She notes that, recently, visitors have learned to expect more interaction, experiences and individual attention, and with this, the focus of museums has shifted from nations and shared stories to individuals. The building of a national identity and nations has been identified as one of the main functions for museums in past centuries (Kaplan 2012, p. 152). However, as Høholt states, nationalism no longer defines individual identities so strongly. Thus, museums must find new stories to tell if they want to reach a wider audience. What then is important, is to create experiences, an aesthetic design and increase the opportunities for visitors to interact with exhibitions (Høholt 2017).

Participation is a tool for measuring visitors' commitment and as such, something to be added to the statistics. But it is also a way to create a deeper understanding of the matter at hand, and to increase visitors' interest through designing aesthetically more appealing exhibition contents. Here, the focus has been on participation as part of the visitor experience. Next, let's look at participation as a way of creating contents collaboratively.

2. Participation is used to create exhibition contents collaboratively

Nina Simon discusses museums doing collaborative production and co-creation with visitors (Simon 2010, pp. 190–191). By co-creation she refers to using collaborative design tools in answering the needs of the public. Simon states that this kind of visitor participation is most challenging for cultural institutions because it requires aligning institutional objectives with the visitor's needs. However, when successful, co-creative projects can be rewarding and help institutions to became more relevant to visitors (Simon 2016).

In their case study, Ole Smørdal, Dagny Stuedahl and Idunn Sem (2014) approached the topic by establishing two experimental zones in the Norwegian Museum of Science and Technology, one inside and one outside of the museum space. These experimental zones were situational spaces, which were open to visitors passing by and in which museum professionals were able to study reactions and outcomes for practices, as well as to try out new technical tools for participation (Smørdal, Stuedahl & Sem 2014, p. 225). In the outside zone, *Akerselva Digitalt*, visitors were given touchpads for exploring, commenting on and uploading contents to the digital platform. The platform was usable through touchpads hanging in the space, and moving from pad to pad also required moving through the space physically. The other zone, *My Commitment*, was designed in a series of workshops. The zone was noted to resemble an offline

social media space. In the zone, visitors could take pictures, add their personal commitments concerning environmental issues and post them on a digital wall. The outcome, a wall filled with visualised, environmental commitments, such as post-it notes, formed an installation during the time that the zone was open, and inspired more visitors to contribute. The cases reviewed were museum focused, but they emphasised the perspective of the individual participant. In both examples, most of the content was produced by visitors, and the ways to participate were defined beforehand. Participation was reactive, and the materials of the exhibition were produced by visitors. In Kaitavuori's terms, participants were here given the role of a user (2018, 17), even though Kaitavuori's research concentrated specifically on the artworks and participation with them.

Another example of participatory content-production was Maja Rudloff's *Extending Museum Walls* (2012). The case study was about an outreach project titled *The Wall*, organised in Copenhagen, in which participants were able to add their own images to the digital wall built in a city space. Participation was discussed as inclusive, dialogic and a practice of sharing knowledge collaboratively. Since the project was organised in a digital format, it meant that digitization was also an essential matter of discussion. Rudloff, as well as Smørdal, Stuedahl & Sem (2014), can be interpreted as what Simon calls collaborative production.

In The Wall, the experiences of the public were shown and emphasised, and the museum's role of holding expert knowledge of culture was not emphasised. Rudloff scrutinized feedback from the public, and, interestingly, found that the museum's decision to put its professional voice in the background evoked questions and even irritation. Even though the format of open participation was popular, the public hoped for a professional contribution in editing the enormous number of downloaded pictures. In addition, feedback was given from schools, indicating that they were not able to use any of the contents. From the schools' perspective, the challenges were similar to those experienced when they used the internet – fact-checking and editing are needed (Rudloff 2012).

Smørdal, Stuedahl & Sem (2014) saw museums as institutions holding onto their traditional structures in curating exhibitions and producing professional knowledge, but with an increased need to engage visitors in social media-based dialogues. Even though museums are striving to be more dialogic and participatory, it is challenging to experiment with new approaches, while simultaneously holding onto old habits. The biggest challenge for museums, in both examples, seems to be combining professional knowledge with the everyday experience knowledge of the public. As Rudloff discusses in her study, the novel ways of practice are at the core, in which knowledge is produced and articulated. According to Rudloff, museums' agency is shifting from "being an institution holding cultural authority and autonomy, toward providing a space where interpretations are individually and socially determined" (Rudloff 2012, p. 40). Outreach and audience engagement are in the centre of these changes, when the idea is promoted that the audience can also contribute to mutual knowledge production.

To conclude, participation is changing exhibition design, and affecting the ways in which museums talk to the public. Museums communicate daily with the public, and thus discourses used are under constant negotiation. Museums are going through a transformation, from transmitting objective knowledge with a professional voice to opening up for a dialogue, and are positioning themselves on more equal footing with the public. Participatory content production is one form of this transformation. Participation is also used as a processual manner of organising internal museum work, which I consider next.

3. Participation is changing internal museum work

Participation as a process refers to a practice in which participants are involved from the planning stage, and objectives, as well as techniques for reaching them, are defined collaboratively. More than one article discusses participation this way. Without predetermined goals, practice sounds like Carpentier's concept of full participation, participation as an act of democracy (Carpentier 2011a). It also resembles what Kaitavuori calls *co-creation* (2018, p. 17) or what Simon describes as collaborative production (2010, pp. 190–191). When considering collaborative planning, starting from the beginning of the project, with participants defining the objectives together, we are also climbing closer to the top of Arnstein's ladder (1969), to the section of citizen power.

The examples I explored were strongly focused on exhibition processes. Amongst them was only one concentrating on participatory museum governance. This suggests that organisational research or development inputs are not (yet) very popular in museums having strong traditions as institutions of hierarchy. However, participation has been used as a tool in both strategy work and organisational management.

Lorena Sancho Querol, Kalle Kallio and Linda Heinonen (2017) interpreted participation through the development of the museum organisation from within. Sancho Querol performed a consultation for the Finnish Labour Museum Werstas on participatory managing, on which their article is based. Sancho Querol, Kallio and Heinonen argue that organisational development of the museum would be most beneficial if it were realised as a participatory managerial project. In this case, the purposes of participation were defined as improving the museum's efficiency, employees being listened to and discussions being organised throughout the whole process. Participation is connected to the idea of evaluation: the need for developing a novel managerial tool grew from the desire to evaluate practices more thoroughly.

Another perspective for participation as an inner process is presented by Danish scholar Line Vestergaard Knudsen (2016). Her case study was based on a participatory project, which aimed at developing a digital platform called *The Map of Danish Rock Music*. A selection of people from outside of the museum field was recruited for the project. The process went on for two years, during which time a group of participants gathered regularly for planning the platform, together with the museum staff. The museum's role was more of a facilitator than

leader in the project. Knudsen notes that participants were aware of different types of knowledge and the museums' traditional role as knowledge providers, as well as their own expertise, both in their everyday experiences and their professional knowledge in other fields. Professional versus experience knowledge was discussed a lot in the focus group, as expected. It became obvious that a professional role was expected from the museum, but also that a process that would give space and voice to various areas of knowledge needs to be developed (Knudsen 2016, p. 207). Although participants expected museums to contribute with their professional knowledge, there was simultaneously an expectation to acknowledge all the diverse forms of knowledge present, and to open the space for museums to learn as an institution from the process.

The focus here was on work practices and on how to manage a project using participatory approaches. Based on these cases, participation might not be a quick or efficient way to carry it out, but the outcomes can be very satisfying for everyone involved. However, the role of expertise and authority in knowledge production should be considered. Based on these cases, utilizing participation requires a thorough design of work practices. This kind of participatory planning of work is close to being a democratic practice, which I look at next.

4. Participation is building democratic practices, or is it?

What determines if a practice is democratic or not? If we look back to Nico Carpentier's (2011a) theory of participation, interaction and accessibility are tools for already-designed practices, while full participation, on the other hand, requires participating in decision-making in an equal way. If the objectives of a project are determined beforehand by a museum, what kind of decisions are meant with shared power? In the case studies, participants were able to influence the content to be made and, in some cases, also the format of the exhibitions. In none of the cases were they able to influence the objectives, which were decided by the museums when the projects were launched.

Interestingly, there was only one article included in the data that had the objective of creating societal change. This was a case study by art researchers working in Aalto University in Finland. The case was an installation set in an outside space, a city square. This research was most critical towards museum practices and pointed out prospects for changing them. Researchers Samir Bhowmik, Karthikeya Acharya and Lily Diaz (2013) named their project *A Museum Installation* to point out that a similar approach might be also used in museums. According to them, museums need to develop their skills in using technology and collaborating with researchers. For testing this idea, they designed a participatory installation, *Light is History*, in which people from the neighbourhood were asked to record their daily energy consumption. The data was used as a light installation, which presented the latest energy consumption of the participants, and which was updated daily. Discussions and gatherings were organised around the installation. The aim was to discover if the visualisation of energy consumption, together with the live happenings, would encourage participants,

as well as random people passing by, to decrease their energy consumption (Bhowmik, Acharya & Diaz 2013).

In Bhowmik, Acharya and Diaz's research, museums were discussed as traditional institutions, which have opportunities, by utilizing novel technological ideas, to invite people to act and thus create societal change. Stine Høholt (2017) also states that museums have been rather stagnant institutions, and that they have mostly been maintained for one purpose, i.e., the building of nations. According to Høholt, national identity has been a major theme in museum contents and as an objective of museum work. Through the lens of national identity, nationalism and the building of nations, museums have been creating social change throughout their history, and continue to do so (Knell 2011; Bennett 1995).

This image of what a museum once was, was brought up in several articles in different forms. For example, Maja Rudloff considers museums to be knowledge disseminators and keepers of monologues (Rudloff 2012, p. 35), Britta Tøndborg describes them as being solidifiers of culture (Tøndborg 2013, p. 7) and Lorena Sancho Querol describes them as being authoritative and inward-looking (Sancho Querol, Kallio & Heinonen 2017, p. 118). The vision of the past museum as a solidifier of culture, a transmitter of knowledge and an inward-looking authoritarian institution keeping up a monologue induces a reader to ask where such images stem from, and if this kind of museum has ever really existed? Is the image merely created as a juxtaposition to justify the necessity of participation, dialogue and communal, collaborative practices?

The universal purposes of future museums were articulated as democracy, inclusion and open dialogue, which might all be needed in creating changes in society. Increasing societal democracy as a purpose of museum work was brought up in all the articles. When the objective was to participate, people were given the opportunity to affect content. In this regard, this is the strongest determiner for participation. Giving space to visitors to influence content means allowing them to also influence the message that the museum is sending. It might be stated that this is not light participation (participation lite), but participation at the boundaries, which is defining museum institution practices. Some of the contents must be defined by professionals, and some of the decisions cannot be equally shared with everyone. Therefore, in many cases in the articles mapped here, the concept of interaction would be more descriptive than participatory.

With participatory practices, there can be traced a shift in how museums create exhibition contents and produce knowledge. When considering the objectives discussed relating to participation, and in the general museum field, it was striking that in only one case can the objectives be defined as political, i.e., the sustainable development goals in Bhowmik, Acharya & Diaz's research. This was the case even though often visitors were encouraged to contribute, to share ideas and to interact. To conclude, even if participation is a social practice in the museum field, it does not usually appear as political, nor does it have the objective of raising awareness on societal issues or initiating social change.

Participation is Used as a Practical and Societal Concept

At the beginning of this chapter, I asked what is meant by participatory practices, and what kind of objectives are given for these practices. In the previous sections, I have analysed different approaches on participation in Nordic museum research. Based on this analysis, the definitions of participation vary according to the user and the context in which the concept is used. Participation was discussed by emphasising the individual experience of a museum visit, or by understanding it as a collaborative method for content production. It was also discussed as an inner working process, taking place before exhibitions open. In addition, participation was approached as a democratic practice, considering its nature from the perspective of societal agency. The selected approach and the aims for practice affected what was meant by participation.

Participation was seen as a practical tool for museums, which meant thinking about the practice from the individual perspective. The concept was used as a means of getting visitors involved in the action and for creating content for exhibitions. However, it was also used as a way of making the exhibitions more inclusive and multivocal than if they had been created only by the museum staff. This practical approach can be traced to the theories of new museology, and in the endeavours of making the museum space safer and more human-centred than before.

Participation was approached as a societal concept in several ways. Relating to it, the ideals of democracy were discussed and aimed for. However, participation's potential in measuring results and impact was also recognised. Brita Brenna, a Norwegian Professor in museum studies, notes that participatory practices, or their results, are in many cases easy to measure for reporting. Even though measuring the real quality of a practice is problematic, it is possible to measure the number of participants or evaluate their feedback. In this way, participation can fulfil new managerial goals, and including it more in museum activities might even become recommendable from the evaluation's perspective. Even if the articulated intention is to improve the museum experience, participation is based on governmental, aesthetic and economic grounds, and thus its status is complicated (Ogundipe 2018, p. 53, citing Brenna 2016). However, none of these studies dealt with counting the number of participants for measuring their impact, but did recognise that it is possible to evaluate situations in that way.

The International Council of Museums ICOM is developing a novel definition for museums using partly participatory practices (see also Ehanti and Enqvist, this volume). This process is about the transformation of objectives and practices in museums. However, in this transformation there are also means of communication, and a multitude of social media, which have their own demands for museums in developing communication. By redefining their purposes and practices, it can be said that the institutionality of museums is in transformation. Moreover, participation is located in the core of this transition. It is not a coincidence that participation increasingly raised discussion in the museum

field during the 2000s. The debate has also begun in other institutions, which are struggling with the demands to legitimise themselves and to point out their societal impact. Ways of communication, and the practices institutions possess involving individuals and the greater society, invite further research.

Based on this study, using participation as a method gives prospects to museums for creating societal change, and for trying and stretch their institutional boundaries. An important thing to consider with participation is the concept of a safe space. We have argued elsewhere (Turunen & Viita-aho 2021) that building safer spaces and creating networks with other organisations increases the potential for creating societal change. Especially at present, when abysses between people are growing deeper, it is even more necessary to increase understanding. Through a mutual past, in an impartial space, opportunities for dialogue and making shared decisions are enhanced. However, this requires accessibility, i.e., spaces, in which everyone is able to get involved and experience equality, i.e., spaces in which all feel appreciated for participating.

Museums are societal institutions. They work in society, aiming for mutual benefit. As noted, museums' use of participatory practices creates several societal opportunities. They can increase democracy, create networks and inspire people to act collaboratively. When considering the current need we have for unifying humanity's practices to solve future crises, it is noteworthy that only one article discussed participation as a means for societal change. As brought up above, participation can be reduced to a measuring tool for evaluating a museum's impact by counting the number of participants. It would be regrettable, however, if participation should be understood only like this, and if the opportunities it has to build and strengthen democracy are also not seen.

Discussion

In this chapter, I have analysed nine Nordic research articles on participation in museums. I have discussed the representativeness and reliability of my review, and consider what it tells about participation in Nordic museums.

The selection of the articles for this review cannot be regarded as representative of the whole Nordic museum sector. There are many public engagement projects which can be called participatory – collection crowdsourcing, collaborative cooking events, yoga classes on a museum premises, workshops and discussions, to mention just a few. Interestingly, none of these were visible in my literature searches. On the contrary, even though public engagement is the usual suspect when discussing participation in museums, most of the articles I found discussed how museums use participatory practices in designing exhibitions. The reason for this remains unclear. Could it be the case that the research on public engagement has moved into a more specific titling than mere participation? Or, might it be that Nordic countries are focusing more on participatory exhibition design than on participatory public engagement? It might be that articles about public engagement are more often published in other languages than English.

Whatever the case may be, a wide spectrum of participatory practices was left out of this research.

Another observation about the data is that the articles were a selection of case studies taking place in museums. The reason for selecting research articles instead of, for example, museum strategy plans, was that I wanted to review the actual practices and realisations of participation. When evaluating plans, strategies and purposes, the target is different. Evaluation of strategies happens on a more ideological level and disregards the factual boundaries of practice. Here, I wanted to review what is actually done, and how it is perceived. When discussing a practice that takes place between an individual and an institution, the factual circumstances become the most important aspect. It is easy to make general plans as to what museums should or should not do, but when these plans are realised, often a thing or two that were unforeseeable become evident. The strength of this review is that it also regards feedback and miscalculations of participatory practices, in the same way in which they were critically reflected in the research articles.

The articles included here cover a wide range of perspectives on participation in museum work. I have pointed out that there are several understandings of the concept of participation, several ways for approaching it and several understandings about what can be achieved by it. There are also expectations targeted to museums from the public concerning participation. I have pointed out questions about museums' changing positions, and shed more light on the ways in which participation is influencing the museum institution. Thus, even though this review does not claim to depict a full understanding of participation, it does give some possible steps for continuing with it.

The range of museum types presented in the articles is wide, and included art, city and cultural history museums. This suggests that participatory practices take place in all museums, without exception. In the articles different exhibition types were also present, i.e., short-term projects happening inside museums and larger city space projects. Interestingly, most of the cases were projects with a pre-determined beginning and ending. Even cases that were aiming to develop a longer-term practice were realised in the project format. Museums, as producers of exhibitions, are naturally also familiar with the project-type of practice. However, it might be asked if this type of short-term planning and working, previously labelled as projectisation (Brunila 2009), will become more common in the museum institution in the 2020s. And if so, how will this affect museums working as public institutions hosting several long-term practices and goals?

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined recent museum research literature from the Nordic countries regarding participation. The concept of participation has become more popular during the past 20 years. In the Nordic research articles reviewed, participation was often treated as a practical tool for designing public

engagement and measuring the impact of museum work. However, the concept of participation is deeply tied to an understanding of museum institutions' opportunities, as well as to museum policies.

I have demonstrated above four different approaches on participation and a variety of understandings for the concept. Participation is regarded both as practice and theory, and it often takes shape in museums as an experimental space or an outreach practice. In this chapter I have shown that there exists a vivid and diverse discussion about participatory practices. In this regard, participation was not comprehended only as a tool for engaging the public, but it was rather used in many types of activities in museums. Participation played an unexpectedly big part in producing exhibition contents.

Based on the research, I suggest that participation is an ambiguous concept, which can be used and understood in several opposing ways. When starting to design participatory practices, museums might benefit by asking a few critical questions of themselves. First, they could evaluate what kind of changes will be required from them as organizations to take this step, and how these changes are going to be realized. Participation is a laborious process, but the outcomes might be very rewarding for all involved. Second, it is always useful to pause and to think about the objectives. What are the desired outcomes of this practice? Who are the participants the museums wish to involve? Is the objective to develop the whole organisation, or to enhance the visitor experience? Lastly, from this reflective stance, museums could consider even more the prospects and pitfalls the designed practices give them. Participation might be a great opportunity for building spaces for dialogue, democracy and collaborative endeavours. It can strengthen and deepen shared cultural heritage, and, when used for communication between institutions and communities, it can promote societal change. However, it can also lead to creating a mirage of shared power and democracy, and with them end up legitimising current institutional practices instead of developing them for a better future.

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Outside Museums' Own Walls – Experiences with participatory projects as part of the Helsinki Model

Erja Salo

Abstract

The Finnish Museum of Photography worked with eleven other art institutions on regional, inclusive cultural work in four different pilot areas in several Helsinki suburbs (Kaarela, Vuosaari, Maunula and Jakomäki) in 2016–2018. The aim of this action, known as the *Helsinki Model*, was to promote cultural inclusion by motivating art institutions to move outside their own walls to a suburban area, with potential new audiences. From the perspective of the city, the model was looking for new ways of engaging audiences/residents with the art world. After this three-year pilot period, the Museum received funding from the City of Helsinki to continue its work in Vuosaari during the years 2019–21, together with KOM Theatre and Klockriketeatern.

In this chapter, the experiences gained by the Finnish Museum of Photography during the first three piloting years of 2016–2018 are reflected through Nina Simon's *Chart of Participatory Model of Engagement* which she presents in her book *The Participatory Museum* (Simon 2010). The chapter addresses the following questions: How has participation been achieved? What do the art institution and participants get from the activities? What are the goals of the art institution and what is the impact of the activity on the organisation/audience work?

Keywords: social museology, outreach, participation, audience engagement, inclusive museum practices

Some Day

In April 2019, I sat in the basement of Mellunmäki Sports Mill with twenty other museum professionals and cultural workers. There were cultural producers, community managers, theatre educators, visual arts educators, audience managers and audience leaders from twelve different art institutions in Helsinki. The Helsinki Model Evaluation and Final Report, hosted by the City of Helsinki's Culture and Leisure Business, was about to begin. For the first time, we got to read and discuss the final report *Toisenlainen taidemaailma* (Another Art World, Tolvanen 2019) published by the Helsinki Cultural Centre, to which we

had all provided materials throughout the late winter. I opened the publication. Stuba Nikula, ex-cultural director and cultural services manager at the City of Helsinki, writes in the opening words of the report:

> And one day, this will no longer be funded separately, but regional work will be as integral to the arts as it is to publicity and internationalisation. Some day. (Nikula 2019, p. 6. Translation by the author)

This chapter does not explain how participatory thinking is embedded in the daily life of an arts institution or sponsor (public funding), but is a case study based on the experience of one art institution on inclusive cultural work in 2016–2018. As an example, I use my own museum, the Finnish Museum of Photography, where I work as the Head of Learning and Public Programmes. The example of the *Vuosaari – In other words* project illustrates the reasons why the museum wants to operate outside of its own walls and do regional cultural work. What are the goals of the art institution and how do they relate to the goals of the residents/local communities and funding? Is there two-way action? What does the art institution gain from it? What is the impact of the activity on the organisation, and is it reasonable to think that regional inclusive/participatory projects will be a permanent form of audience work for all art institutions one day?

The chapter has three sections. At the beginning, I present the Vuosaari – In other words project, as well as the institutional goals and level of commitment of the Finnish Museum of Photography, funding from the City of Helsinki and how this has all been achieved. After that, via two case-studies, *Polkuja* (The Paths) and the *HOAS* (The Student Housing in the Helsinki Region) Photography Wall, I present two ways of approaching audiences and participatory practices. I reflect them on the action in relation to Nina Simon's Museum Participation Chart, which is published in her book *The Participatory Museum* (2010). I find that Simon's chart provides a practical tool to reflect on the case studies I present and mirror what is achieved with participatory practices that are aligned with institutional goals and policies from the funding side. In choosing Simon as a reference I am definitely not alone; her pragmatic way of writing has been an extremely popular reference among museum professionals and researchers ever since (see also Viita-Aho, this volume). In conclusion, I look at the plans and future of the second project period and how they have been influenced by past activities and experiences.

Who Is Interested in the Outcomes?

Public funding and policy targets

Outreach projects by museums and cultural institutions in Finland have been so far carried out mainly in Helsinki, which is probably because the City of Helsinki (the city administration) has consciously supported the cultural work of art institutions outside their own premises. This cultural policy goal is an international trend, part of an urban strategy of combating segregation and strengthening social capital outside urban centres (Tolvanen 2019, p. 7; see also Kaitavuori, this volume).

In 2014, the Helsinki Cultural Centre launched a pilot project involving inclusive cultural work. The Helsinki Model was modelled on the Lyon Cultural Work Model, which was visited by representatives of the Cultural Policy Department of the Helsinki Cultural Centre in October 2011 (Kuusi 2017, p. 8). The aim of the Helsinki Model was to balance access to cultural services and increase accessibility to a wide range of audiences. *The Interim Report of the Helsinki Model Towards a More Equal Cultural Helsinki* also describes the project's objectives as follows:

> The model encourages cultural institutions and artist groups that receive public support to invest in those neighbourhoods and social groups that have been left behind in cultural services. It is a cultural activity shared by artists and residents, which encourages residents and communities to become involved as artists in the making of art and culture. At the same time, art organisations are reaching out to new audiences and developing their operating models. (Kuusi 2017, p. 7. Translated by the author)

After the pilot phase of 2014–2016, the first three-year model operated in 2016–2018 and is, at the time of writing, in operation for the second three-year period of 2019–2021. In 2015, The Finnish Museum of Photography received funding, together with eleven other art institutions, for regional work in Vuosaari for the first three-year period[1] and then again for 2019–2021. In addition to Vuosaari, the other residential areas designated by the city were Kaarela, Maunula and Jakomäki.

The Perspective of Museum Policy

When I started at The Finnish Museum of Photography in 2004, my title was Educational Curator, and I was the museum's first specialist dedicated to working for and with audiences. Then, during the sixteen years that has since passed, my work content has grown and changed from pedagogy and learning to the wider topic of audience engagement. The change in my job and its focus reflects well the changed role of museums. In general, education has been replaced by a more holistic concept of learning, diversity of audience structure, community response and supply diversification, all of which require a participatory approach that is strongly linked to the museum's public relations and roles (see also Kaitavuori, this volume).

The latest expression of this thinking is the Museum Policy Programme of the Ministry of Education and Culture in Finland (Mattila 2018), which outlines the key success factors of the Finnish museum sector through 2030. The vision is that by 2030 Finland will have the most up-to-date museums and enthusiastic visitors in Europe. The programme emphasises the role of museums as experts, partners and enablers, and defines the value of museums as a foundation of

1. Total amount of funding for the Helsinki Model was 376 450 €/year (Kuusi, Räisänen & Tolvanen 2017).

community, interactivity, reliability and continuity, polyphony and democracy, as well as courage and open-mindedness. In addition, participation, community and working together have been raised as developmental targets as part of the Encounters and Partnerships development package (Mattila 2018, pp. 12–16; see also Viita-Aho, this volume).

The release of The Museum Policy Programme by The Ministry of Education and Culture was preceded by the *Exposure to Customers* pamphlet, published by the National Board of Antiquities (now known as the Finnish Heritage Agency) in 2013 (Teräs & Teräsvirta 2013). The *Museum Management and Operational Models in Change* publication, is, according to its subtitle, the first in Finland to open up museums to audience-oriented thinking (Teräs & Teräsvirta 2013, p. 7). The *Puhuttelevat museopalvelut* (the Talking Museum Services) section of this document highlights museums as service providers and asks who the museum serves in the current situation. At the same time, it reminds us that the "one-size-fits-all" approach no longer works, and that relevance and accessibility are the key factors (Teräs & Teräsvirta 2013, p. 22).

Presenting the *Vuosaari – In Other Words* Project

The Vuosaari suburb is about a half-hour metro ride from the cultural centre the Cable Factory in Ruoholahti, where The Finnish Museum of Photography is located. Vuosaari is Helsinki's largest, fastest-growing suburb, with about 40,000 inhabitants, located in eastern Helsinki. It consists of nine areas with different identities: Middle-Vuosaari, Kallahti, Meri-Rastila, Rastila, Aurinkolahti, Uutela, Niinisaari, Nordsjö Manor and Mustavuori. In 2017, when Vuosaari was voted City District of the Year, Pertti Tossavainen, Principal of the Vuoniitty School, described Vuosaari so: "There is not one Vuosaari. There are four or five very different areas. There are many languages and cultures. You could say that Vuosaari is now what the rest of Finland will be in 10–15 years." (Räty 2017, p. 36. Translated by the author.)

For the Finnish Museum of Photography, Vuosaari – In other words is the first long-term, publicly-funded project where the museum also had an opportunity from the funder's side to experiment with different participatory practices. The project team is comprised of the Head of Learning and Public Programmes Erja Salo, a part-time producer Ulla Viskari-Perttu and photographers/visual arts educators Tuukka Kangas, Kastehelmi Korpijaakko, Hanna Parviainen, Liisa Söderlund and Noora Sandgren. Viskari-Perttu and the art educators also partly had the role of community managers.[2] The artists and visual arts educators working on the project also work in actual museums as art educators. When building the project team, this link was seen as the most important decision when building a bridge between museums' core functions and services in the Cable

2. Art educator Laura Porola worked as a part-time producer 2016–2017. Korpijaakko, Sandgren and Söderlund are still working for the project in its second phase, 2019–2021.

Factory venue. All in all, the goal was to gain new knowledge and engagement skills during the project.

Guidelines to Participation

The Finnish Museum of Photography had many goals of its own, but fewer ready models of engagement based on its own experience. The museum's own goals included awareness and visibility – to attract new visitors to museum exhibitions, workshops, courses and events, and in general, to convey its contents to potential new audiences/visitors. We also wanted to develop new forms of audience work, partners and networks. The museum's own special museum-related content, photography and photographic culture, was also in focus. The aim was to support, inspire and enable photography and photography-related activities, especially for children and young people, and to offer different ways and opportunities in which to participate. But how can this be achieved, and what is the best approach? What is the role of the resident or community and the museum staff?

In her book *The Participatory Museum*, Nina Simon (2010) introduces *The Museum Participation Chart*, which is strongly practice-based. Simon's chart helps to identify methods of participation and to identify the different levels and forms of participation. The model also helps look at the museum's own commitment and the kind of involvement the museum wants to promote, as well as where non-participation comes from. Simon's model is based on the idea that there are many ways to implement inclusion, and that different models are suitable for different institutions and projects. The level of participation and the roles in the model will vary, depending on how the role and amount of ownership, control of the process and creative output are defined between the museum and the participants. Neither model is better than another, nor can they be seen as a step towards maximum participation (Simon 2010, pp. 183–189). In her spreadsheet model, Simon divides participation in museums into four categories: contributory, collaborative, co-creative and hosted. The categories are bracketed by seven questions designed to help to examine the level of engagement and the museum's commitment to the given activity.

- What kind of commitment does your institution have to community engagement?
- How much control do you want over the participatory process and product?
- How do you see the institution's relationship with participants during the process?
- Who do you want to participate in and what kind of commitment will you seek from participants?
- How much staff time will you commit to managing the project and working with participants?
- What kind of skills do you want participants to gain from their activities during the project?

- What goals do you have for how non-participating visitors will perceive the project? (Simon 2010, pp. 190–191).

	Contributory	Collaborative	Co-Creative	Hosted
What kind of commitment does your institution have to community engagement?	We're commited to helping our visitors and members feel like participants with the institution.	We're commited to deep partnerships with some target communities.	We're commited to supporting the needs of target communities whose goals align with the institutional mission.	We're committed to inviting community members to feel comfortable using the institution for their own purposes.
How much control do you want over the participatory process and product?	A lot - we want participants to follow our rules of engagement and give us what we request.	Staff will control the process, but participants' actions will steer the direction and content of the final product.	Some, but participants' goals and preferred working styles are just as important as those of the staff.	Not much - as long as participants follow our rules, they can produce what they want.
How do you see the institution's relationship with participants during the project?	The institution requests content and the participants supply it, subject to institutional rules.	The institution sets the project concept and plan, and then staff members work closely with participants to make it happen.	The institution gives participants the tools to lead the project and then supports their activities and helps them move forward successfully.	The institution gives the participants rules and resources and then lets the participants do their own thing.
Who do you want to participate and what kind of commitment will you seek from participants?	We want to engage as many visitors as possible, engaging them briefly in the context of a museum or online visit.	We expect some people will opt in casually, but most will come with the explicit intention to participate.	We seek participants who are intentionally engaged and are dedicated to seeing the project all the way through.	We'd like to empower people who are ready to manage and implement their project on their own.

	Contributory	Collaborative	Co-Creative	Hosted
How much staff time will you commit to managing the project and working with participants?	We can manage it lightly, the way we'd maintain an interactive exhibit. But we ideally want to set it up and let it run.	We will manage the process, but we're going to set the rules of engagement based on our goals and capacity.	We will give much time as it takes to make sure participants are able to accomplish their goals.	As little as possible - we want to set it up and let it run on its own.
What kinds of skills do you want participants to gain from their activities during the project?	Creation of content, collection of data, or sharing of personal expression. Use of technological tools to support content creation and sharing.	Everything supported by contributory projects, plus the ability to analyze, curate, design, and deliver completed products.	Everything supported by collaborative projects, plus project conceptualization, goal-setting, and evaluation skills.	None that the institution will specifically impart, except perhaps around program promotion and audience engagement.
What goals do you have for how non-participating visitors will perceive the project?	The project will help visitors see themselves as potential participants and see the institution as interested in their active involvement.	The project will help visitors see the institution as a place dedicated to supporting and connecting with community.	The project will help visitors see the institution as a community-driven place. It will also bring in new audiences connected to the participants.	The project will attract new audiences who might not see the institution as a comfortable or appealing place for them.

Figure 1. The Museum Participation Charts (Simon 2010, pp. 190–191).[3]

In the next section I present two cases that both provided various opportunities for participation, which incorporate elements of each of Simon's categories. When these projects were initiated, we did not follow Simon's chart, but experimented with different approaches where the responsiveness to participants' actions and involvement played the biggest role. Now, as a means of evaluation, I run them through Simon's chart and its seven questions.

3. Available at http://www.participatorymuseum.org/chapter5/ [Last accessed 1 February 2020]

Participation in Practice
Case Study 1.

The Paths Project – Young people as event organisers and exhibition makers

Polkuja (the Paths) was a project lasting the whole first funding period of 2016–2018. It is an example of where the museum is committed to supporting the needs of a local community, and seeks co-creational elements in engaging it. The co-creation was justified and meaningful, not only because of the common values, but also because the museum's own goal in the project was to involve children and young people, and to work with local communities and groups that are interested in photographic methods in their operations. The Paths is an example of a project that has features of collaboration, co-creation and hosting, according to Simon's model.

The Paths' activities were developed by a visual artist, art educator Noora Sandgren, working in co-operation with Volunteer Coordinator Tuula Ylänne and the Director of Girl Work, Tanja Rajala, both working for Debora/YWCA[4] in Meri-Rastila, in Vuosaari.

The Debora Project has a living-room type of place called SOma-SOppi, which specialises in working with young girls, strengthening friendship, social skills and a sense of self-reliance. It is dedicated to girls of 13–15 years in the Meri Rastila neighbourhood of Vuosaari.

Rajala and Ylänne selected a group of nine sixth-grade girls for the Paths activity. In addition to the girls, the Paths also indirectly targeted the leaders of the Debora Project and the girls' close adults and family from the museum's side. The internal goal was to support the transition of girls to high school, and to promote interaction skills – friendships and a sense of belonging. One of the main goals of the project from Debora's side was to support girls' self-esteem, agency and peer relationships. Other important objectives included the participation and responsibility of girls, support for girls with an immigrant background and support for intergenerational co-operation. Sandgren had the role of co-creating and supporting the content creation with the tools provided by the museum, i.e., contemporary photography.

In the Paths Project, the Finnish Museum of Photography provided materials, information and guidance, but the girls participated in the design of the content, in collaboration with the museum and the guiding artist Sandgren, but sometimes entirely by themselves. The Paths Project was structured around weekly meetings in SOma SOppi, as well as excursions to local nature and to

4. Debora is a company that provides cultural, social and health services for cities. The City of Helsinki buys services from them, for example, for senior citizens, families, children and young people.

the Finnish Museum of Photography. As an outcome for non-participants, there was the Restaurant Day event and two exhibitions.[5]

Learning creative skills and engaging non-participants

Paths included two exhibitions, *Kuljen, katson, kohtaan, 2016* (I walk, I see, I meet) at the Vuotalo Cultural Centre and *Itseni hyvä ystävä 2017* (I am My Own Good Friend) at the Meri-Rastila Library. Kuljen, katson, kohtaan was an exhibition where another joint project with an artist/art educator, Kastehelmi Korpijaakko, and a group of young people was presented together. Korpijaakko's practice had more of a collaborative approach since two institutions, the museum and the Vuotalo Cultural Centre, had developed the concept and the plan (one-week, free summer courses for young people) for how participants were able to work. In both cases, participants followed the whole creative process of producing art work and presenting it.

For the Restaurant Day Flashmob (2016), where girls had a Spring-flowery restaurant, the menu constituted of Somalian Sambusas, Asian crab chips, Rocky Road sweets and surprise drinks. As an exchange of tasting experience, the restaurant guests were asked to share with the girls three things that really gave them joy and happiness in life. The thoughts were written or drawn in a special guestbook, with any voluntary donations used for field trips involving the Paths Project.

All the outcomes and exhibitions, as well as the Restaurant Day event, brought out the perspective of young people as event organisers and influencers in their own neighbourhood. It connected the young people of Vuosaari, regardless of background and place of residence, and allowed young people to use public spaces and other facilities (the Sjökulla Manor) in a new way. As one young participant said: "I went and visited places I would not otherwise visit". Via exhibitions and their visibility, both institutions – the museum and the Vuotalo Cultural Centre – got new audiences that were connected to the participants of the project, and brought together people and groups from very different socio-economic areas in Vuosaari.



Figure 2. The portraits were completed with the courses *Smiley Eye*, *Mutrusuu* and *Face to Face*. During the week-long Face to Face course, participants were looking for different ways to approach

5. Developed in Helsinki and first held in May 2011, Restaurant Day allows anyone to set up their own café, restaurant or bar for one day.

a portrait. What kind of picture is it telling me about myself? What does a portrait reveal and what does it hide? Photo: Kastehelmi Korpijaakko/The Finnish Museum of Photography.

Case Study 2. Using participation to create public art

The goal of the project was to create a permanent photo installation in a public space, in collaboration with various local communities in Vuosaari. Photographers and art educators Tuukka Kangas, Hanna Parviainen, Noora Sandgren and Liisa Söderlund conducted several photo walks in Meri-Rastila, for all age groups. Photography and the Community Photo Walk were used as tools to address issues and topics that were important to different age groups living in Meri-Rastila.

The project also had consultative features of collaboration, since it involved outside experts. The project was commissioned by *Lähiöprojekti* (The Suburban Project)[6] and it was produced by the RaivioBuman-Collective, which is a public art and urban design studio and consultancy, specialised in community driven projects, installations and site-specific art.[7]



Figure 3. A permanent 6 x 2.5 m photo of residents' photos was made on the wall of the HOAS (Student Housing in the Helsinki Region) condominium yard in Meri-Rastila. Photographers: Miska Elo, Katja Kanerva, Viktoriia Kotova, Anni Malmberg, Heikki Parviainen, Valtteri Vickholm, Niina Vickholm. Lay out: Artist-designer Päivi Raivio. Photo: Daniel Bumann/RaivioBumann.

In this case, our museum and the *Lähiöprojekti* had a very similar commitment to community engagement, i.e., to deepen understanding of artistic and cultural content and to give residents the possibility to participate in the artistic process (making and exhibiting), together with professionals in the field.

6. *Lähiöprojekti* (the Suburban Project) was completed in its present form at the end of 2017. The Helsinki City Government established the Suburban Project at the beginning of 1996 to define the general development directions of suburbs and to organise regional development activities. The suburban project had an annual budget available to carry out these activities. The objectives of the period were regional activities and the prevention of exclusion. In general, residents were offered low-threshold participation opportunities. In 2017 the Helsinki City Government decided to allocate the operating funds of the Suburban Project to financing the implementation of the participatory model.
7. https://raiviobumann.com/

The photographs were also shown before the final installation as a screening at the *KulttuuriX* (CultureX) outdoor festival, where they engaged a lot more viewers and potential participants. As one participant put it later on social media: "So touching was Meri-Rastila Saturday that tears fell on the floor of the croft and on the forest path. Thanks, everybody! It was an experience that this Meri-Rastila resident will never forget." (Facebook group: *Ohjaajat Vuosaaritoisinsanoen*. Translated by the author)

Conclusion – Still wondering and asking questions

This chapter has described via two case studies how the Finnish Museum of Photography has worked towards participation in Vuosaari during the years 2016–2018. At the time of writing we are more than half-way through the second funding period (2019–2021) and the funding has shifted somewhat. The museum is now working in Vuosaari under the name Vuosaari 21 in partnership with two theatre groups, under Helsinki Model funding (KOM Theatre and Klockricket-eatern), sharing mutual goals.[8] Since spring 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic has created unexpected challenges and changes, and new outcomes have emerged, such as *Virtual Family Albums* and the *New Ordinary* exhibition. Virtual Family Albums is an online project involving elderly people of Vuosaari, and was a continuation of home visits done earlier the same year. With Covid-19 came a new assignment – to document together in a performative way the effect Covid-19 measures had on the lives of the participants in Vuosaari. Online workshops also grew as a way to explore the virtual possibilities of community art and creative engagement. The Covid-19 pandemic also affected the *Dokumentteja Vuosaaresta* (Documents from Vuosaari, tanslation by the author) project, which started in summer 2018. The purpose of the project was to collect old and new photographs of Vuosaari from the locals and, through them, reveal the changes in the urban landscape and the environment. The project was launched with a group of local seniors whose approach was based on documentary photography and the tradition of community art. Then all meetings and events had to be canceled because of the pandemic. The big questions were as follows: How can the emotional intimacy between people be strengthened with art in these extraordinary conditions? How can community art tied to a particular place be created when we are forced to be apart? These questions led to new ways of interacting with one another. We went from emails to sharing photos on Google Drive, and from these photos to chatting on Zoom. Digital technology and unfamiliar applications posed a challenge, and tackling it with the elderly required creativity and solidary. These extraordinary times forced us to consider

8. In her unpublished dissertation, photographer, researcher and art educator Liisa Söderlund, who has worked on the project since 2015, the Vuosaari 21 project is one example of participatory photography, where a team of artists works with different audiences, working together and developing new approaches to the field of community art.

the meaning of community and participation in virtual encounters, to figure out ways to make art together and to redefine the role of a community artist.[9]

The New Ordinary exhibition (5.12.–30.12.2020) explores the topic: What is a good life when something new and unknown changes the familiar into something else? The residents of Vuosaari bravely started recording changes and the emotions evoked by Covid-19, with texts and photographs in Vuosaari 21 project workshops. With the Columbus shopping centre as venue, the photographs display Vuosaari's walking routes – places that are important to the photographers as well as small, everyday moments.[10]

The continuing challenge since the beginning has been how to be visible and reachable, when the museum has no permanent place in Vuosaari that could serve as a site and resource to engage with and meet people in everyday encounters. It has actually turned out to be a positive challenge that has encouraged and motivated us to be present in surprising, easy-to-access places: parks, streets, cafes, beaches, sports fields and shopping malls. And it has worked well – informal chats have produced successful encounters – such as the group of girls for the *Photography and Movement* course, who became enthusiastic when they by chance heard about the course in a café and as a consequence then saw themselves as potential participants in the course.

The strength of the Helsinki Model is in its accessibility – all activities are free. But are they relevant, and to whom? Why would anybody participate if it did not have any meaning for them? That brings us to the biggest challenge and also the most time consuming – building relationships with people and supporting them. It is often as simple as spending time, talking, eating and having coffee together. Through such activities an idea for a programme, activity or other collaboration could start to emerge.

Community educators Mari Laakso and Pekka Turunen consider the outcome of Helsinki Model in their research to be successful, especially among children, youth and other participants who were already active in the area, as well as inhabitants with cultural interests. Laakso and Turunen state that the attitude of the art institutions influenced the success of the activities. They also pay attention to the power structure and the roles in participatory projects and mention: "A genuine encounter requires that art institutions and residents are equal, so that the activities are not aimed from top to bottom, putting art against participation" (Laakso and Turunen 2019. Translated by the author).

That all brings us back to the museum's own priorities and institutional values. How does inclusive thinking take root in our museum, and how is it embedded

9. Images from this project and working process available at: https://www.valokuvataiteenmuseo.fi/fi/hankkeet/vuosaari-21/dokumentteja-vuosaaresta [Last accessed 27 August 2021]

10. More about Virtual Family albums can be found at: https://www.valokuvataiteenmuseo.fi/en/projects/vuosaari-21/virtual-family-albums and New Ordinary https://www.valokuvataiteenmuseo.fi/en/projects/vuosaari-21/vuosaari-21-new-ordinary [Last accessed 1 February 2020]

in the work of the museum as a whole? Is it something that we prioritise, or is it something that we do only when we have extra funding? The City of Helsinki has made accessibility and inclusion a criterion for participation in cultural grants. Via the Helsinki Model, the City's purpose is to permanently renew the entire project-funding application process, so that work with the audience will be done more outside of the walls of the artistic facilities, especially in the suburbs. How strongly will the City of Helsinki strategy govern museums and their work in the future?

A lot of resources have been invested in the work in Vuosaari, as well as in the Helsinki Model. It has been running for several years and employs a good number of staff, but has it been of any relevance to the residents? And how can it be managed and sustained in the future? I honestly cannot answer that yet!

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Accessibility Means More than Ramps – A critical approach to the (in-)accessibility of museums, galleries and cultural institutions

Dorothea Breier

Abstract

This chapter challenges the image of museums and galleries as accessible places. For this, I draw on my research on a group of young adults in Helsinki, to illustrate with this case study how certain groups of people experience said institutions as unwelcoming and particularly inaccessible. As my interviewees put it, "accessibility means more than ramps", but is as much connected to the principles of social accessibility.

In this chapter I present the group's detailed critique of cultural institutions, before discussing their suggestions and actual strategies on how to increase accessibility to the arts and culture. With these insights into the perspective of people who do not feel welcome at museums and other cultural institutions, this chapter seeks to provide input and inspiration regarding participatory practices and grassroot approaches when trying to transform museums into more inclusive places.

Keywords: social accessibility, inclusivity, participatory practice, do-it-yourself (DIY), safer space

Introduction

In past decades, the question of accessibility of museums and cultural institutions has been widely discussed. This resulted in multiple publications by and for those institutions, such as the *Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessible Exhibition Design* (2010) or ICOM's Committee for Education and Cultural Action conference proceedings named *Museum Education & Accessibility: Bridging the Gaps*. A great number of guidelines and other field-specific literature focus on the physical accessibility of museums (Lisney et al. 2013; Murphey 2015; Cock 2018). However, accessibility is about more than just physical access to the space and its content; it also entails a social dimension. Some publications pay attention to this, discussing, for instance, the complexities and issues faced when aiming for more inclusive cultural institutions (Sandell & Nightingale 2013; Papadimitriou et al. 2017; Newman et al. 2005), or emphasising the benefits of participatory practices when trying to open up museums (Simon 2010). Considerations on

the social accessibility of cultural institutions can also be found in the *Ethical guidelines 4 – Access* of the Museums Association or, in a Finnish context, the recommendations and services of the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture on how to enhance the accessibility and diversity of culture.[1]

However, even in publications that discuss social aspects of accessibility, the focus seems to rest on selected groups of people, often linguistic and ethnic minorities, and on how to include them in the operations of art and cultural institutions. Still, it seems that a particular, yet crucial aspect of inclusivity and accessibility has been only marginally addressed, namely how to include seemingly unreachable groups of people, people who might not even be on the radar of art and cultural institutions, and who perceive such institutions as exclusive and unwelcoming, but who would still benefit from participating in them.

In this chapter, I draw on novel ethnographic research done on and with a group of young adults in Helsinki that work in an open and inclusive (sub)cultural centre called Loukko.[2] As shown in my research, the group has highly elaborate idea(l)s, and solid critiques about the exclusivity of society in general, and cultural institutions in particular. Their activities can be seen as a direct response to perceived failures and shortcomings of cultural institutions.

I use Loukko's viewpoints to shed light on the limitations regarding social accessibility, of which museums and similar institutions might not even be fully aware. Furthermore, I discuss one of Loukko's strategies to increase accessibility to the arts and culture, namely a programme called Museokerho (Museum Club). Within the framework of Museokerho, Loukko organises visits to museums and galleries for their target group, i.e., people at risk of being marginalised due to their social or educational background, gender identity, mental health issues or social abilities. I present the voices of organisers at Loukko, participants of Museokerho and a collaborating institution, to illustrate how such participatory practices have the potential to turn museums and cultural institutions into places for everyone.

Methodology and Material

I gathered the material for this chapter as part of my postdoctoral research on grassroot initiatives and urban activism, working for a more socially sustainable city. I discovered Loukko right at the beginning of my project. After the first interview with Vilja, one of the founding members, I decided to focus on them for the time being. Already in this first interview, it became clear that Loukko's attempt to create a subcultural centre rests on highly elaborate idea(l)s, linked to a solid critique of society. Their main driving force is a perception of society as

1. Available at https://minedu.fi/en/accessibility-and-diversity-of-culture [Last accessed 12 June 2019]
2. Available at https://www.kulttuuriloukko.fi/ [Last accessed 12 June 2019]

one that is exclusive, one that leaves behind different groups of people without even realising it.

This perception stems from personal experiences of Loukko's members, a group of young adults in their twenties to mid-thirties, and from what they witness regarding people in their immediate surroundings. This forms the background of their activities and motivates them to create a space that is inclusive and accessible, both physically and socially, for people who feel discriminated against because of their social or educational background, affiliation to subcultures, sexual or gender identities or (mental) health issues. Here, I present and discuss one specific strategy with which Loukko tries to make the arts and culture more accessible by organising museum and gallery visits in a do-it-yourself (DIY) manner. I refer to the framework of DIY as something that describes "anti-professional activities" (Deslandes 2013, p. 218) in which "ordinary people (…) rely on themselves in order to fill a need, fix a problem, or pursue a goal" (Relles & Clemens 2018, p. 313). As Griffin put it, "a DIY ethic encourages people to think about their position and place in the world, and how their actions or (in-actions), are connected to others, to wider society" (Griffins 2015, p. 25), which shows clearly in Loukko's agenda.

My research material consists primarily of five qualitative interviews with some of Loukko's core members, each lasting between one and two hours. Most of the interviews took place in summer 2018 and deal with the basic ideas and strategies of Loukko on a more general level. Loukko launched their Museokerho only in spring 2019, which in turn inspired me to write my contribution to this volume.

To gain more specific data on Museokerho, I participated in two of its events at different venues in Helsinki: The Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma[3], and the Helsinki Art Museum (HAM)[4]. These gave me an idea of how Museokerho works in situ and prepared me for follow-up interviews with two of Loukko's members, as well as one with the Head of Public Programmes at Kiasma. All interviewees decided not to remain anonymous, therefore I refer to them by name.

In addition to the interviews, I conducted a questionnaire survey with participants of Loukko's Museokerho to learn about their experiences at museums in general, and in Museokerho in particular. Since it was not obligatory to register for most Museokerhos, I asked Loukko to distribute the link to the survey via their Facebook page as their main medium for informing about events and sharing other updates. The survey covered three areas: some basic background information on the participant (age, gender, education, occupation, etc.), some questions on their relationship to museums and museum visits in the past and present and their experiences with and thoughts on Museokerho. Some of the questions had a simple multiple-choice format; others required the respondent to write their own text.

3. Available at https://kiasma.fi/en/ [Last accessed 12 June 2019]
4. Available at https://www.hamhelsinki.fi/en/ [Last accessed 12 June 2019]

Due to the small scale of Museokerho, participation in this questionnaire was small as well. In total, four people responded, three males and one female, with three people aged between 18 and 33, and one aged 50+. In retrospect, I think that it would have been more fruitful if I had done short, qualitative interviews with participants. Unfortunately, the answers to the questionnaire turned out to be a bit short and superficial, while in face-to-face interviews, I could have followed up more specifically on aspects relevant for this article. Thus, I draw on the results of the questionnaire to support my arguments, but they should not be seen as a primary source.

Besides my own research data, I took different surveys and a social media campaign into consideration that Loukko had implemented themselves. Firstly, there are surveys and a social media campaign named *Mikä estää* (What stops you?) done soon after Loukko was founded in early spring 2018. In those, Loukko asked people what challenges they faced when wanting to go to (semi-)public places. Secondly, there is a questionnaire that one of Loukko's core members, Vilja, did in early autumn 2018 for her master's thesis (Joensuu 2018). With this questionnaire, Vilja tried to find out more about different aspects of accessibility to be taken into account when planning "low-threshold arts or cultural activities" (Vilja). Each of those questionnaires had around 20 responses. For this chapter, I refer to a listing of the results of the first survey that was shared with me, as well as an interview with Vilja, in which we discussed the findings of the questionnaires. For ethical reasons, I did not have those findings directly at my disposal.

With this multidimensional approach, I try to look at the issue from different angles; from both outside and inside arts and cultural institutions. As a trained ethnologist, I put a lot of emphasis on presenting the (transcribed) voices of my interviewees, to allow them to make their points clear in their own words, rather than summarising them myself. Additionally, I refer to guidelines and literature on museum practices to complement the discussion of my findings. However, my main intention is to present an example of innovative and meaningful participatory practices as a source of inspiration for future development at museums, galleries and other cultural institutions.

Case Study and Discussion

A perceived inaccessibility of museums, galleries and cultural institutions

One of the more encompassing approaches towards accessibility can be found in the *Equality Planning Guide* (2010) of the Finnish organisation *Kulttuuria kaikille* (Culture for All) that was launched in 2003 and is supported by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture.[5] Unlike other guidelines that either focus solely or primarily on physical accessibility, this one not only provides

5. Available at http://www.kulttuuriakaikille.fi/about_us [Last accessed 18 June 2019]

additional information on how to include different age groups, linguistic, ethnic or religious minorities, but also sexual and gender minorities. In another guideline, the *Guide to Equality in Youth and Sports Organisations* (2014), Kulttuuria kaikille differentiates between physical and social accessibility and provides a definition of the latter: "Social accessibility is a question of climate. In a socially accessible organisation, everyone can safely be who they are, without fear of discrimination." (ETNO et al. 2014, p. 19).

Though rather vague, this definition points towards aspects that are crucial when discussing Loukko's stance, its criticism of a perceived exclusivity of cultural institutions and its response to it. Loukko's members understood that the cultural and art scene does not feel particularly welcoming to certain people for reasons that lie beyond the physical accessibility of those places. As Mirjami, one of Loukko's core members, put it:

> Mirjami: There [are] different things that stop you from going to places. It's not just about --- are the doors wide enough and stuff like that. It's also, a big deal of it is social and psychological, and I have noticed, many times when I have wanted to go somewhere, and then I feel like people are just staring at me and wondering if I'm gonna steal something from there… There are different kind of things that stop you from going to places. And for people that have different kinds of problems with discrimination regarding their sexual orientation or gender identity and different kinds of mental sickness and anxiety and so on, it's --- it's harder to go to some, like, cultural event at Korjaamo where there are all these beautiful people sipping on their Aperol Spritz and watching some short films that their friends directed on his year in India. It's a lot harder than going to some crumbly building in Suvilahti, where we have been saying on the internet that "You don't need any money, you don't need fancy clothes, you can just come here and we're a bunch of, like, (laughs) crappy older Punks (…) that don't even own a pair of, like, pantyhose that aren't broken…"

For people who experience(d) discrimination due to their background, the threshold of going to a public place, particularly one which signals a considerable degree and even expectation of sophistication, is high. What Mirjami described also shows in the results of Loukko's own surveys. As Vilja explained to me, two of the surveys asked if the respondents "'feel like there is enough arts and cultural services available that are (…) accessible for [them]'". Of all participants, 50 and 60 percent, respectively, answered in the negative. The reason most often provided (66/85 percent), was "I can't afford to participate", followed by "I don't feel welcome" and "I don't feel safe" (more than 30 percent). When asked in one of the surveys if those reasons had prevented the respondents from attending events, 54 percent responded "Yes, sometimes" and almost 40 percent said "Yes, many times". Some of the respondents explained as part of the open questions in more detail what obstacles caused them to feel unwelcome or unsafe. As Vilja elaborated, one big issue addressed was the gender-normative space and appearance of many institutions, in addition to the insecurity that some people

feel in an unknown environment, not knowing "whether a place or an event is (…) really open, or is it still kind of a clique-thing".

These findings gain deeper meaning when one knows about the background of the respondents. An average of one third indicated a non-binary gender (alongside the majority of participants who identified as women, and a minority as men). Furthermore, about 50 percent said they were in school or working. However, some of those also said they were on sick-leave or rehabilitation to get (back) into work life, which means that *at least* half of the respondents were de facto outside of work and school.

As Mirjami pointed out above, there are many reasons why certain people feel unwelcome at cultural institutions, from the fear of not knowing enough to being eligible to enter such spaces, over not having enough, or the right, social and cultural capital, to having already experienced discrimination due to their gender identity, sexual preferences or other characteristics. Considering the vulnerable status of many of Loukko's participants, it therefore becomes clearer why they might feel excluded from the arts and cultural events, but also why it would be all the more important to include them. Studies illustrate the positive impact of artistic and creative activities, particularly for people's mental wellbeing (Secker et al. 2018; Wilson et al. 2015; Margrove 2015), a concept to be understood as something that is worth aspiring to "regardless of the presence or absence of symptoms" (Secker et al. 2018, p. 80). I am not implying that all of Loukko's participants suffer from mental health issues, but certainly many of them are at risk of being marginalised from mainstream society for one or another reason, which is why participating in the arts and culture would be beneficial for their overall wellbeing.

Despite this, Vilja criticises in one of our interviews the fact that even though museums, galleries and similar institutions might have charitable offers, such as free entry or workshops, these usually target specific groups such as children and teenagers. According to her, some people might not be part of, e.g., mental health groups (which are also considered a target group for some charitable activities at institutions), but still, and maybe particularly because of this, those people would be in urgent need of such supportive offers. Thus, Vilja concludes, "the group that would benefit the most, is the group that is excluded the most".

This forms one of the main pillars in Loukko's work, namely, to make access to arts and culture as low-threshold as possible. For this, Loukko organises activities of different kinds and contents, including political cross-stitching, creating poetic collages, acrylic painting and pottery workshops. The difference from similar activities offered by, e.g., adult education centres and such is that Loukko's workshops are not only offered free of charge, with no prior skills needed, but most significantly, they are held in a non-institutional environment. It is precisely this environment and atmosphere of a place that have a crucial, yet mostly unrecognised impact on the social accessibility found there.

In line with this, Loukko tries to create a safer space for those groups of marginalised people they want to reach, a space where, as Mirjami pointed out, they can be who they are, without having the feeling of not being [*insert an adjective*] enough, or the fear of being discriminated against for their personal background. In all their activities, Loukko thus follows clear safer space principles (figure 1), which are stated on their website, in each event description, and, most importantly, which are implemented consequently in situ.

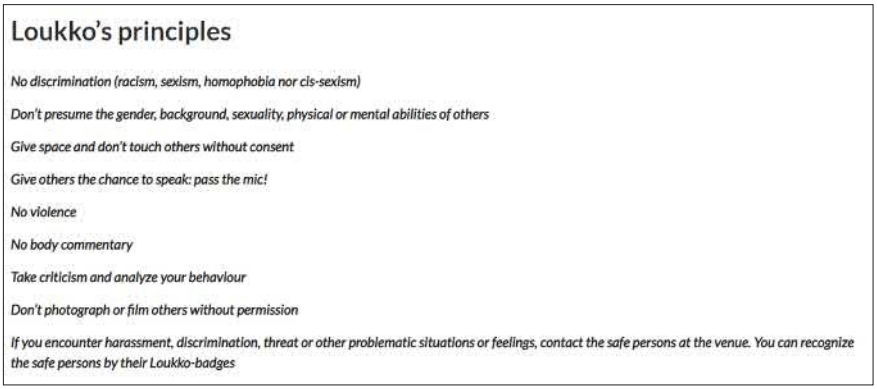


Figure 1. Loukko's safer space principles, screenshot from their website.

Surely, most cultural institutions would generally agree on principles such as having non-discriminatory policies. Furthermore, guidelines like the one of Kulttuuria kaikille reflect on the importance of not just having policies for increasing inclusivity, but of actually implementing those policies at all levels of the organisation:

> The implementation of social accessibility is the responsibility of all actors at all levels of the organisation. The attitudes of the organisation's members, volunteers and staff have a major impact on how social accessibility is realised in the everyday activity of the organisation. (ETNO et al. 2014, p. 19)

However, more factors play into the creation of a safer space that is needed for including marginalised groups, factors that cultural institutions may find hard to accomplish by themselves. For Vilja, it is obvious that certain spaces for certain people cannot be created artificially, but that they have to grow organically from within the group. In our interview, we discussed how diversity cannot be achieved from above, by pro forma, including minority quotas. As Vilja put it: "You can't fake diversity, if you would want to have more minorities in, (…) you can't really do that unless you reach out in a way that would include them in the operations in a way."

Taking the example of municipal youth centres, Vilja does acknowledge the work that is being done by social workers there, yet she criticises the fact that they are curated and coordinated in a top-down manner. For her, one way of solving this is to rely on self-governed spaces and activities organised by the users themselves.

According to Vilja, this is what Loukko managed to do: "I feel that the group working with Loukko is also the people we are doing it for (…) It comes from us, because we are part of the people we would want to reach out to anyway."

By making it easy for everyone "to bring own needs and interests into the operation", Vilja said that Loukko strove to have no clear division between organisers and participants. As Vilja put it at another moment of the interview, most of Loukko's members have a punk background, which made "doing things in a do-it-yourself-manner (…) close and familiar' to them as they had "so much experience in doing things on a grassroot level". According to Vilja, following a bottom-up, DIY-strategy worked against the limitations of cultural institutions and allowed people instead to create spaces that are more inclusive and accessible to marginalised groups.

As an intermediate conclusion, I therefore want to emphasise the necessity for museums and cultural institutions to acknowledge their limitations in reaching out to certain groups because of their inherent institutional nature. However, since such groups would benefit from participating in the arts and culture, other strategies are needed to make cultural institutions more accessible to them. As one possible solution, I now present and discuss Loukko's Museokerho programme.

Bottom-up Museum Tours for Increased Inclusivity? – Loukko's Museokerho

The organiser's perspective

The idea for Museokerho was created because Vilja realised how much she herself benefits from art and creative activities, and thought that if she found it helpful, others might feel the same. When working on her MA thesis on the accessibility and benefits of the arts and culture, she felt further supported in her idea to set up events that would lower the threshold of this field and related activities.

To complement their art and handicraft workshops, Loukko introduced Museokerho, planned as a series of organised visits to museums and galleries. For this, Vilja started to contact numerous institutions to ask for collaboration. However, she was turned down by most of them on the grounds of "lack of resources". She expressed incomprehension about this, as, according to her, "[t]he way it's been planned or presented to museums is that it wouldn't take any of their resources". At a later point of the interview, she added, "the only thing that we wanted to have is free entry, for ten people, few times a year – that's not much for a big museum".

The background for this is the strategy of lowering the threshold to arts and cultures by creating the approach in a DIY, bottom-up way. In the case of Loukko's Museokerho, this DIY-approach means that instead of booking an official exhibition guide, some of Loukko's members familiarise themselves with the exhibition they want to visit beforehand in order to provide some background information for the participants in situ.



Figure 2. Museokerho's logo, made by Vilja Joensuu. Photo: Mika Paananen.

As Nova, another member of Loukko who is helping with Museokerho, indicated, the exclusivity of galleries and museums is not just about the participants, but also about "who is presented and given space in the art scene and who is not". Raising awareness of this problem is something Vilja envisions for Museokerho:

> I would like to include in the Museokerho more of this kind of critical thinking about arts, like, what the background and the --- what you [Nova] said about representing, who is being represented and everything, but then again, to not make it too theoretical, to make it easily accessible, even for a first contact to looking at art in a museum, and then finding the balance of having this analytical ideas about art and power and stuff – it's difficult thing to kind of balance.

However, despite the struggle of finding a balance between providing enough information, prompting a critical discussion and yet making sure that it does not drift into theoretical and potentially exclusive realms, Nova and Vilja considered the above-mentioned bottom-up approach as a way to solve this. One reason for this is that non-professionals are more capable of creating an atmosphere in which participants do not feel inferior, or as Vilja put it:

> Yeah, but that's really important part about accessibility to arts, that you have to --- that it's not something that everyone just has to understand without knowing anything, like, that you have to be a philosopher or ehm, a historian or something, or super intelligent and artistic to enjoy art, but that it's something that can be talked about.

This is especially true if participants cannot connect with a piece of art, as becomes clear in a memory Nova shared with me about an experience he had at one Museokerho:

> I had a really nice discussion in the museum the last time we went there, because, [one participant] were annoyed about a piece of art that they thought was, eh, at the same time they felt like 'I'm feeling stupid and maybe this is too difficult for me, but I'm also angry, because this feels insignificant, like, this doesn't say anything to me'.

As Nova explained, he also could not explain the piece of art, even though he found it interesting as such, but then he and the participant discussed discussed "how not every art piece is meant, like, you don't have to understand everything (…) it is okay if it doesn't speak to you". Nova concluded: "I think it was also a point for me to learn, to not try to explain something, but to be like, 'Yeah, that's totally valid that you think like that (…)"

Just as Vilja described it to be the case for Loukko on a general level, Museokerho's strengths also stem from the fact that it is created by people for people, i.e., from within a group of potentially marginalised and vulnerable people for people like them. As I elaborated above, this has the potential to create an open atmosphere in which people can get involved with art regardless of their social and educational background, in which they feel safe enough to admit the fact that something does not speak to them.

Another pillar of Museokerho, which sets it apart from institutional guided tours, is that it is supposed to follow the same safer space principles as other Loukko activities. In practise, this means, for example, that Loukko's members are aware of sensitive topics that could come up during a discussion. However, as Nova and Vilja discussed, the implementation of a safer space might become challenging when keeping events open to everyone. As Nova explained:

> Because there is a lot of people who are not very familiar with queerstuff or safer spaces policies or stuff like that, and still kinda are in our target group, like they don't go to museums and maybe they would like to, but they still can share different morals or something like that.

Having constellations of participants with differing opinions, experiences or just levels of awareness of certain issues could cause conflicts or unpleasant situations, both at Loukko in general and Museokerho in particular. Nova ponders:

> Yeah, I guess it's about, the tricky thing for me maybe is the balance, like, how to give a chance for people to, like, who wouldn't know about that stuff, to get to know about it, but at the same time, people who are very familiar with all the stuff that is being discussed and maybe it's very personal to them, to talk about queer things for example, eh, so that they feel safe at the same time, without feeling, like --- "Now we have to teach these people about this thing that I have to face all the time in my everyday life", and, well, that's very difficult, how to balance that. Most of the times I don't think anything really bad happens, but of course, especially when we are looking at art, there can be themes that bring something up that somebody says something, and then it's like, OK, now we have to

> --- (Vilja: Yep, yep.) we can't let this just pass, we have to do something about this, what was just said.

As Museokerho was such a new programme at the time of the interviews, Vilja and Nova were still working on the challenges they addressed. However, I see the potential of solving them once more by having a bottom-up strategy. As Museokerho is organised from within the group, Loukko's members are closer to the participants than employees of art and culture institutions would normally be. They are aware of potential group-specific issues that could arise, are more sensitised to them and thus likely to be more capable of reacting to them accordingly.

The Institutional Perspective

The potential of Museokerho was also recognised by Minna, head of the public programmes at the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, which is part of the Finnish National Gallery. She was one of the few who reacted to Vilja's e-mail request positively and granted free admission to the Museokerho groups. One of her reasons had to do with her understanding of the limitations of big institutions such as Kiasma:

> We have this burden of being a big institution, we are too big and too scary for some groups; even if we want to be inclusive in very many different ways, we cannot reach these groups who might be very, ehm, excluded from the community, so then this National Gallery is not the first thing they approach.

According to her, it therefore was "built into the Kiasma concepts since the beginning" to put a lot of emphasis on collaborating with outside groups. As an example, she told me that Kiasma worked with the Finnish Red Cross and their volunteer friend visitors throughout 2019. This programme aimed at connecting volunteers with people "looking for human contact".[6] Minna described Kiasma's contribution:

> (…) The only thing we did was that we educated these friends for museum-visits, how to, eh, visit a museum, and gave them some ideas how to approach art and what kind of things is possible to talk about in art. And then they come together with their friends, this volunteer friends and their friends, and it can be --- people who are lonely, or people who are, maybe have some mental disorders, or many many many different backgrounds. So, this is one way for an institution to make it very personal, but we have to – because we are an institution, we have to take a step back, and let these people who have this trust relation to these people to come together, and then we step back and in a way we lose the control, but we trust them.

6. Available at https://www.redcross.fi/get-involved/join-friend-visitors [Last accessed 2 July 2019]

According to Minna, the strategy that Kiasma applies to Loukko is "exactly the same as [they] use for example together with the Red Cross", though on a smaller scale. A few days before I met Minna, she and Loukko had a meeting to discuss their experiences with Museokerho. As Minna told me, she decided to continue their collaboration for another half a year. She even extended the agreement so that Loukko's members could join info events held for teachers to introduce them to the new exhibitions. According to her, Kiasma receives hundreds of requests for collaboration, but as she had heard of Loukko from somewhere in social media before, and was impressed by their ideas and professional attitude, she decided to help them. She explained:

> So for Kiasma, it's like a very easy and small way to help, but for participants it can be --- huge. (…) I have this principle, if I can help someone in fifteen minutes, I do it. If it's possible to help, so… I also saw that this is very easy way to help them on their way to something good.

Throughout our interview, Minna expressed awareness of both the limitations of big institutions like Kiasma, and in turn the potential of small organisations such as Loukko. Therefore, she explained, when she told Loukko's members that from now on they could join info events on new exhibitions, she reminded them to stay independent:

> Yes, and they were so active and interested and motivated so that is why I invited them to be part of our system, but we laughed and said that they cannot be *too close* to the institution, because they don't --- I warned them, "Don't *be* the institution, because that is why you are a treasure, because you are *not* the institution!" That is why --- "Don't marry us, but use us!" (Interviewer laughs) "Because if you are too close, you are not Loukko anymore!"
>
> (…) I want them to be on the *side* of the institution, but not part of the institution, because we *need* the city and these --- because we have the same goals with these groups. So, I'm not jealous, I don't need to do that myself as a representant (sic) of an institution (…). It's very OK for me if they are the persons who lower the threshold. For me, the main idea is that they get in contact with art. And if they don't need me more than this, it's fine.

In the interview, it became clear that Minna was aware of the different dimensions of accessibility and challenges connected to it. She pointed towards Kiasma's Equality Plan (2018), which aims to make the gallery and its services "socially, physically, culturally and economically" accessible, "taking the diversification of society into account", and emphasises a "zero tolerance for bullying, harassment and discrimination". Despite this, Minna and the above-mentioned Equality Plan acknowledge the lack of diversity in Kiasma's staff as a factor that poses a challenge to their aims. Therefore, collaborating with outside groups not only helps Kiasma in reaching otherwise unreachable visitor groups, but also in adding more heterogeneous perspectives, experiences and values to its agenda.

The Participant's Perspective

As stated above, I consider Loukko and its Museokerho to be able to reach people that institutions would not be able to reach because of their very institutional, high-threshold nature. I argued that the strength of Museokerho lies in its bottom-up approach, which is why it is perceived to be different from similar, institutional offers. As Vilja put it: "(…) if it was someone from the institution providing a service of the institution to a group that is visiting, is very different than, like, an independent group going in and operating [there]."

This becomes apparent in the responses to my questionnaire, in which I asked about the participants' experiences with and at museums and galleries, Museokerho in particular.

To begin with, four out of four respondents indicated that they would like to go more often to museums and galleries. Among the top things that prevented them from doing so was that they did not know what was going on, but also that they lacked company to go with and that it was hard to motivate themselves to go. Those reasons were each chosen by two out of four respondents, followed by a lack of money and the feeling of not being welcome, indicated by one respondent each.

It is all the more encouraging to see that half of the respondents did in fact come alone to Museokerho, and also in the open answers several respondents acknowledged that Museokerho motivates them to go to museums,[7] even if they go alone.[8] One participant gave a possible reason for this and described Museokerho as something that "easily takes you in", something that is easy to join and become a part of, where you can "just be yourself".[9] When asked where they see the main difference between Museokerho and similar offers of art and cultural institutions, one respondent characterised Museokerho as "more social and more relaxed", and as a place where it is easy to get to know the other participants.[10] The fact that social aspect of Museokerho played a prominent role in the responses also supports Minna's understanding of Museokerho as "a platform for meeting, (…) a safe platform in a museum and art environment".

Besides this social aspect of Museokerho, participants appreciated the way it was organised by Loukko. As said twice in the responses, Loukko's members were praised for being "inspiring and top-notch congenial leaders"[11] and "wonderful guides who provide interesting points as a background".[12] Another respondent

7. *Idea on ihana, ja museokerho motivoi lähtemään museoon*. (Response to survey)
8. *Luulen, että kyseinen toiminta helpottaa lähtemistä käymään museoissa ja gallerioissa. Jos ei ole esim ystäviä tai perhettä, jotka olisivat kiinnostuneita lähtemään kanssasi ja itse et haluaisi yksinään lähteä*. (Response to survey)
9. *Helposti mukaansa ottava ryhmä, jossa saa olla aivan kuten on*. (Response to survey)
10. *Sosiaalisempi ja rennompi tapahtuma, Museokerhossa tutustuu helposti myös toisiin kerholaisiin*. (Response to survey)
11. *Innostavat ja huippu sympaattiset vetäjät* (Response to survey)
12. *… loistavat vetäjät ja mielenkiintoiset kohteet, joista vetäjillä hyvät taustatiedot*. (Response

explained that they enjoyed that at Museokerho, "things are gone through mainly from the viewer's angle and the discussion is created organically, while including different viewpoints". They added that while "more formal open doors are, of course, a fantastic opportunity to visit the galleries, they lack that special feeling".[13]



Figure 3. Photo at exhibition 'Pawel Althamer – I Am' at Helsinki Art Museum. Photo: Mika Paananen.

Above, I already touched upon the differences between Museokerho and similar institutional offers, primarily regarding their ability to reach different audiences. In my survey, I asked if the respondents had participated in similar open events or guided tours that were organised by museums and galleries themselves, which three out of four had not. When asked what had been the reasons that stopped them from participating, the answers reflected various aspects. One of them answered that they had not come across similar offers,[14] another that they prefer going at their own pace at museums,[15] and the third that they had not been involved because there are often too many people attending.[16]

Going back to Loukko's own surveys, one of the big issues mentioned there, that of seeing gender-normative, binary spaces as an obstacle, did not show in my results. On the other hand, aspects such as not having money to go or finding it difficult due to a person's social capabilities, were addressed in both Loukko's and my surveys. However, given the small scale of my own survey, it is hard to draw broader conclusions. Especially regarding such sensitive topics, it would have most likely brought more valid results if I had done qualitative interviews with Museokerho's participants. In such personal interviews, I could

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to survey)

13. *Loukon museokerhossa käydään läpi asioita lähinnä katsojan kuvakulmasta ja keskustelua syntyy suhteellisen helposti näkemyksistä. Ns. "virallisemmat" avoimet ovet ovat toki upea mahdollisuus käydä katsomassa gallerioita, mutta siitä uupuu se jokin fiilis*. (Response to survey)
14. *Ei ole tullut vastaan samanlaista mahdollisuutta*. (Response to survey)
15. *Kuljen mieluummin omaa tahtiani museoissa*. (Response to survey)
16. *En ole osallistunut, koska sellaisissa on usein turhan paljon ihmisiä*. (Response to survey)

have followed up on issues that are mentioned only briefly and superficially in the survey, to get a deeper understanding of the participant's thoughts on cultural institutions and Museokerho. Despite this, I find the insights gained through my case study to be thought-provoking as such, and hope that they stir or contribute to further discussion on the (in-)accessibility of museums, galleries and other cultural institutions.

Museokerho in a Larger Context – Discussion

By presenting the results from my research in the group Loukko, I illustrated how museums, galleries and other cultural institutions are perceived as unwelcoming and excluding to certain groups of people, for instance people who feel discriminated against because of their look, their social or educational background or their sexual and gender identification.

Going through different guidelines of museums and related organisations that discuss aspects related to their accessibility, it becomes clear that accessibility is most commonly discussed in physical terms, which may be explained by it being more tangible than the social dimension of accessibility. As Wilson et al. put it, "[a]dapting and designing the built environment to be more inclusive for disabled people is well advanced", while "[u]nderstanding how the social and occupational environment can be adapted is more subtle and is often developed through education to raise awareness of diverse needs". As Wilson and his colleagues conclude, this task may be challenging, but "is best facilitated by the active involvement" of the people aimed for (Wilson et al. 2015, p. 203).

This relates to participatory practices at museums and similar institutions, for instance when curating exhibitions, a practice that, as Sarraf and Bruno describe, "arose from the need to connect with various audiences" (Sarraf & Bruno 2015, p. 239). In another paper, the same authors explained that by involving underrepresented publics in participatory curatorship projects, museums may learn to "understand their wants and needs" and consequently, be transformed into "more accessible spaces for all visitors" (Sarraf & Bruno 2013, p. 104). The value of co-creation as part of museum work is also discussed in this volume, by pointing out how such practice may benefit neighbourhoods and groups "left behind in cultural services" (see Salo, this volume), but also how it may transform museums into visitor-friendly spaces that acknowledge visitors to be more than passive knowledge receivers, but rather active participants and co-creators of knowledge (see Viita-aho, this volume).

Even if it is not about involving outside groups in the actual curation of exhibitions, it should be in the very interest of a museum or gallery to reach the widest possible range of audiences. As Kaitavuori (this volume) pointed out, the question of which audience to aim for may become a delicate one, once different stakeholders, such as external funding bodies, are involved. However, it still remains one of the main purposes of a museum to "communicate[s] and exhibit[s] the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment

for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment", as defined in the ICOM Statutes of 2007.[17]

There are various ways of implementing this goal of addressing a broad audience, for instance by inclusive educational programmes such as the one described by Chiovatto and Aidar for the Pinacoteca de São Paulo, Brazil. One part of their strategy is a *Sociocultural Inclusion Programme* that aims for different "groups in situations of social vulnerability", for instance by organising "ongoing educational visits and partnerships" with those groups, or by offering training courses and educational publications for social workers (Chiovatto & Aidar 2015, p. 79).

To some extent, Loukko's Museokerho could be seen in line with this. However, the significant difference lies in Loukko's bottom-up approach, relying on themselves instead of asking for an expert from the museum to guide visitors through the exhibitions. As I pointed out when presenting my empirical data, this strategy has to do with the inhibition some people feel towards institutions. Implementing museum visits in a decidedly grassroot, DIY manner serves as a way to acknowledge the need of certain people for a specifically non-institutional approach, even though the activities might take place inside an institutional setting. While the Ethical Guidelines of the UK's Museums Association see a possible response to people who "do not feel that museum visiting is for them" lying in "services such as outreach, the internet or publishing" (Museums Association, p. 4), I suggest that institutions and experts stepping back and handing over some of the control to users could be another way to go. Strategies like the one suggested here, form another possibility of museums lowering their institutional voice and sharing their power (see Viita-aho, this volume).

One prerequisite for this is the step of accepting one's own inability to reach certain groups as an institution and acknowledging the ability of others to do so. The next step is to be available to enable and help those others in their work, to become "platforms for practices" (see also Viita-aho, this volume), as a result of understanding and appreciating the deeper meaning and value behind bottom-up, DIY museum work.

As I showed with my research on Loukko and their Museokerho, there indeed is a demand for such bottom-up approaches. There are groups of people who do not feel welcome at cultural institutions, but who would still want to go there and who would certainly benefit from it.

Loukko's surveys indicated that many of the people who come to Loukko's events already are, or are at risk of becoming, marginalised from society due to various reasons, as described earlier. Being in such a marginalised position poses a considerable risk to people's mental well-being.

17. Available at http://icom.museum/en/activities/standards-guidelines/museum-definition/ [Last accessed 11 July 2019]

Simultaneously, several studies like those by Secker et al. (2018), Hacking et al. (2008) or Thrash et al. (2010) discuss how participating in activities related to art contributes to people's well-being, particularly their mental well-being. Furthermore, as Secker et al. describe, "learning has in itself been demonstrated to be associated with well-being", with lifelong learning being recommended "as a means of boosting self-confidence, building a sense of purpose and optimism and strengthening relationships with others, thus promoting mental well-being" (Secker et al. 2018, p. 82; Thomson et al. 2014). Meanwhile, the majority of studies related to art and well-being seem to focus on "art used as a medium of expression" within the framework of therapy, "rather than art that has been viewed from gallery collections" (Roberts et al. 2011, p. 146). In their article, Roberts et al. present different effects that viewing art can have on people, such as "mentalising", which they describe as empathising with others, or finding "coping strategies, such as going to a place of beauty for emotional respite" (Roberts et al. 2011, p. 152).

In my research material, I did not find immediate evidence that would support such claims regarding the mental well-being of Museokerho's participants. Some reasons for this might be that the scale of my study was rather small, and as I mentioned earlier, additional research methods could likely have brought more detailed insights into the experiences of participants of Loukko's Museokerho.

However, I did show that there are a considerable number of people who would benefit from going to museums and galleries, but who experience barriers of different kinds, which often prevent this. Members of Loukko understood this perceived inaccessibility of cultural institutions, as many of them share those experiences and feelings with their participants. With their project, Loukko in general and Museokerho in particular, they try to lower the threshold to arts and culture. The central driver is Loukko's grassroot nature, by organising everything in a bottom-up, DIY way. They do not become part of the institutions, but use them, as one representative of a collaborating art gallery even recommended them to do. This is what sets them aside from institutional participatory practices, and this is also what makes them valuable, both to their users and to the museums themselves.

The Museums Association asks museums to not just speak to users, but also to listen and learn from them (Museums Association s.a., p. 2). However, how can a museum listen to and learn from people who are not among their existing audience? People for whom going to museums holds a high threshold need people who are closer to them, who help them to overcome any personal barriers. As the above-mentioned representative of an art gallery acknowledged, institutions can learn a lot from collaborating with outside groups, as this adds to institutions' inner diversity. This is an inner diversity whose importance was also acknowledged implicitly by Pettersson (this volume), when she reflected on recruitment practices in museum circles. It is thus in the interest of institutions to involve outside groups, even if those groups require a certain degree of independence and freedom from the given institution. As the example from my

study showed, museums can still contribute by supporting those people who serve as facilitators between marginalised groups and the museum, for instance by granting free admission to those groups, as something to start with, or even by providing insights into the exhibitions for those facilitators such as Loukko.

Contributions to this volume show how museums have changed; they have come a long way from being a "collections-based and object-centred organisation to visitor-oriented museums" (Kaitavuori, this volume), from having the focus on the "exhibition object to [the] visitor experience" and thus to an "experience production" (Myllykoski, this volume). A lot has been achieved and though acknowledging and approving those changes, my article attempts to point out a possible blind spot in museum work. I wish to support Pettersson's plea for museums "to be ready to change their practises and ways of communicating and [to] show economic, social, cultural and political awareness" also by respecting, and I may add, by reacting to, the individual needs of people who are the ones making the museum (Pettersson, this volume).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I first illustrated how inaccessible the arts and cultural institutions may feel to certain groups of people, and then discussed one example of a strategy to overcome this issue.

I relied on different sources. First, I used the official guidelines of museums and related organisations to shed light on the limited perspective on accessibility that appears to still be the predominant one. Second, I drew on novel, empirical data of my own research on a group of activists in Helsinki, named Loukko, that tries to lower the threshold of the arts and culture by offering workshops and visits to museums and galleries that are organised in a DIY, grassroot way. Supported by material gathered through different surveys and a social media campaign, I showed how such bottom-up strategy has the potential to reach groups that cultural institutions cannot easily reach, and facilitate access to the arts and culture for such groups.

One aspect that plays a crucial role in this is the principle of safer spaces, which may allow people who have encountered discrimination due to their background to feel safe as who they are. I claimed that such safer spaces cannot be created artificially but have to grow from within the group. This forms the strength of Loukko's operations, as was also acknowledged by one institution that collaborates with it. As my case-study showed, such bottom-up approaches to museums and galleries does not need to take much of institutions' resources but can still be highly meaningful on a personal level for people at risk of being marginalised from society. From an institutional perspective, such collaborations offer the possibility to reach out to otherwise hard-to-reach groups and add a degree of diversity and unfamiliar perspectives to the museum scene.

However, for making such projects possible, institutions need to become aware of the limitations of their own abilities to reach out to people who feel intim-

idated by and excluded from them. I argue that arts and cultural institutions should not be afraid to hand over control to outside groups. They should grant open access to their spaces and otherwise step back to let groups create their own usage of and meanings for museum spaces. As my case-study showed, this strategy appears to benefit everyone involved, by increasing the accessibility of the arts and culture.

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What Finland Taught Me about Doing History in Public

Benjamin Filene

Abstract

For five months, I, an American museum professional, explored Finland, seeking new understandings of what the public in public history could mean. In my time there, I drew connections between key qualities I observed in Finnish museums and the rituals and routines of the public life I saw unfolding around me. I found underlying differences between US and Finnish society, but also identified transferable insights about what constitutes a public. Even as a sense of public is characterised by a shared place, collective experiences and common values, I concluded that, fundamentally, it is grounded in trust – a willingness by individuals and institutions to admit uncertainty, share expertise and invite open-ended exploration, together.

Keywords: public history, civic engagement, collective identity, comparative museology

Searching for Public Culture

In many ways, Finland could not feel more remote from my home in North Carolina. Through a Fulbright fellowship, I arrived in Helsinki in January 2019 and faced bracing cold and enveloping darkness, the language seemed hopelessly spikey and impenetrable and the grocery store felt like a culinary roll of the dice. Professionally, too, I was in unfamiliar territory. The public funding model for museums, the curricular training standards for aspiring professionals, even the school-fieldtrip routines challenged my assumptions.

I spent five months in Finland, working with the Helsinki City Museum (HCM) and the University of Helsinki's Museum Studies programme. If I arrived onto unfamiliar terrain, I left with a feeling of common ground, of shared questions and concerns. I carried away a fresh sense of possibility for my work, an enriched understanding of the core elements that grounded it and new tools for cultivating change. Now back home, I am overlaying my Finnish visions on familiar American landscapes and seeing what patterns take shape. This essay itself is part of that process. Appropriate to the Fulbright program's ethos of collegial exchange, open exploration and personal growth, I focus here on positive lessons. I came to Helsinki not to mount a scholarly critique of Finnish museums, but to gain fresh perspectives on American culture and to reinvigorate my museum practice. This essay, then, is not a studied assessment of the state of the museum field in Finland. Rather, it is a personal reflection in which I strive to identify

core principles and an animating sense of purpose for my public work. These lessons emerged from my time in Finland but, I feel, could be useful to the work of any museum professional.

I arrived in Finland carrying two broad challenges from home. One was a problem that hits at the core of the public historical profession: many Americans, scarred by tedious experiences in classroom and museums, see history as remote and distant, unrelated to their lives. A second challenge was more diffuse but no less impactful: in America, our sense of ourselves as a collective body with shared interests, as a public, has become fractured. I came to Finland hoping to learn how history can undergird a sense of public and how museums can help.

Attuned to these issues, I felt public-ness everywhere I turned in Finland: an embrace of shared experience, an acceptance of collective investment and a sense of connectedness to a whole. Whether walking the streets, working in or visiting museums or talking to students and faculty, I tried to account for what I was sensing. If Finland somehow has brewed up a healthy public life, I asked myself, what are the ingredients? I've built this essay around my answers, in each case citing examples from Finnish culture beyond the galleries and then from within the museum world. I draw mostly on Finnish museums, but also incorporate some examples from other European countries I visited during my fellowship stay. While I certainly don't pretend to understand Finland as an insider, perhaps these conclusions can help Finnish professionals see their day-to-day work in a broader context and can prompt non-Finns to consider what makes public life thrive or fracture in their home countries.

So, what makes a public? First, most simply, public is a place. Of course, online publics exist as well, but in Finland I was most struck by and interested in Finns' embrace of open, designed spaces for people to gather. I arrived in the country shortly after the opening of the new public library in Helsinki, the Oodi. More than the books, magazines or music collections the library offers, the building itself was a cause for national celebration, a place where people sit, wander, drink coffee, eat, sew, do 3D printing, hear concerts, read some and most of all, observe each other doing all of the above.

Finnish museums, too, have begun to embrace the idea of being places for open-ended gathering. To take a simple example, I noted with admiration that seemingly every museum of any size has a substantial café, usually with real (not paper) plates and cups and delicious *pulla*. Patrons are invited not just to learn but to linger together. Building on that gathering-place impulse, the Helsinki City Museum, the country's most visited museum in 2018, has embraced the idea that its lobby is for people to hang out and do whatever. With no admission fee, it offers funky chairs, an in-house coffee shop, jigsaw puzzles and, again, people-watching. Former director of HCM, Tiina Merisalo told me that in designing the museum's new building (which opened in 2016), the project team saw serving pass-through visitors as central to its public-service role; the museum didn't need to have an explicit didactic purpose for this space.

But if we see museums as settings for public gathering, spaces where people can see themselves together, there is still the question: How do we activate a place, make it more than just a container of people? For as much as it depends on place, public is an experience, something we do together in shared space. I saw so many memorable public happenings in Helsinki. I was enthralled by Lux Helsinki, when thousands braved the January cold to see colourful outdoor light installations across the city. To celebrate the last day of high school classes, hundreds of students don furry costumes and circle the city park in the cargo beds of bright orange trucks, tossing candy to the thousands who cheer them on. For *Vappu*, a May Day carnival that marks university graduation, seemingly the whole city gathers to watch students, lowered by crane, place a graduation cap on the statue *Havis Amanda*. After a night of revelry, the next morning everyone reconvenes for a mass picnic at Kaivopuisto park (figure 1). Even the national embrace of the sauna illustrates the point: Finns gather not just to sweat, not just to sit side by side in towels (or not in towels) but to follow a series of ritualised steps, spoken and unspoken, together in a shared space.



Figure 1. Public celebrations invite shared experience. Helsinki residents gather for a picnic at Kaivopuisto after Vappu, 2019. Photo by the author.

Museums, too, have begun to build experiences, discovery and exploration, into their plans. When I arrived in Helsinki, lines to enter the Amos Rex museum spilled out the door and around the block. The attraction? The museum had installed *Graffiti Nature*, an animated swirl of colour from floor to ceiling created by the Tokyo-based artists *teamLab*. Touching the walls reshaped the swirls and launched flowers and colourful waves. In a side room, meanwhile, visitors of all ages calmly coloured on old-fashioned paper. A staff person then scanned their pictures and soon their coloured creations joined the scene, animated, literally moving across the room.



Figure 2. Exhibitions can become participatory experiences. In teamLab's *Graffiti Nature* at Amos Rex in Helsinki, touching the walls shaped swirls of colour. Photo by the author.

Such experiences are designed to produce a sense of wonder. Part of the attraction, too, is that visitors can participate in the wonderful. I saw multiple instances where museums invited visitors to insert themselves into the story. The National Museum, for instance, features a very staid-looking photo gallery of Finland's presidents. In a twist, though, visitors can snap a selfie in an adjacent photo booth, and then their image soon fills the open frame: the next president! More simply, the Design Museum allows visitors to fill a wall with a projection of the Marimekko backdrop of their choice and then, of course, pose in front of it. Not all such immersion opportunities are high-tech. At the HCM, visitors can stand behind cut-outs to see how they would look in 1930s-era swimwear.

Such participatory experiences invite engagement but also raise a question: Is coming together enough? How do we interact with each other in such settings and turn an adjacent experience into a collective one? In this sense, I feel that public is a value, an outlook that shapes how we see our fellow citizens, not just the ones we already know and love, but the ones we don't know or even directly see. This is perhaps the most challenging aspect of building public culture, to shift from tolerating each other to caring about each other.

My sense is that public-ness in Finland is sustained by a set of deeply held cultural values. While teaching a graduate class on museum management at the University of Helsinki, I got a glimpse of a more collectivist value system at work. I had assigned Jim Collins's book *Good to Great and the Social Sectors* (2005), which challenges the notion of applying business practices bluntly to non-profit (social sector) work. Non-profits, Collins says, carry different value systems and different definitions of success than do for-profit corporations. At the same time, Collins urges the social sectors to take to heart some lessons from their business brethren: discover your distinctive niche in society, be the very best at what you do and push people off the bus who don't share your passion for where you are taking your institution.

I have taught using Collins's book many times in the US, and have had good discussions with students about how passionate, mission-driven work can enable

museums to become standout institutions in their communities. My Finnish students, though, pushed back against the very notion of standing out: "Why does every institution need to be great anyway?" one asked. Echoed another, "If everyone is trying to be great, they might tear each other down." "What about the common good?" added a third. The group was also uncomfortable with Collins's cut-throat approach to staff-building: "What happens to the people who get pushed off the bus?"

For me, the students' discomfort was a great instance of cross-cultural dialogue yielding new perspectives. The experience raised questions that resist easy answers. For starters, the dialogue made me wonder about my home country. If it is true, as this conversation suggested, that Finns have a more collectivist mindset than Americans, will other aspects of Finland's approach to public history fail to take root in a more individualistic country like the United States? Or might Finnish techniques apply in America, but yield different results? Is it necessary (or even possible) for public history professionals to nudge Americans toward more collective ways of thinking?

At the same time, my exchanges with students, and follow-up conversations I had afterwards with Finnish professionals, left me with questions about Finland. How does a country that embraces the common good allow room for difference? How does it balance equality with innovation? Can a strong collective identity accommodate diversity and dissent? I heard these questions of individualism vs. conformity discussed among Finns whom I met, but I did not see them addressed in museums. The exhibitions I visited tended instead to focus on emblems and stories of shared identity among Finns. Could such displays also explore the limits and potential drawbacks of shared culture? Doing so could point the way forward to a more fluid collective identity that allows room for cultural differences.

Personally, I don't believe that a collective mindset inherently breeds uniformity. To guard against the pressures of homogeneity, though, I think it is helpful to recognize that, at a basic level, public is a question, an ongoing, shared process of inquiry. I was struck by how even within (or because of?) Finland's comfort with shared identity, the culture has elements that invite and nurture open questioning. For instance, my favourite Finnish phrase is "Put the cat on the table", i.e., move the lurking issue front and centre. For all the messiness of the contemporary political situation in Finland, I found a general acceptance that hard conversations will lead to acceptable resolutions, even if the underlying issues will, of course, not be resolved once and for all.

Finnish museums, too, seem to be embracing the need to ask difficult questions for which there is no one answer. The HCM, for instance, did an exhibition called *Fear* that asked people to confront the lurking anxieties that they carry and how fear can potentially turn into hate. In its public programming, the Espoo Museum of Modern Art (EMMA) tackles another intractable issue: loneliness. After discussing an artwork in which the artist cries out for human connection, children write *Postcards to a Lonely Stranger*, which the staff then delivers. More than in America, I saw a frankness in how Finnish museums approach their visitors.

The Helsinki Art Museum made an exhibition called *Old Age* that directly addressed how aging changes one's body and creates physical limits. In Tallinn, Estonia, I saw *Sex and the Sea* (an exhibition that had previously appeared at the Maritime Museum of Finland), which featured video interviews in which sailors matter-of-factly discussed prostitution and homosexuality on ships. Few institutions in America would dare tackle these subjects head-on.

Other difficult topics, though, struck me as getting relatively short shrift in the Finnish museums I visited. In American museums today, the most urgent creative energy is devoted to delving into the histories and legacies of racial exploitation and privilege. In Finland, I did not see a similar emphasis on understanding the legacies of prejudice against the Sámi or the challenges facing recent immigrants to the country. I was moved by an exhibition featuring Sámi oral histories at the Arktikum in Rovaniemi and by an extensive display about Sámi history at the Nordic Museum in Stockholm. (I failed to make it to Inari to visit the Sámi Museum and Nature Centre there.) But I felt that the central history museums in the country tended to treat the Sámi as somehow separate from the core story of Finland. My sense is that there are issues of identity and intersection that would merit further exploration.

Overall, though, Finnish museums do seem to be asking hard questions in public. But if you ask difficult questions, how do you convey an openness to hearing the answers? Here one realizes that, at its heart, public is an invitation. This attitude seems to imbue official culture in Finland. Whereas the institutional voice in America defaults to the instructional or the scolding (Stay in line!, Don't touch!), the official Finnish voice often strikes an explicitly inclusive tone. For instance, while most American libraries list rules about food, drink, and silence, the Oodi posts a sign titled "This is how we do it here". It pledges non-discrimination, respect and comfort. "Oodi is our common living room," it asserts. "Tell us if you are worried about something." The renovated Helsinki City Hall (opened in 2019) likewise is conceived as a gathering place where everyone has a voice. A large magnetic board in the lobby asks, "How does Helsinki feel today?" and invites visitors to place magnets along a mood continuum, ranging from "wonderful" to "ghastly."

Museums, too, are increasingly allowing room for different voices to have their say. At Aboa Vetus, in Turku, schoolchildren wrote the exhibit labels for the paintings. Refreshingly, the students openly wrestled with how to make sense of abstract art: "This is great because I just don't get it." The Finnish Labour Museum in Tampere is built around a series of questions: "Should working hours be cut instead of raising salaries?" "Should armed resistance be used against dictators?" Via touchscreens, visitors vote and then see how their answers compare to those who came before. Through such activities, museums invite visitors to join in as interpreters of history. These participatory interactives de-centre the museum's expert voice and encourage visitors to consider the validity of their own experiences and viewpoints.

Along those lines, many Finnish museums have become quite purposeful in inviting visitors to explore personal memories. Instead of disparaging remembrances as subjective and ahistorical, museums seek to encourage visitors' recollections and

to validate the results. The installations in the HCM's new building, for instance, are designed to prompt intergenerational memory-sharing. The *Children's Town* exhibition features Grandma's Living Room, a fully furnished, 1970s-era apartment. Visitors can walk in, sit down, and explore, but they don't meet Grandma. Instead, the space triggers conversations about their grandparents and the orange couches and canned soup in their apartments.

The HCM's core historical exhibition, *Helsinki Bites*, also aims to tap into memories. The gallery features settings of community gathering across time, from a 1930s picnic area to a 1970s bar to a 2000-era skateboard park. These settings will not likely mean much to tourists and newcomers, but they resonate immediately with the museum's target audience, whom the staff describes as "Helsinki-lovers". Resisting the temptation to have an expert curatorial voice explain the historical details, these installations invite cross-generational sharing about lived experience and how it has changed over time.

A similar emphasis on memory drives HCM's public programming. The museum hosts monthly events in which people gather to sing songs from their youth (in Children's Town's reconstructed schoolroom). The Tram Museum, an HCM satellite site, hosts tours for people struggling with memory loss, recognizing that the old trams carry deeply embedded associations. Finally, the HCM staff has assembled a set of Memory Suitcases that volunteers carry to retirement communities. The suitcases are packed with items that prompt discussion and shared recollection, from old photos to kitchen tools to distinctive scents. Such invitations to personalize the past tell visitors that their opinion matters.



Figure 3. Museums can be places to share memories. The Helsinki City Museum hosts monthly sing-alongs of traditional songs in its galleries. Photo by the author.

But if museums invite responses to big, open-ended questions, what if people answer differently than we'd like them to? Here, it becomes clear that public is about trust. Trust in the public, and trust in each other, is a value that seems to

run deeply through Finnish society. It's what enables the Kallio Public Library in Helsinki to let patrons check out a banjo. It's what allows Oulu Airport to set out coloured pencils to entertain children waiting for a flight and what enables the HCM to place a 1000-piece puzzle in its lobby for visitors to work on a bit at a time. To extend the point, trust is what allows Finnish teachers to teach without direct oversight and students to learn without endless homework and testing.

At its core, trust depends on a willingness to accept a degree of uncertainty and vulnerability, to recognize that few things are absolutely indestructible, few spaces absolutely safe, few measurements absolutely precise and few assertions absolutely without exception. Instead of pretending certainty, we are better served by sharing openly and trusting that our efforts will be met with reciprocal respect.

In museums, trust manifests in how institutions project their authority. More than in America, Nordic museums seem willing to hold their authority loosely, to be up-front about the fact that we professionals don't have all the answers. I saw several exhibitions that strived to "pull back the curtain" and reveal how knowledge-formation works, including the fact that the museum itself has an incomplete and contingent understanding of the world. The Design Museum in Helsinki features an exhibition that questions how its own institutional history has skewed the gender balance in its collection and how that unevenness shapes the stories the museum can tell. The Finnish Museum of Natural History features life-sized profiles of the researchers who gathered the information in the exhibition. Knowledge, it shows, is made by people. In Stockholm, the Swedish History Museum's exhibition *History Unfolds* introduces the museum itself as a Reality Machine, one that creates history and reflects contemporary values and assumptions. It then offers visitors tools and case studies for thinking about how that process works. For instance, it traces how the popular image of Vikings says more about 19th-century nationalism than about the period when they were sailing the seas 1200 years ago. History becomes an act of interpretation.

Also in Stockholm, the Vasa museum, built around a seventeenth-century shipwreck, features a new exhibition that begins with a self-aware question about historical omission: "Where are the Women?" *Vasa's Women* goes on to explain that by asking new historical questions, using different research tools and allowing itself more freedom to speculate about individual lives, the museum was able to bring women's experience out of the shadows. The exhibition concludes with a pledge to apply these new skills in the future, even in exhibitions that are not focused on women.

Showing that professionals are piecing together the past may feel like a sign of institutional vulnerability, but these institutions seem to recognize that they can build trust by being transparent about what history-making involves. These museums become less all-knowing but more human and, perhaps, more essential to their constituencies.

Trust can be scary at times, but there is no question here, except how to engender it. I recognize that the idea of public in Finland is not simple and that it faces challenges today, both financial and cultural. Nonetheless, my Finnish explorations convinced me that if we can create institutions with a strong sense of place where people can gather for rich experiences, institutions that value togetherness and ask big questions, institutions that invite diverse responses and trust people to receive them in good faith, then we may build a strong yet fluid sense of us – a recognition that we matter to each other and belong together, as a public.

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Section IV

Exhibitions as Transmitters of Changing Museum Identities

This section concentrates on recent developments in exhibition production and attitudes towards the exhibition-making process in Finland. Transmitting a museum's identity and the knowledge contained in its collections into stories has been fundamental since the cabinets of curiosities, either for the purposes of amazement or education. Collecting and presenting have long been considered the main tasks of the museum institution (Pearce 1994). Already by the end of the 19th and the early 20th centuries, this operational pair underwent changes and the concept of museums being civil engines broadened (Pettersson 2020). As stated in section III, exhibitions and audience engagement are intertwined operations of museums. Clearly, exhibitions are often the main reason for audiences to visit a museum, but maybe one should examine the politics behind the scenes as well. Exhibition productions have been the visual form of a museum's identity, but the potential politics behind them have not often been discussed publicly. The question of selection needs addressing. One needs to bear in mind the role of power, and where it sits, when selecting themes and choosing objects to be presented in exhibitions. It is through such work that museums are able to show their stand in contemporary society. Addressing such issues as the history of colonialization, climate change or social equality are, in a more profound manner, entering the international museum field, and it is up to current and future museum professionals to create a welcoming atmosphere for all visitors. This task requires wisdom and sensitivity in an institution, whose core existence originates from an entirely different world. Exhibitions are one sector of museum work where this wisdom becomes tangible.

Recent decades have shown that museums are often faced with contemporary pressures in delivering a wow-factor through their exhibitions (Carlsson 2020). The combination of the latest technologies and the task of museums to produce true, often multivocal stories has resulted in an ever-growing industry of large-scale exhibition productions. There is a wide spectrum of means and various outcomes, depending on the particular characteristics of any given museum, but even smaller museums are expected to conform to the latest trends. This in turn may cause various practical stress factors in terms of production scales and budget planning.

The chapters in this section show practical examples of current exhibition planning and creation in Finland. Henna Paunu writes about the changing role of a curator, with her own personal reflection and long-term experience giving her a good perspective on the changing identity of a curator. Hanna Forssell takes the alteration of the permanent exhibition in the National Museum of Finland as her point of departure. What kind of challenges are there in attracting new audiences, when the starting point is permanence? Mikko Myllykoski's chapter describes the role and identity of science centres in the world of museums, how these centres attract visitors and work in the forefront of making science approachable to wider audiences. The expert role of the curator has been contested, and content planners are facing new challenges, whether they work in smaller or larger institutions. Sanna-Mari Niemi's chapter takes this line of thinking a bit further, with her point of departure being the possibilities of fictional storytelling

entering the realm of traditional, research-based content planning in museums. In addition, the latest developments in exhibition production, as well as the background work and politics behind the scenes required for any international co-operation to take place, are among the themes discussed, as becomes evident in Minna Tuominen's chapter. She focuses on how transhistorical content planning is helping to bridge art-historical eras. Furthermore, chapters in this section focus on the aspect of co-creation and how museum visitors are already becoming potential content makers.

Henna Paunu
Sharing Creative Efforts – Working as a curator in an art museum

Hanna Forssell
Looking for a New National

Mikko Myllykoski
From Object to Subject – Creating relevant and engaging experiences

Sanna-Mari Niemi
Entering the Mystery – *Helsinki Noir,* a fictional detective story created in a museum space

Minna Tuominen
About Transhistoricity – The Old Masters exhibited with contemporary art

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Sharing Creative Efforts – Working as a curator in an art museum

Henna Paunu

Abstract

The museum world has undergone radical changes in recent decades. The role of museums and the importance of curated contents has changed. Previously, the curator was more engaged in traditional museum practice such as acquiring, conserving and researching. Today, exhibition and audience engagement aspects are more emphasised.

Curatorial theories and practices encompass and are intertwined with social, cultural and ecological conditions. Single narratives in modern and contemporary art have come under question. Boundaries and hierarchies between different art forms have diminished. Issues of identity and representation have come to the fore, and renewed attention is paid to museums' responsibilities to their communities. Different political, economic and ecological pressures, such as awareness of climate change, have forced museums to shift their focus from traditional museological standard-based thinking towards interaction with audiences that have different realities and topical issues. The identity of curators has shifted from being only legislators or connoisseurs to mediators, interpreters and influencers. Could we in the future see curators working in the capacity of activists, or together with social workers?

The chapter explores the aspects of curating in a museum context through case studies from the Rauma Art Museum and EMMA – the Espoo Museum of Modern Art. What is the curator's role in exhibition profiling? What kinds of motives or competencies do we need in curating, and what kind of social effectiveness are we looking for? How do we rethink the role of the curator around material objects in relation to art practices and audiences? How do curators engage audiences and what sort of critical and transformative potentials can be traced to curatorial work? How do we listen to feedback from museum visitors?

Key words: art curator, curatorial practices, audience engaged curating, ethical curating, social museology, inclusive museum practises, multifaceted curatorial practise, mediator between art and audience

Introduction

The subjects of this chapter are the motifs of curating and the individual curator, along with the topical curatorial practises of an art museum context in Finland. I

discuss my work with exhibitions of contemporary art and modernist collections from the perspective of an in-house curator in two different art institutions. A discussion of other curatorial roles is beyond the scope of this text.[1] After a short introduction to the history of curating, I present three case studies, discussing both subjective viewpoints and more general issues relating to the curating of art exhibitions.

The first two cases involve a small, local museum, the Rauma Art Museum, where between 2001 and 2014 I co-curated a series of exhibitions for the Rauma Biennale Balticum, in addition to contemporary art exhibitions for children and young people, applying an exhibition concept developed for that specific purpose. The third example involves an art and design collection at EMMA, the Espoo Museum of Modern Art, where I took part in a multi-disciplinary collaboration that developed a new concept for the museum's collection. The concept is a spatial hybrid that, along with a collection storage facility, also includes a presentation of the work of museum professionals to museum audiences. The new space was opened in early 2017.

I discuss the case studies on the level of different motifs, concepts and principles, to illustrate the strategic and content-related components of which a curator's work could consist. In the conclusion, I link my role as curator to the wider museum field framework.

What Meanings Have There Been in Working as a Curator?

Many professionals working in museums and tasked with a variety of duties have the word curator in their job title.[2] Deriving from the Latin verb *curare*, the English term evolved to refer to a guardian or overseer. In the 14th century, the term curator was actually applied to people responsible for the care of minors and lunatics. By the 17th century, it had come to denote someone in charge of collections and displays in a museum, library or zoo.[3]

From the 18th and 19th centuries onwards, the usage of curator took hold as denoting professionals working with museum collections and in charge of nearly all processes, from the selection of acquisitions to cataloguing, research and exhibition planning, often even covering conservation. The notion of curators as guardians of visual culture and taste emerged in the late 19th century and became established by the mid-20th century. At that time the museum came also to be seen as a place of engagement and learning, where artists and cura-

1. For a broader account of curating through Finnish examples, see for example, Elfving, T & Hannula, M (eds.) 2017 *Kuratointi – Yhdeksän nykytaiteen kuratoinnin käytäntöä*. Tallinn: Kustannus Oy Taide.

2. Curator in the Finnish art museum context denotes a person who has the artistic responsibility for exhibitions, being in charge of content, concept and artist selection.

3. Definitions here are based on the *On-line Etymology Dictionary* available at www.etymonline.com [Last accessed 8 February 2021]

tors could together prepare experimental presentations. The role of a curator was also seen as an author, who started to play a vital and essential part in our understanding of art (George 2015, pp. 4–5). Curators established diverging practices as a result of close affiliation with contemporary artistic movements. They upheld different kinds of ideologies and strengthened the status of artists, museums and exhibitions, but also generated new audiences. These roles also had an educational dimension: visitors were taught curated content and curated ways of seeing, as well as learning how to behave in a museum (Morgan 2013, p. 23). Later, the pedagogical aspect of the curator's work decreased and new museum professionals working with education and audiences took responsibility of that area. It has sometimes been asked, whether these two professions – curators and educators – have drifted too far from each other in the course of their professionalisation (Kaitavuori 2013, pp. x–xiv).

Exhibition as a Medium

Former museum director and museology scholar, Marja-Liisa Rönkkö, defines an exhibition as follows: "A work produced by a museum is an exhibition, a three-dimensional installation consisting of the building, exhibition space and technology, as well as the materials displayed therein, and wherein visitors move at will" (Rönkkö 2010, p. 236, translation Tomi Snellman).

The process whereby art exhibitions have become a medium is associated with early 20th century modernism, when avant-garde artists created installations for the display of their works, reinventing the presentational conventions of art. Opposing institutional and bourgeois aspects of art, they made art more a part of everyday life and emphasised the viewer's role. From the 1960s onwards, art museums began to take a proactive role, serving as curatorial promoters of contemporary art and new forms of display. In the 1970s, inspired by new museology, the focus shifted in general from exhibition making more to engaging audiences and giving an active role to visitors (see also Kaitavuori, this volume). Since the 1980s, the curator's work has increasingly been associated with an idea of the exhibition itself as a medium. The breakthrough in curating occurred in the 1990s, with the boom of thematic and conceptual group exhibitions. Artworks are frequently selected and commissioned to suit the specific exhibition and venue, and often the curator and the artist work concurrently. Since art has become increasingly conceptual, the curator has come to play an important role as a creator and mediator of ideas. The first curator training programmes emerged globally in the late 1980s, a time when the theory of curating and the curator's professional identity were both established. Curating can today be linked with many kinds of responsibilities, roles and characteristics, meanings and metaphors. The concepts involved are continually developing and evolving (O'Neill 2012).

Curating and the Curatorial

Curating art is not just a matter of making choices: the curator provides a vision for the exhibition; the whole is always more than the sum of its parts. The starting point in curating is principally in the art and the artist's practice. The curator constructs a dynamic among the works of art, the drama that emerges from this and the discourse that surrounds the works. An exhibition of contemporary art can also undermine conventional thinking. Instead of producing knowledge, it can "provoke feelings of irreverence or doubt, or an experience that is at once emotional, sensual, political and intellectual" (Filipovic 2013, p. 75, p. 78).

Curating has become increasingly international since the 1990s, with the ascendancy of massive global exhibitions. The curators of these shows have had a great impact, particularly by highlighting postcolonialism, as well as other topical issues and new ways of interpreting modernism or contemporary art. Their choices also indirectly affect the exhibition programmes of art museums across the world. Increasing internationalisation has also provided local curators with new ways to promote and earn recognition for regional art (Morgan 2013, pp. 24–25).

Maria Lind has defined curating and the curatorial in her work as follows: "Today, I imagine curating as a way of thinking in terms of interconnections: linking objects, images processes, people, locations, histories and discourses in physical space, like an active catalyst, generating twists, turns and tensions. This is a curatorial approach that owes much to site-specific practice" (Lind 2009, pp. 63–66). Curating is the inherently physical process of exhibition management, whereas the realm of the curatorial includes site- and context-specific practices and creative institutional criticisms aiming at alternative practices. In Lind's view, the curatorial seeks to strengthen meanings and relations, as well as to support new ideas (Lind 2009, pp. 63–64). The curatorial is a methodological approach that takes art as its starting point and places it into a larger specific context. According to Irit Rogoff, the curatorial consists of critical thinking that poses questions, challenges protocols and formats, has the potential to make a contribution rather than a representation, understands contemporaneity by engagement and makes these issues our own (Rogoff 2015, pp. 45–46).

Attribution is a standard practice to credit all relevant players. The responsibility for curating can also be shared, and major shows often involve a group of curators assisting the main curator. From an institutional perspective, a clear attribution of agency can be used to justify new kinds of contextualisation of art and experimental exhibitions. The curator's authorship is sometimes compared with that of the artist (Morgan 2013, pp. 27–28). Boris Groys has described this situation and the difference between the artist's and curator's roles in the following way: "The curator may exhibit, but he doesn't have the magical ability to transform the non-art into art through the act of display. That power, according to current cultural conventions belongs to the artist alone" (Groys 2010, p. 46).

Case 1: Rauma Biennale Balticum

The concept of curatorship emerged in the 1990s, and many art museums invited outside experts to curate art exhibitions. The use of curators also became increasingly common in Finland, especially in connection with extensive international and group exhibitions. One relevant example is the Rauma Biennale Balticum exhibitions at the Rauma Art Museum. Mounted by a small, predominantly local art museum, the biennales were a major undertaking, which highlights the museum's profile in the Finnish context. At that time, the museum entrusted the curating of biennale exhibitions to outside curators, who represented different contemporary art institutions from the Baltic Sea area, with powerful networks and strong expertise.

In 2001, we in the Rauma Art Museum decided to start curating exhibitions in-house. Curating was still based on existing networks, but we intended to do more background study and research on the Baltic Sea area ourselves. This had the effect of strengthening the museum's role as a content producer and expert, with exhibitions increasingly following the museum's strategies and taking local audiences into account. With in-house curating, the museum was no longer limited to managing only practical affairs, but began to cover active content production, making selections and speaking with its own voice.

The shift to in-house curating drew upon existing practices. Whereas the authorship of exhibitions had previously been attributed to outside curators, this practice could now be handled within the museum. It was important to be able to develop our skills and have a say in the most interesting aspect of making art exhibitions, i.e., content selection.

The change in curating included an institutional reassessment of the museum and its purpose, but also a stronger focus on both internationalism and local conditions. One important question was how the museum, with its minimal resources and operating in a highly specialised environment, the UNESCO World Heritage site of Old Rauma, might be able to exploit its distinctive position by using novel forms of display locally or by increasing its collaboration with local communities. The museum's traditional buildings and yard, as well as nearby areas, were used as much as possible for site-specific and context-sensitive artworks. Commissioned artworks in particular were adapted to local conditions. This model of in-house curating was used to mount seven biennales on themes revolving very much around sustainable development, climate change, ecological and universal human issues. Each biennale was accompanied by a publication showcasing the themes, artists and works in the show.

I was a recent graduate in art history when I was appointed to co-curate the Rauma Biennale Balticum exhibition series. I did not have any training in curating.[4] Although I had a minor in museology, at that time the studies did not

4. University studies at that time did not include a period of internship in a museum, so there was no opportunity to gain first-hand experience of museum processes.

address curating at all. In fact, according to one professor, only finished processes could be studied in art history.[5] There were all sorts of ideas about curating and the curatorial in evidence at the time. Even seasoned specialists might not have identified themselves as curators, even if they had extensive experience in the field and had for decades managed artistic strategy, the selection of artists and artworks and interaction with artists. You could say that curatorial work was being carried out but not recognised as such. Even when one had the requisite expertise and competence, one did not wear the curatorial hat. There may have been many reasons for this, such as the notion of museums as anonymous producers of institutional knowledge, as well as a lack of both developed professionalisation and curator training in the field.



Figure 1. Antti Laitinen's performance in the Rauma Channel as part of the *Rauma Biennale Balticum – What's up Sea* exhibition. Photo: Jari Sorjonen/Rauma Art Museum.

Case 2: Contemporary art exhibitions for children

Alongside the biennales, I curated Rauma Art Museum exhibitions for children from 2002 to 2014. Children have been identified as a strategic target group of museum already since the 1970s, and the museum mounted annual exhibitions designed specifically for them. Wanting to focus on contemporary art here as well, I developed a new format for children's exhibitions.[6] The children's exhibition series enabled us to more efficiently display contemporary art in our small town, to secure new audiences for contemporary art and to promote a positive change in the attitudes of future art museum audiences. Each show featured 10–20 artists. The concept and curatorial thinking in the exhibitions revolved around topical themes, ecologically, socially or humanly important issues and

5. Specialised further education in contemporary art curating is currently available at Aalto University and the Academy of Fine Arts. Articles relating to curating and curatorial thinking are published within Aalto University's *CuMMa programme* and are available online at https://cummastudies.wordpress.com/cumma-papers/ [Last accessed 8 February 2021]

6. The selection of works was based on my extensive and regular visits to a great number of contemporary art exhibitions with my three daughters, which allowed me to observe how they viewed the artworks and how one might best discuss art with young people.

narrativity. There was an aim to create a powerful experiential dimension that employed interactivity and installations, and of course a clear dialogue with the audience. One important aspect of these exhibitions was to make innovative use of the facilities of the museum building itself. The first five exhibitions were about the senses,[7] while the next seven shows were built around themes that were universally human, touching people of all ages. These exhibitions examined a great variety of human topics, from cleaning and baking to profound questions of life, from environmental issues to death. Although a few subjects, such as sexuality, violence or overpowering angst, were left outside of the series, that did not mean that the darker side of humanity was not featured at all in the shows. I have also considered this kind of content to be pedagogically interesting in my later curating at EMMA (see also Filene, this volume). The exhibitions were also designed to allow any serious questions to be raised on the guided tours.

Crucial for the development of the concept was that the museum already had a regular exhibition programme for children. The foundation of the exhibition series was therefore based on the art museum's operative strategy and objectives. Another crucial factor was the question of how to spark an interest in contemporary art among the inhabitants of a small town and to encourage them to visit a museum.

Each exhibition consisted of a narrative route that could be easily verbalised for visitors of all ages. As Boris Groys has said, every exhibition tells a story, by directing the viewer through it in a particular order (Groys 2010, p. 47). No publications were produced for the shows, but each show was guided for all groups. A clear and understandable narrative was important to the visitors, but also to the guides. As the museum did not have the means to hire guides with experience or training in art, the guides were young interns or unemployed volunteers. The content of the exhibition had to be easily assimilated for them to be able to pass it on in a narrative story-like format. All works needed to include aspects that would resonate with different age groups. It was paramount for visitors to be able to talk about and discuss the art, even in simple terms. The goal was to provoke dialogue and wonder (see also Niemi, this volume). All shows were built around works that could awaken the viewers' interest, either because of their functionality, techniques and materials, or due to spatial or experiential aspects. The exhibitions did not include commissions, but were instead based on existing artworks or concepts. That was a conscious choice, since commissioned artworks often have an exaggerated status in curating, but they are not always necessary for either curating or curatorial thinking. Artworks withstand the passage of time well, but often get too little exposure. It is important to present them in new contexts and venues, in order to acquire new layers of meaning when they

7. The senses, as well as a more holistic experience associated with them, have been a common theme in recent contemporary art. I got the idea for the exhibitions when I was visiting Göteborg Konsthall, in Sweden, with my children in 2000 and saw the work *Bill* by Scottish artist Clara Ursitti. The work is based on the artificially produced scent of semen and the scandalous relationship between former United States President Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky.

are displayed as part of a thematic whole or in a different space. Many of the shows also included works by less famous local artists. Although the decision introduced a certain heterogeneity to the exhibitions, it was important for promoting local arts and interaction among artists. That was also a good choice, both ecologically and economically, since transportation was shorter as a result.

Children who had visited a show with a group would later visit the same show with family or friends and act as guides, based on what they had learned during their original visit. The museum received requests for reruns, and children visited shows several times. Years later, some visitors still recall individual works, saying that they visited all shows in the series with their day-care centre or school. The key aim was to present contemporary art to new audiences, to lower the threshold to the museum, to provide easily-accessible shows with a strong experiential dimension and to examine current, relevant topics. This can be seen as a part of a broader phenomenon involving how museums in Finland have begun to embrace the idea of being places for open-ended gatherings. The exhibitions were really popular, and I think there could not have been a better target group. The project enabled me to implement curatorial ideas and visions without compromises.



Figure 2. Children exploring Outi Pieski's work in the contemporary art exhibition *In the Middle of Nowhere*. Photo: Jari Sorjonen/Rauma Art Museum.

Case 3: Bryk & Wirkkala Visible Storage

The most recent example involves the collection display called *Aukio* at EMMA – the Espoo Museum of Modern Art, a new concept created in multidisciplinary collaboration among a large team. The project took its cue from the collection, as well as the results of a competition for the presentation concept organised by the Tapio Wirkkala Rut Bryk Foundation. The key designers of the space were the *Wanderlust* architects, selected based on the competition, in close

collaboration with experts from the museum. I served both as the owner of the project and designated curator. [8]

The purpose of Aukio is to provide maximum visibility to this unique archive, art and design collection, deposited in EMMA by the Tapio Wirkkala Rut Bryk Foundation, which also openly illustrates various aspects of museum work. Aukio's concept and curatorial idea is based on different onion-like spatial layers. The outermost area is visible storage, where the Bryk & Wirkkala materials are displayed, and a space where visitors can observe museum processes, such as photographers and conservators at work. That area is a non-curated, storage-like space where the display of a huge number of objects would be determined by author and chronology instead of a curatorial idea or script. The display is dense and rich, as is usually the case in storage spaces. In the middle there is a semi-curatorial area working wall used to showcase small-scale research and pedagogical pick-ups. In the centre of it all, bordered by the transparent perforated metal wall, is a white cube, a space for curated temporary exhibitions that is in dialog with the collection surrounding it.

In the Aukio display it is possible to experience all the different stages of curating. The creation of an entirely new museum concept also related to the role of the curator required reassessing the curator's role and looking at issues from a much broader perspective, rather than just a thematic selection of artworks.

My main task as a curator was to mediate between different interests, ideas and potential implementations, to sift, formulate and search for solutions from among numerous possibilities. I searched for references and precursors, listened to different players, tried to determine the essential factors, provided stimulating ideas, engaged with many players simultaneously and polished and distilled the collective, multidisciplinary outcome. Looking back, I feel that my work was seamlessly integrated into the vast apparatus of professionals, de-emphasising my own contribution as curator. I nevertheless assumed responsibility for the overall vision, even if the planning was carried out collaboratively.

One integral architectural feature of the visible storage facility was its perforated metal walls. The metal sheets introduced an element of transparency in the space layers, while also serving as a wall for mounting temporary exhibitions on its reverse side. The sheets also protected the shelving in the storage facility that alternated with glass display cases. The idea was for the displays on the other side to be viewable in silhouette, lending a kind of tranquillity to the rich displays in the cases. This concept was novel. Although we sought to explain the idea to visitors, feedback consistently indicated that the objects could not be seen well enough from the other side of the perforated wall. Visitors found it vexing that the objects were on display, and yet they were prevented from viewing them in detail. These reactions prompted us to search for a new solution. One alternative was to replace the metal partitions with glass display cases; another was

8. In EMMA's project model the owner of the project is above the project leader and has the highest interest and responsibility for managing it in the best possible way.

to rethink the display of items behind the sheet. We chose the latter. The space retained its overall appearance, but now only storage boxes were placed on the other side of the partitions – viewers were no longer irritated by seeing the boxes in silhouette. Audience comments were the final and necessary contribution in creating a totally new spatial concept.



Figure 3. EMMA's visible storage is based on curatorial layers and showing the museal work processes. Photo: Ari Karttunen/EMMA.

Summing up the Work as a Curator

Based on these three case studies and my different roles as a curator, I will try to sum up here the most essential part of a curator's work in an art museum context. Based on my experience, a curator refines the vision of an exhibition, after which decisions or acceptance proceed. The curator oversees the production of exhibition content, bears the main responsibility for the ideas and solutions in exhibition planning and is the one who verbalises them. A curator must also be able to formulate and express her expertise, areas of interest and vision. This work includes ideation, conception, research, scripting and participation in practical planning, as well as handling tasks relating to the artist and artwork selection. The curator envisions the whole, different alternatives or possible changes of plan and works with artists, project management, technical staff, conservators and the exhibition architect. The main focus in curating is on the management of artistic content, usually meaning close co-operation with the artist. However, the curator also engages in dialogue and serves as mediator for the museum's staff and the audience. The importance of working in close collaboration with artists, new curatorial approaches and engaging new audiences is crucial in the art museum context (see also Tuominen, in this volume). The curator's vision can also provide the foundation for events and ancillary programmes associated with the exhibition.

Curating can be part of a museum's content specialist's professional identity, but it is also a role that one assumes in certain situations, carried out independently or collaboratively. Although the position of a curator involves a certain, mostly externally ascribed role, the curator's own vision and choices are crucial. A curator's work is usually international in character, is based on networks and requires the curator to maintain her expertise and interest in new phenomena and viewpoints in art.

Museum practices differ regarding a curator's tasks. In addition to content-related work, curators assume managerial or organisational duties, although being in charge of practical arrangements is not necessarily always ideal for curating. The range of duties of a content specialist working, for example, in a small art museum can be sometimes quite huge. At the Rauma Art Museum, I was in charge of the museum's collections, archives, public art, research, funding and partnerships, as well as organisational tasks and audience engagement. On top of all this, one still has to somehow find time for curating. However, when working with content that engages our interest, we are more motivated and better at prioritising.

The curator's duties should in any case be defined on a case-by-case basis, according to need. When the museum decides to bring in an outside independent curator, the curator's role needs to be defined with particular care. There is no single way of doing this, but rather a great number of varying models.

The curator's authorship can be individual or shared, as in a co-curating situation. Curating is nevertheless invariably collaborative: it involves mediation, serving as a bridge between different authors, agencies and players. Authorship in curating cannot exist without collaboration. In this sense, a curator's work may differ from that of an artist, which traditionally revolves around the artist's own creativity. A curator's authorship can also be subsumed into the collective responsibility. Curating can be delegated more widely and can even be based on a collective or inclusive approach, as in the case of collective curating. Curating and its associated authorship are usually communicated to the audience in the credits, either at the exhibition venue or in the exhibition publication. The highlighting of different authorships, including curators, promotes the visibility and understanding of work undertaken in museums, especially as regards decision making, which often takes place in the background. It promotes the transparency of using power.

The Framework of Curating

In the role of curator, I've based my work on certain exhibition and displaying concepts, reviewing them as necessary or creating new ones. The process begins with the formulation of a frame and its adaptation to the needs of the particular institution and audience. Once that is in place, thematic thinking, more detailed and smaller decisions almost automatically fall into line with the wider framework. Defining a concept leads to the construction of a specific curatorial

approach, which in turn steers the design of the whole. The common view of curators is as experts who work professionally and exclusively with art, but the audience and the community are equally important aspects of this.

The exhibitions I curated at the Rauma Art Museum focused on the unique location, local audiences and exposition of contemporary art. With sufficient sensitivity towards site-specificity and a clear vision of target groups, curating can have a real social impact. For example, one could engage youth by developing services and maintaining close and sustained collaboration with schools and day-care centres. Doing so provided the museum with open-minded, curious and interested audiences, which we could affect far into the future. In contemporary art exhibitions for young people, the primary goal was to make the museum accessible. One can see a role of a museum to function as a community centre or a public space, as Kaija Kaitavuori has stated (Kaitavuori 2013, p. x). I also wanted to emphasise the uniqueness and experiential aspect of art, as well as to facilitate discussion. Nora Sternfeld has pointed out the importance of calling for participation: "If we understand art institutions as public spaces that are not only open to everyone, but also strive to be sites that belong to everyone, then we are dealing with the question of the possibility of change" (Sternfeld 2013, p. 4).

It can be problematic if exhibitions are curated separately from those responsible for audience engagement, which is traditionally the domain of educators. This polarised division of duties is by and large a thing of the past; close co-operation has become more prevalent. Yet, I felt that curating exhibitions for children was not entirely unproblematic, as some might view it as less significant, even marginal. This is perhaps an aspect of a broader phenomenon, wherein curating and audience engagement are seen as separate disciplines with different statuses, curating being more intellectual and audience engagement being a kind of service (Kaitavuori 2013, p. xiv). My own observation is that this division has come under critical scrutiny and that an audience-centric approach has become more common. I've hopefully been part of this broader trend.

In my work as a curator, I have not avoided a subjective approach. Intuition plays a role, as solutions can emerge subconsciously, through a combination of experience and vision. It has been said that curating is an exercise in visual rhetoric. The curator achieves the same effect as a writer with a text, by putting together an exhibition (Carrier 2010, p. 82). The goal has always also been to achieve the best possible result that is in keeping with my vision – to be able to stand by my work with satisfaction. The idea of creating for and from oneself is part of a natural aspect of any authorship. In spite of all the visualisations and demonstrations that are part of the planning of an exhibition, it's the vision behind the show that is most intimately a creation of the curator's mind. A colleague once said, "None of us are curating stuff for ourselves here". However, to some extent I disagree: the curator's work must also satisfy, perhaps primarily, her own personal criteria. Jean-Paul Martinon has likened the curatorial to a gift the curator gives primarily to herself, and which only then becomes a gift to others (Martinon 2015, pp. 25–31).

Maria Lind distils her own view of curating as follows: "I tend to focus more on the effects of curating. What is a curator's task is less interesting to me" (Lind 2009, pp. 63–66). Because of pragmatic orientation, consideration of the recipient and identification with the viewers, together with the rhetoric, drama and narration of exhibition, have also been far more necessary to me than deeper theoretical research or exploration of the content. My goal has been to curate the best possible, yet also accessible, exhibitions of art through choices, for which, the primary purpose is to serve the art, the audience, and my vision as author. The most important elements have been enthusiasm and interest in topical issues, along with the need to learn and take on new challenges.

It is not at all unusual that the curator's work is learned hands on, through practice. Curating is always sharing the different kinds of creative efforts, views and ideas. The process always involves an infinite number of possibilities, and someone must provide the vision that informs an exhibition's planning, choices and demarcation. That is, I feel, the keystone of the curator's work. An exhibition can be many things, but it never curates itself.

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Looking for a New National

Hanna Forssell

Abstract

This chapter discusses the National Museum of Finland's main exhibition reform process, which was carried out in 2015–2017. The text is based on performance theory, in which the museum exhibition is seen as a holistic process. The setting up process can be analysed as a performance as well, in which staff roles and cultural dialogue are tied to a specific time and context. Exhibitions in historical museums are seen as institutional performances, in which the authors of the exhibitions are usually in the background. The museum outlines the way in which the work is done, and the goals that it hopes to reach. However, the professional roles, areas of specialisation and personal interests of the working group inevitably influence the content of the performance, making the concept of a single, unified voice of an institution an illusion.

The strategic choice of the National Museum's exhibition reform was multidisciplinary expertise and customer orientation. The reform began with exhibitions of prehistory and 20th-century history. The *Prehistory of Finland* exhibition focuses on the questions of being human in the Nordic frame of reference, and the *Story of Finland* exhibition addresses the origin of Finnish democracy and the development of Finland as a Nordic welfare state in the 20th century. Both exhibitions opened in 2017.

In this study, the permanent exhibition's strategic objectives in 2015–2017 are compared with the previous exhibition reform made in the 1990s. The material used is primarily the National Museums's archive materials, such as memos, press releases and interviews made by the author in 2012–2014.

Keywords: concept, performance theory, exhibition, national, interpretation

Introduction

The National Museum of Finland in Helsinki was opened to the public in 1916, and is the central museum regarding the country's cultural history. It illustrates Finland's past, from prehistoric times to the present. The organisation is part of the Finnish Heritage Agency. Historical collections describe the material culture of Finns and Finnish history from the Middle Ages to the present day, and the ethnological collections provide an all-around illustration of the life, trades and traditions of the Finnish people. The coin chamber collection consists of coins, notes, tokens, medals and decorations. Archaeological collections (in the Finnish Heritage Agency) contain objects from the whole of the current territory of Finland, as well as from the so-called ceded areas.

This chapter is about the exhibition renovation of the National Museum, which took place between 2015 and 2017. During that time, the exhibition sections of Finnish prehistory and the 20th century were renewed. I'll go deeper into the exhibition Story of Finland as part of the overall renewal, because I was involved in it from the very beginning. I worked as a project manager, and therefore the following analysis is entirely based on my own experience. I think of it as a performance, where each author has a role to play in relation to each other, the audience and the museum in which they work. This is based on performance theory, where all cultural phenomena can be seen as performances: it is not just about the final result, the exhibition that a person experiences, but is also about the structure that gives birth to it. It can be about what a person (the exhibition maker in this case) does and how they behave in relation to others. It can also be for the purpose of entertaining, making something that is beautiful, marking or changing identity, making a foster community, healing, teaching, persuading, convincing or dealing with the sacred and/or the demonic (Schechner 2006, p. 46).

I compare the changes that have been made regarding the process of making the previous main exhibition, which opened in 2000. I discuss this exhibition project and its goals in the text. I use written sources and interviews as my material. Written sources mainly include design plans, meeting memos, press releases, item lists and exhibition texts. This archive is unlisted. I have started a dissertation of the National Museum exhibition history and did interviews related to this in 2011–2013. I interviewed five people who had worked at the National Museum for a long time, all of whom had worked during her/his career on several exhibitions. The interviews were anonymous and were conducted as thematic interviews. In addition, I have some personal memories from that time, as it was when I started to work at the museum as a trainee.

Renewal 1997–2000

The National Museum's previous main exhibition reform was made in 1993–2000. It consisted of a prehistory exhibition, the *Coin Chamber* (money, silver, jewellery and weapons), the *Realm* exhibition (Finland from the Middle Ages to the 19th century), the *Land and Its People* exhibition (on ethnology) and the *Past Century* exhibition (on the 20th Century). Only the 20th century exhibition was rebuilt in 2012 (*Suomi Finland 1900*), but it had already been dismantled, and space was reserved for temporary exhibitions from 2015. The hands-on exhibition *Attic*, for children and families, was opened on the top floor of the museum in 2006. It is still open to the public and has done surprisingly well. It is a favourite of families with children and does not contain any digital technology.

At the same time, the entire building was renovated and the museum was closed for three years (Talvio 2016, pp. 306–309). The project proceeded in stages, with an idea phase in 1993–1996, when partial plans were made. The framework plan was completed in 1996, when progress had been made on object photography and conservation research. In 1997, the overall design was completed and a

more detailed design of the different components (including display and lighting) was underway. In 1998, detailed plans were made, including manuscripts for guidebooks, multimedia programmes and educational packages. Exhibition architecture, furniture and lighting design, furniture and equipment orders were all in progress. The intention was for the exhibitions to open in December 1999. During the year, the furnishing, bringing in of objects, construction and exhibitions' completion continued. Eventually the project was slightly delayed and the museum opened in the summer of 2000. In 1996, the National Museum was visited by 90 633 people, and the aim of the reform was to attract 200 000 visitors to the museum each year (Educational plan 7.1.1998). This goal was not met during the time this exhibition was open.

The design papers for the reform were surprisingly modern in their aims and visions. Behind them was the top management of the museum, in particular Dr. Ritva Wäre, director general of the National Museum. It was decided that computer equipment should be present in most of the rooms, texts should be clear and limited in quantity – exhibitions "should not have standing books to read", daring to try new ways to produce an exhibition, making modifiable spaces to keep exhibitions from becoming out of date too soon, reflecting on the message of the exhibition. Collection boundaries had to be crossed in the display, the audience had to be offered a memorable experience, cultural-historical styles could not define the exhibition and furniture dominance had to be abandoned (Wäre 1995). The same things could be found in a different form 20 years later in the 2016 plans. Alongside visionary design, however, there are details that strongly point to concrete and iconic objects: "essentials include a shingle holder, spinning wheel, churn, birch bark container, scythe, sickle and sleigh" (Plan for the new main exhibition 1997).

The theme throughout the main exhibition was time, a recurring theme in various items, such as clocks and calendars. The exhibition did not deal with the interdimensional processing of time. The development of style periods, typology and chronology were part of the exhibition design, though they did not necessarily appear to the visitor as an obvious way to embrace history, but rather as a way to make history understandable to all visitors. Throughout the exhibition, object-related information was presented mainly in short texts. Multimedia applications were implemented in co-operation with students in four rooms. The original plan was to do more of them. Audio guides were also designed, but never implemented (Perusnäyttelyiden yleisjäsentely, 1997).

Concerning the Middle Ages, it was stated that the exhibition architecture does not seek a sacred atmosphere, but that the space is presented as an exhibition room, which was described as the most comprehensive exhibition of medieval art in Finland. The medieval saint sculptures were viewable without display cases (Wäre 1995). This same principle permeated the entire main exhibition, and the exhibition space was not deliberately set up to create an adventurous historical entity or atmosphere. An exception was the smoke cabin built in the

1830s, which was transferred to the museum at the beginning of the 20th century, and the 1760s interior of the Jakkarila Manor.

The exhibition project had a five-person steering group and several implementing bodies per unit. The group met once a month and reported on its work to the Executive Director. The steering group consisted of representatives from all of the museum's various departments and sometimes external experts, mainly architects, according to the theme. There were nine working groups, and their responsibilities were divided into sections. This was about 50 persons in total, which in practice constituted the majority of the museum's staff. The disadvantages of working, according to interviews, were delays in meetings and slowness in decision-making. The projects were generally design-oriented, but it should be pointed out that the work culture at the time did not include as many meetings as it does today (interviews 2012–2014).

Every new exhibition project was a learning situation for its author and motivated to acquire new knowledge. After each exhibition project, the author was knowledgeable and more credible as an expert. In practice, this meant that with each exhibition project, the museum collection or part of it became more familiar (interviews 2012–2014). The exhibitors felt themselves to be mostly researchers, whose primary goal in the process was communication and eventually making the collection more visible to various audiences, to show to the audience "Here's what we have". The exhibitors were united by a certain degree of practicality, ability to get along and get things done and the desire to make something visible. The professional duty to look after the museum and to respect the choices made there was also considered important (interviews 2012–2014). "Exhibiting should not be built solely on factors that are expected to be of interest to visitors, which are primarily aimed at increasing the number of visitors" said a research staff representative in 1996 on the plans for the main exhibition (letter from the staff representative to the museum management 13.9.1996, translated by the author). It was clear that the change in customer orientation did not always succeed throughout the organisation, and this influenced the implementation of the renewals. Another museum researcher, protesting the thematic presentation plans, wrote: "The museum tells through objects. As a result, the museum cannot tell much that is not reflected in the objects – the exhibition cannot be made from an idea" (letter from the staff representative 23.11.1996, translated by the author).

Expertise has been important to exhibitors, and it appears, for example, in interviewees' characterisation of National Museum exhibitions and their role as makers. The exhibitions had to meet high standards, striving for flawlessness. The selection of objects for the exhibition had to be justified and the text of the objects as accurate as possible: "Well, of course it has always been important that the information is correct, and every object must show why it was chosen" (interviews 2012–2014).

Renewal 2015–2017

Big changes in working life are often triggered by weak economic times, changes in management or changes in the surrounding society and its needs. Institutional change typically starts with some kind of shock (Simon 2013, p. xvi). This was also the case at the National Museum: state budget cuts in 2014 forced redundancies and reorganisation. The time for museums was financially weak, as public funding for museums was declining dramatically and, for example, the National Museum's attendance had long been stagnant at around 120 000 visitors per year. Therefore, the engine of change was not just an internal desire to do things in a new way, but rather a question of justifying one's existence. New members of the museum's management were very central to the issue; the driving force behind the new main exhibition was the new Director General, Elina Anttila, who has had a strong vision for new ways of doing things and for the museum to renew itself.

In many ways, the exhibitions had become more like interiors than interesting exhibitions for the public and the staff; it had become a museum within the museum. The presentations were outdated and the premises were worn out, the collections had already been used and interpreted in many ways in the audience work over the years and this did not inspire new projects. It was a fact that in addition to exhibitions, the entire National Museum needed a face lift. There was a lot happening at the museum field in Finland and abroad, and new, attractive museums were planned and built. The Helsinki City Museum was renovated, opened to the public in 2016 and awarded the Museum of the Year by the Finnish Museums Association. The Amos Anderson museum launched a new building under the name Amos Rex in downtown Helsinki.

The National Museum's main exhibition reform, together with a programme of temporary exhibitions, organisational reform, brand reform and public space reform, were all part of the ongoing change within this broader context. These events were raised as the focus of public work. The aim was to make the museum more dynamic as an active cultural actor, and to reach out to new audiences and people of different ages, providing them with meanings and inspiration. This meant that the staff was part of an ongoing process of learning how to make things more audience-friendly and, in practice, more flexible and faster. Large organisations have their own work traditions and hierarchies, which are sometimes difficult to change. The fundamental point is that museums that remain committed to the organisational traditions upon which they were originally founded are increasingly unable to address the issues of content, community and agendas of the greater society (Janes 2013, pp. 108–109).

The planning of the exhibition The Story of Finland began with workshop meetings in 2016. As the staff of the museum sat down together and began to gather things they wanted to tell about independent Finland, the list grew longer and longer. The collections of the museum inspired the telling of a story, and many times the vast phenomenon of history was opened up through a single object. For

example, the 1920s, the period between the wars, was seen as a cheerful decade. Suggested themes were outdoor life and sports, and objects mentioned included women's swimwear, telephones, radios, bicycles and cars. Culture, architecture, prohibition law and political movements were also on the list, and suggestions for objects included such things as a wood stove, furniture, women's and men's clothing, a student cap and a bottle of liquor, as well as political party flags and manuals. The objects of the 1940s, on the other hand, focused on the wartime: a soldier's badge, a boy's mourning outfit, a soldier's death announcement, a badge of honour, a name tag hung on the neck of a war child sent to Sweden, etc. However, we wanted to expand the perspective beyond our own collections, seeking phenomena and intricacies of history for which we did not have objects of our own. Every collection has its gaps. Our collections alone could not explain the whole story, as many intangible phenomena would have been left untold. This meant that instead of being collection-oriented, new exhibitions were decided to be theme-based.

The most significant and impressive single policy that the museum implemented at this point was that we decided the core theme of the exhibition would be the history of the state and society. It was a big change from the previous situation, when the National Museum acted as a cultural history museum, representing more or less the everyday life of Finnish people. The museum's own cultural historical and ethnological collections, including furniture, textiles, vessels and church objects, among others things, had earlier formed the body of the main exhibition. The state's history at the heart of the story was a strategic choice because other museums in Finland did not present it, and because there was a social debate about whether a separate museum of the state's history of Finland was needed. The emphasis on cultural history in the previous main exhibition had avoided the presentation of political history from the state's point of view, but politics is always involved in one way or another in the narrative of a national institution. By conveying the values and practices of democracy, the National Museum wanted to be more involved in the public debate, and help explain how the Nordic welfare state was built.

The main exhibition is often called a permanent exhibition, due to its long-term status. It could also be described as a staged exhibition, since the main exhibition stops the presentation of museum collections and selected history at a certain time. In the National Museum, the turnover time of main exhibitions before the 2000s was about 15-30 years. Creating a main exhibition differs from making a temporary exhibition, due to their longer lifespan, scope and collection-based nature. Content is usually planned with greater care and time than it is in temporary exhibitions, because of their requirements for greater durability. The museum staff are well aware that what is not ready when the exhibition opens is rarely completed. The structures, walls, text panels and display cases are made to last as long as possible. The main exhibition also requires constant museum technical care, such as the monitoring of heat, humidity and lighting conditions, correction of public-related variations, for example, in interactive equipment, and thorough annual cleaning. Nothing makes the exhibition more outdated

than faulty digital devices, fingerprint-stained glass windows, displaced and dusty museum objects or text panels that flutter around the corners.

Co-curational Start for the Project

Public discussions, shared learning projects and reference forums were key to the preparation of the exhibition, with experts and influencers giving their views on the role, content, presentation and narrative priorities of the National Museum's main exhibition in the most creative ways possible (Anttila 2016). The purpose of the renovation was to redefine the National Museum. Therefore, the first thing needed in 2015 was a vision of the National Museum's future prospects; this is why the project started by inviting around 300 influencers from science, the arts and society to share their views about the museum. Of these, 50 eventually participated in five debates. In discussions they talked about, among other things, breaking the myths of Finnish history and the need for customisation, that is, that the visitor must be able to make his or her own choices, use the exhibit and find out more about what he or she is interested in. Digitalisation is important in such customisation. In addition, the need for stories was obvious. Stories about people behind historical events and objects humanize knowledge. The National Museum was also recommended to use professionals from the creative industries and storytelling (Raatikainen & Juti 2015).

These encounters were very revealing to the museum staff. For example, when planning the exhibition on Finnish prehistory, a serious question emerged on whether the National Museum really needs a prehistory exhibition at all, because who cares? (Raatikainen & Juti 2015). These types of abrupt comments are very eye-opening and make museum professionals really wonder who museums are for. On the other hand, the opposite was the case shortly thereafter; from a discussion with archaeologists, the expectations for the new exhibition were immense. The presentation of a national institution is important, and the research and scientific community in the field showed the greatest interest in its content. The genuine sharing of information and collections with the public is a way of making their discipline relevant. "Keeping that old object in your hand is just a great thing and for us archaeologists, it is a privilege to get so close to the object, but the average visitor has no chance, and it would be great if they could actually do it", said one of the participants in the open discussion in 2015. This is also what happened, and many authentic objects can be touched by visitors at the Prehistory exhibition (Open discussion for archaeologists 5.10.2015).

We also started working with immigrants in *The Next Helsinki* project with the University of Helsinki in 2016. The starting point of the project was that Finland has been international both before and now, and it should also be seen in the National Museum that Finland is not separate from the rest of the world. When Finland has been through difficult times, for example, thousands of people have moved to Sweden and North America to seek a better life. A group of immigrants from various countries gathered approximately ten times at the museum with museum staff, discussing the ways in which the new exhibition would present

the history of Finland in an interesting and touching way, pointing out issues to which they have some personal connection. The following issues emerged: the equal status of women, the Nordic welfare state, nature education, safety and some interesting and even funny topics such as heavy metal music, which is popular in Finland. A young man from the Balkans said: "When you listen to heavy music, everything else disappears". (So, we put this into the exhibition as well). However, intolerance and racism also emerged in the discussions. The purpose of the project was also to bring to the exhibition the participants' own stories and memories from their home countries. The model for the project came from the Tate Museum in London and it was suggested by Dr. Peggy Levitt, whose book *Artifacts and Alliances* deals with the role of museums in a changing world (Levitt 2015).

Students of political history at the University of Helsinki also made their own suggestions for the content as part of their studies. They suggested the following exhibition sections: Finland divided in the interwar period, the recession in the 1990s, the world's largest coffee consumers, the Finnish school system, "Finland mentioned in the world!", Finnish export technology and equality. In co-operation with Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, the National Treasure Hunt landed in four Finnish cities to look for ideas relevant to Finns in 2017. People were also allowed to submit their proposals for national treasures and there was a dedicated website. Students also produced short films of a topical nature, which can be viewed on the National Museum website.

In addition, there was co-operation with the University of Helsinki and the Finnish Broadcasting Company YLE in selecting the main themes of the exhibition. All in all, experts from the economic, political, entertainment and media sectors were asked for bold opinions on what kind of actions the National Museum could see and influence. Based on these collaborative themes, the exhibition's production team created the exhibition, which combines a dramatic story and emotions with a factual basis. In addition, customer feedback and developmental suggestions collected over the years were reviewed. Many of the museum's public and outreach museum staff also have a very strong idea of what worked in existing exhibitions and what did not.

Eventually, the Story of Finland themes began to be narrowed down and the exhibition was finally built upon 13 themes that consistently came up during this co-creation process:

- The years 1900–1917, tools for state creation
- Universal and equal voting rights 1906
- The equal status of women
- Independence in 1917 and the Civil War in 1918
- Population demarcation from 1919 to 1939
- The Winter and Continuation Wars
- Welfare state creation and development since 1945
- Coffee, Finns' favourite drink
- Presidents

- Migration from Finland to Sweden
- Minorities in Finland
- Economics and recession
- The sauna

Participation and co-curation continued on a smaller scale during the project; when the sauna section was to be displayed, no objects could be found from our own collections. We asked the audience to donate sauna buckets to us. Because sauna buckets are usually made at a young age, for example at school in a craft class, they have a lot of personal emotional value, and we did not get enough of them. Fortunately, in the end, a youth workshop in Karkkila made the rest of the necessary buckets. This kind of co-curation, co-creation, inclusion and participation has been a welcome phenomenon in the 2010s and has been at the forefront of audience work and museum education. Through audience-centred thinking and working methods, the services of museums have begun to be designed to be genuinely accessible and to meet the expectations people have (Simon 2010, pp. 34–41). These engaging methods can also be seen in the annual awards given by the Finnish Association for the Museum Educators projects, which have also gained international visibility (Johansson 2016).

Concepts and Project Management

The exhibition work was guided by concepts, and it was decided that they should be clear and short, so that they would be easy to remember. It was considered a principle of concept work that the message, focus groups and methods of implementation of the exhibition would be carefully considered before a production is released. However, that did not mean that there was a great deal of time for designing and writing, quite the contrary. Doing, learning, being able to make unpredictable solutions throughout the process and having transparency of choices were how we worked. The concepts were decided upon at the museum's senior management level on the basis of suggestions made by the exhibition team. During the project, the implementation of the concept was followed up through regular steering group meetings and meetings between the project manager and the chair of the steering group.

The concept of the Prehistory exhibition was to bring up issues of being human in the Northern frame of reference. The content of the exhibition consisted of five themes: origin, movement, worldview, encounters and materiality. Selected themes were approached from the perspective of being human, identifying and alternative interpretations. The latest research data were presented, as well as controversial or otherwise open questions. The iconic highlights of the collections were also brought to the foreground, which were integrated into the exhibition, either as part of the main storyline, thematic entity or individual objects. This was complemented by hand-made materials, objects and fragments of objects. The exhibition was designed by Tuomas Siitonen Architects and Fantomatico Oy, who won the design competition in the spring of 2016 with their proposal *Survivors*.

The Story of Finland exhibition concept was as follows:

> The Story of Finland exhibition focuses on the birth of Finnish democracy and the development of the country into a Nordic welfare state. In the exhibition, the common and shared meets the personal – and in its narrative, Finland and the Finns, meets the global world. The exhibition looks back from this time. The themes of the exhibition are equality, a strange but happy people and turning points in Finnish history. The objects of the exhibition are meaningful and iconic. It deals with a widely explored era in a surprising and bold way, inspiring and touching large audiences, commenting on and highlighting alternative interpretations. This involves extensive collaboration with experts in various fields. (Forssell 2017)

The timetable for the renovation was tight and was largely determined by the timetable for financing. The Story of Finland had a relatively good budget, as Finland celebrated its 100th year of independence in 2017. This was also the absolute limit to the completion of the exhibition. The Prehistory exhibition opened in April of that year, so they were completed side by side, by different working groups. On the other hand, the museum had no simultaneous renovation needs related to the building itself. When the decision was made to keep the museum open throughout the renovation, and even with normal entrance fees, the importance and motivation of the staff in making the new exhibitions was emphasised. In fact, the number of visitors to the international temporary exhibitions was constantly increasing. The most popular exhibitions were Rooms Hidden by the Water (2016), The Renaissance. Now! From Rafael to Tizian – 16th Century Paintings from Italy (2016), Come to Finland (2017) and Public and Hidden Finland (2017).

In project-based work, the role of the team is emphasised, as members must have the motivation, skills and time to complete the task. Because the team members were from different units, the principles of project-based work also included learning within the organisation, with the project manager being responsible for the project's progress and decisions. The project manager was supported by a steering group. At the same time, there was a shift from design-oriented work to an action-oriented work culture. In the history of the National Museum, there were examples of exhibitions that were planned for a long time but were never actually completed. In the 1970s, the design team for the *History of the Fatherland* exhibition had ambitious plans to make a modern, main exhibition. The project included visits to foreign museums, planning for the integration of ethnographic and historical exhibitions into a single exhibit and the devising of pedagogical solutions such a museum area for children. The project team, who had been working together for about ten years, was unable to complete the project as time passed, as the original plans had become outdated.

The dangers identified by risk mapping were that there was not enough budget, the schedule might not be kept, there could be a dispute over who would make the final decisions and that there would be no time to conserve the objects displayed. In the end, there were issues with the budget and construction costs,

which were unpredictable. New walls, solid showcase elements and floors were built on the premises of the old building, and electrical installations had to be made for the digital technology. The schedule was on time, but it meant that the staff were doing some evening and weekend work, and this was particularly stressful in the final stages. It also meant that as the project timetable stretched, it delayed the subsequent subprojects and, as the opening day approached, things were overlapping in the showroom, causing stress in terms of object safety. The decision-making process was made clear at the beginning; in case of disputes the project manager had authority and in case of controversy the museum director had it. More money from the budget could be invested in conservation, which was also outsourced.

The key to project work, however, was that the implementation team was small and flexible. The project team was organic, and in addition to about five people, it included a varied and at times very large number of professionals from both inside and outside the house. In addition to its own staff, the Prehistory exhibition featured an architect, a digital designer, a lighting designer, a sound designer, a graphic artist and a large number of builders. Drama and storytelling were of great importance in the Story of Finland exhibition, so the team was complemented by a film director, playwright, stage director, special stage designer, light and sound designers and a large number of screenwriters. Indeed, the central role of the project manager was to keep the whole team under control while giving all the actors the freedom to plan and brainstorm. At the same time, of course, it was crucial to keep to the schedule and to implement the given plans.

Sharing the museum's expertise was key to the project. This is not problem-free in expert organisations, and it was revealed to be the case in this project as well. For outside team members, things that are seen as essential to a museum project may come as a surprise, such as lighting restrictions, the time allowed for various conservation procedures, restrictions on an old cultural-historical building and restrictions on the display of objects such as materials, as well as group and guide behaviour and learning.

Museum staff are generally well aware of the behaviour of their audience and can anticipate the pitfalls of exhibition design from this perspective. This caused conflicts in the working groups. In terms of content and objects, the museum staff were expected to have strong expertise, but the issue was tricky, as state history was not among the expertise of the museum staff, as it was an entirely new emphasis in the museum content. The storytelling professionals in the Story of Finland exhibition were experts in the film industry and had never done a museum exhibition before. For them, the experience was brand new. Making an exhibition is different from theatre and movie production, as the critical factors are collecting, preservation and research (Lord 2014, pp. 27–29). However, because the goal was a new way of doing things and a new kind of end result, this kind of conflict was valuable.

Those involved in the exhibition reform took the word forward regarding the change in the museum. They also had a fresh and open-minded vision for making

a new exhibition, and definitely had expertise in storytelling and framing, as well as visual and spatial design. The concerns of the designers in both exhibitions were related to there being too many objects, too long of texts and consideration of the audience. Because the goal was change, in conflict situations, project choices in this project were ultimately based on the designers' suggestions. This was a learning process for the museum staff. In any case, in the future it is worth paying more attention to communication among the team, so that everyone has a clear, common goal.

Interpretation – Texts, storytelling, objects, design and digital experiments

We know that people really trust information provided by museums. The Historical Awareness in Finland survey 2007–2010 mapped Finns' ideas about history: what Finns believe to have happened in the past, what meanings the past has and how the past relates to the present and the future. Research has shown that museums are considered to be the most reliable source of historical information. The next most reliable sources were non-fiction books, school history teaching and university historical research. After these, the most reliable sources were the stories of parents, relatives and family members, television programmes and documentaries relating to history, genealogy and activities of family associations. Movies, historical plays, historical novels and statements about politicians' history were the least trusted (Torsti 2012, p. 9, pp. 52–55). Therefore, museum professionals often have a heavy burden when making a new exhibition, since the text content should always be as correct as possible. It means that museum projects are slow, when ensuring the right information is used. And as we know, very often there is no definite information about historical events. At the same time, the aim of the exhibition was to provide alternative interpretations of history and to encourage the visitor to ask and seek more information. It is therefore a good idea for the team to remind themselves from time to time that exhibitions are always about interpretation. As Simon Knell reminds us, museums are places where professional and public performances are scripted and staged (Knell 2010, p. 43).

Both the Prehistory and the Story of Finland exhibition manuscripts were written by academic researchers and writing professionals outside the museum. This was to ensure that the information provided was correct and that it relied on current research. Researchers in the field are able to crystallise the essential. A closer connection with the scientific community was seen as important. Both exhibition manuscripts were also published as an exhibition publication. Texts were much longer than we had space for on our walls, showcases and digital devices (Herva & Lahelma 2017; Häkkinen et al. 2018). During the project, our perception of the exhibition script also changed. The texts were a matter-of-fact basis for the exhibitors, which, however, were not even intended to be introduced as such. Together with the visual and experiential design, they formed a complete script for the exhibition.

The museum staff wrote the object texts. In the Prehistory exhibition, a Twitter message (280 characters) was taken as the length and model of the text. This was, of course, very difficult for museum professionals, but the fact that visitor feedback highlights that text is usually too long motivated us try a new way. The selection was based on the length of the text that visitors could read at the exhibition. More detailed information was also available to those who were interested in it; each text was followed by an artefact number, which provided more information about the item in the national Finna digital collection service.

In some places the Story of Finland exhibition has longer texts, and in some places the object text even introduces the whole theme. Our aim was to curate individual and impressive objects for display with their own story to tell, rather than illustrating the theme with a large group of objects. Objects have power, in Donald Preziosi's words, "The significance of any object can be made to appear a uniquely powerful 'witness' to past or present events, and to the character, mentality, or spirit of a person, people, place or time" (Preziosi 2010, p. 137). Our goal was that each item selected for the exhibition was curated with the idea that the items form individual and personal stories as part of a broader common and national story. By doing so, a common story would help the visitor get information on past individuals:

> Almost 63,000 Ingrians of Finnish background were evacuated for use in a labour force from the Karelian front in 1943–1944. Among them was also Mari, who worked on a farm in Simo. The terms of the September 1944 Moscow Armistice decreed that the Ingrians must be returned to the Soviet Union. Most of the Ingrians, about 56,000, returned to their home country – some voluntarily, some because they had no choice. Before she left, Mari gave her apron to the daughter of the house as a memento. (Object text in the World War II section of Story of Finland)

In both projects, the script then passed into the hands of the exhibition team and the designers, and the scriptwriters were no longer involved when the text was transformed into a spatial experience. Extensive manuscripts changed their form quite a lot when used mainly as a fact-based material for making the exhibition. Texts were shortened and edited for the exhibition and used there as object texts, room-specific general texts or part of digital narrative tools, such as audio guides. We made this choice in order to make the best use of the expertise of storytelling and exhibition design professionals, giving them an equal chance to make their work, not just illustrate the text. Texts written by professionals were seen more like a strong scientific basis for thinking and creating the exhibition and its story.

The very first peer group discussions already highlighted stories, experiences and holistic experiences, suggesting that the museum should benefit from artists for renewal, to interpret history and to bring exhibitions to the senses of the visitor. Writing and theatre or cinema professionals should also be asked to create storytelling. This is why film director Juho Kuosmanen was asked to help in creating the Story of Finland. A filmmaker can construct a story, make

the necessary choices and bring drama to the fore. This also affected the design of the premises. We all are so used to cinematic storytelling, where the viewer is dramatically transported through the story. Exhibitions can also be analysed and seen like movies. As Mieke Bal says, "The key metaphor in my analysis was narrative, conceived as a meaning-producing sequentiality, emerging from the viewer's walk through an exhibition. Putting one thing next to another, in other words, produced a time-bound relationship between the two, one that moved from the first to the second" (Bal 2007, pp. 74–93). The vision of scenographer Kari Kankaanpää was that every room's atmosphere is different and supports a story. For example, the first exhibition room tells about the construction tools of the Finnish state, the state flag, the first money and parliamentary elections. The walls are therefore a concrete cul-de-sac and the roof has sturdy beams; Finland is under construction. Thus, scenic interiors became an important form of interpretation.

One of the lines of the exhibition reform was to place fewer but more reasonable objects in a space. If previously there were several similar items on display, it was now decided that one item was enough, but it was to be better displayed and researched. Especially for the prehistory exhibition, this was a big change, which was at first a concern for the museum's own staff. The educational nature of the prehistory exhibition (abundance of objects, chronology, distribution maps, etc.) had followed it since its graduation from the 1920s, and schoolchildren were particularly targeted. Despite this, it was difficult for younger learners to find the essentials for learning about the exhibition's mass of information, and it always required an interpreter-like living museum guide. The importance of the exhibition in university teaching was also considered, but to them, of course, it worked well. The exhibition was praised by researchers and those with a deep understanding of the subject.

In 2011, a study was conducted in the old prehistoric exhibition to determine how people behaved in the space and what interested them there. The methods used were route tracking, timing and Think Aloud visits. It revealed that visitors are most in need of clarity. Prehistory is a little-known era for many museum visitors, and the rich masses of objects and text make it difficult for many to understand (Ehrnsten 2012, pp. 64–68). The exhibition, which opened in 2000, featured 3,668 objects. The Past Century exhibition had 1004 objects; it was open 2001–2008. The exhibition was replaced by changing exhibitions 2008–2011. The Suomi Finland 1900 exhibition, which ran from 26.4.2012 to 1.3.2015, had 460 objects. The Story of Finland exhibition has 210 museum objects. The reduction in objects is thus obvious.

On the other hand, the number of photos and additional information has increased. Building a level of digital storytelling as part of the exhibition experience was an important goal, designed to make the visitor experience more interactive. Digitally it is also possible to create a whole world, for example around an artefact, in an entirely new way. Digital interactivity is one of the building blocks of exhibition experience building (Roppola 2012, pp. 41–43).

Conclusion

Revamping the National Museum was a complex process. National museums easily turn into temples of history or museums within a museum because they are so closely linked to the building of a state; architecture highlights the magnificence of a national story and exhibited artefacts become iconic. The mission of national museums is to be museums for the whole nation, and at the same time to be a showcase for tourists. The performances it builds are also part of the greater societal debate and structures of the nation, which is why its choices and what is left out matter. A long history and a certain way of performing both invite the new generation to renew itself and at the same time stay within a framework.

Nevertheless, doing a main exhibition is a motivating project for the museum staff, every time, and the key element of motivation is the opportunity to create something new. Both the 2000 and 2017 reforms aimed for a clear change, and the idea papers are surprisingly similar. In any case, new kinds of professional backgrounds and skills are a relatively new phenomenon in expert and research-driven work. In the 2010s technology, marketing, sales and event production tasks became an indispensable part of the museum industry. The main trend in audience work was inclusion and participation. Through audience-centred thinking and working methods, the services of museums began to be genuinely designed to be accessible and to meet the expectations people have.

Work processes were flexible in 2015–2017. Interpretations have changed from knowledge-based to artistic or community-based entities. At the same time, however, co-operation with the university has been further strengthened, and the latest research information is also valued. The museum's own research work has decreased and expertise in the field of history has been outsourced. The customer experience for the general public has been the starting point for concepts and processes. The overall renewal of the National Museum has been successful in terms of visitors. But it is not just because of the new main exhibition; it is also due to a renewal of the whole, including interesting and frequently changing short-term exhibitions and an attractive program of events together – places to be and do.

Over the last twenty years, the tools of interpretation have become more diverse. At the same time the number of objects has decreased. Materialistic history has become more intangible and more interpretative. Opportunities for interpretation have been given to non-traditional museum professionals while exhibiting, and the aim of the 2017 exhibition was also to give visitors the opportunity to interpret the relation of history to modern times and to their own personal lives. Elements of interactivity have included digitalisation and hands-on implementations. The concrete object preserved by museums is still something that other memory organisations do not offer, and in an increasingly digitalized world, an encounter with an authentic and physical artifact may be what the public is interested in, and for which there is greater need.

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From Object to Subject – Creating relevant and engaging experiences

Mikko Myllykoski

Abstract

The global science centre movement and its learning-by-doing philosophy reached Finland in the 1980s. In the beginning, Heureka, the Finnish science centre (founded in 1989) was regarded as the odd man out in the museum community, but it was the change-agent in introducing audience orientation and socio-constructivist pedagogy to the field. Finland's 75th anniversary exhibition (1992) was a forerunner in adapting interactive methods to historical narratives in order to create connections and empathy with the people of the past and to tell a human story about the modernisation of Finnish society.

Heureka has moved from production of interactive exhibitions towards deeper engagement of the audiences through participatory methods and co-creation. *Heureka Goes Crazy* (2013) is an example of a challenging controversial topic, i.e., mental health, which was turned into an interactive exhibition with the help of experience experts, i.e., people who live with mental illness. With this somewhat edgy topic the science centre had to challenge its own mission, "sharing the *joy* of discovery", in order to have a strong societal impact. The exhibition's adaptations for French, Portuguese and North American audiences showed the sensitivity that is needed in discussing mental health with diverse audiences in different cultural contexts.

The chapter is written from a practitioner's point of view, and it aims to fill a gap in Finnish museology about the role of science centres in audience-orientation by sharing lessons learned and methods in the process of producing exhibitions that would be relevant for their potential audiences.

Keywords: science centre, audience engagement, constructivism, experience experts, mental health

Introduction

Museum, a Temple or the Forum?, was a relevant question fifty years ago, when Duncan F. Cameron wrote his article in *Curator – The Museum Journal* (1971). He stated that museums are in need of psychotherapy because of their identity crisis (Cameron 1971, p. 11). Today, this question seems outdated: museums have chosen to become fora, central public meeting places. Their exhibitions, events and communication strategies have developed. They now keep the diversity of

audiences in mind and reach them effectively. At the end of the day, a museum is all about people, as Pettersson discusses in this volume. I have worked in science engagement through interactive exhibitions since 1990 at Heureka, the Finnish science centre. In this chapter, I intend to explore some main steps on how our institution has learned to work not only for, but also with audiences, in order to have more societal relevance and impact. I have a practitioner's viewpoint and I wish to share what I have found helpful in shaping engagement strategies at Heureka.

The focus of museums has moved from the object, the collection or the exhibition to the subject, the visitor. The visitor is the protagonist, and the owner of the museum experience. Yet no visitor is an island; the audience should also be seen and understood as part of a social group. To visit a museum is a social experience. In our case, according to annual visitor surveys, more than 99% of the audience visit Heureka, the Finnish science centre, as a member of a group.

The interactive exhibition production is nowadays logically called experience production, because of the focal shift from exhibition object to visitor experience. The experience production borrows methods and tools from theatre: scenography and dramaturgy are key elements in creating concepts for fascinating learning environments. This development has opened museums up, giving them a huge potential to create a fluid mental state for their visitors (Csikszentmihalyi-Hermanson 1995). Since there is no such thing as one audience, but a diversity of visitors, museum professionals need tools to respond to the needs of different types of learners. We need to understand why people visit museums, i.e., what is their motivation?

Luckily, there is research and evidence relevant to this. Research can inform us to create relevant experiences for our guests. We believe in free-choice learning, but this does not mean that we should leave visitors on their own, in total freedom. On the contrary, we need to gently design environments that offer the audience a sensible balance of comfort and appropriate challenge. Freedom of choice does not mean endless freedom, but a feeling of control over their own experience (Falk 2009, pp. 142–145, pp. 150–152). We need to build feedback loops to increase our understanding of visitors: what are their attitudes and expectations, what is their knowledge base, etc.? With this kind of insight, it is possible to surprise the visitor and exceed their expectations.

After briefly explaining how the birth of the modern science centre movement has impacted museums generally, I will take an early example of how in Finland the interactive exhibition methodology was also used in the humanities, specifically in social and cultural history. My example is Finland's 75th anniversary exhibition (1992), when I started my museum career as exhibition coordinator, creating the content and interaction for and with visitors. My other example is a more recent one: Heureka Goes Crazy, an exhibition on mental health, which Heureka produced in 2013 and has subsequently been on tour in Europe and North America. This is an example of where Heureka worked with experience

experts and understood the need to be sensitive with audiences in diverse cultural contexts, as the exhibition was a touring one.

Science Centres in the Museum Family

Public science demonstrations and exhibitions have a history that dates back to the 19th and early 20th century, with institutions such as Urania in Berlin (1888), Deutsches Museum in Munich (1903), the Science Museum in London (1909) and Palais de la découverte in Paris (1937). However, the two institutions that gave a critical boost to the global science centre movement were established in 1969: The Ontario Science Centre (Toronto) and The Exploratorium (San Francisco), with their variety of open-ended scientific experiments (Persson et al. 1999, pp. 16–22). At that time, the American Association of Museums (AAM) did not regard the newcomer seriously as a museum, since it did not have collections. The founder of The Exploratorium, nuclear physicist Frank Oppenheimer, is said to have answered: "I have a collection of the greatest ideas that have affected mankind". Already in 1982 AAM turned 180 degrees on the topic and gave Oppenheimer the Distinguished Service for Museums award, emphasising "the impact of [his] ideas and methods on museums and museum education" (Hein 1990, p. 146; Cole 2009, p. 203).

Thinking in the museum world started changing. Already in 1974, the Tenth Assembly of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) defined the museum as:

> A non-profit-making, permanent institution in the service of society and of its development, and open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates, and exhibits, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment, material evidence of man and his environment.
> (Hudson 1977, p. 1)

For science centres, the important change was in the addendum of the definition. Conservation institutes, exhibition galleries of libraries and archives, as well as zoos, aquaria, science centres, planetariums and natural, archaeological and ethnographic monuments and sites, were also considered to comply with this definition, in addition to museums designated as such (Hudson 1977, p. 1). More than a generation later, in 2007, ICOM managed to incorporate the idea of conceptual collections into the renewed museum definition: museums are about both the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environments. Thus, the intangible can refer, for example, to the scientific method, ideas and scientific culture, among other traits of culture and heritage.

In Finland, the first science centres were founded towards the end of a long economic growth period in the 1980s: Tietomaa (Knowledgeland in English) in Oulu (1988) and Heureka, the Finnish science centre, in Vantaa (1989). The naming reflects the goals of these two institutions: Tietomaa started as a computer class with an entirely Finnish name, and was aimed at a regional audience. Heureka, on the other hand, took the universally understood Greek word from the famous quote of Archimedes, capturing the spirit of invention and joy of

discovery. Heureka was aimed from the start not only at national, but also at international audiences and recognition.

Even though Heureka fitted the ICOM definition of museums, and became a member, as well as a member of the national Finnish Museum Association Museoliitto, the Finnish Heritage Agency (until 2018 The National Board of Antiquities) does not regard Heureka as a museum, for example in its visitor statistics. *Suomen museohistoria*, the history of Finnish museums, published in 2010 (Pettersson & Kinanen 2010), also leaves science centres out of its narrative. The only reference to science centres is in an article about Finnish museum audiences, where distinguished museum educator Marjatta Levanto observes that behaviouristic pedagogy, where information is delivered one-way, top-down, from experts to the audience, has dominated in Finnish museums. She notes that the discovery-based learning by doing philosophy was first adapted by science centres, and then, little by little, has influenced the traditional museum field, where the constructivist approach is now generally accepted (Levanto 2010, p. 105).

The notion that science centres are museums is still not common knowledge in Finland. Looking, for example, at the Wikipedia pages on museums, you can see a difference: the page in Finnish states that science centres are "not to be mixed in with museums"; they are regarded as "something like museums". The page in English is true to the ICOM definition and also describes interactive science centres without tangible collections as an integral part of the museum family.

Interestingly, the ongoing discussion about redefining ICOM's museum definition has moved further and further in the direction of audience-orientation. The proposal that was discussed, but not approved, at the General Assembly of ICOM in Kyoto (2019) emphasises dialogue, democracy, polyphony and inclusion; it embraces the future as well as the past, heritage and the diversity of memories. Instead of addressing collections and their tangibility, the suggestion mentions "understandings of the world" as the topic to be collected, preserved, researched, interpreted, exhibited and enhanced by museums. This aligns with the socio-constructivist philosophy of science centres, with its emphasis on meaning-making. Eero Ehanti describes the debate around the suggestion for a new definition in his chapter about museum ethics in this volume.

The Finnish interpretation of a science centre idea differed from the pioneering Exploratorium (San Francisco) or Ontario Science Centre (Toronto), which were both established in 1969. Heureka did not limit itself to the natural sciences exclusively, but included all academic subjects in its programme. Both national languages supported this understanding: *tiede* in Finnish, and *vetenskap* in Swedish refer to all knowledge, and they cover both the humanities and social sciences, just as the German term *Wissenschaft* does. At Heureka, all academic study was considered fit to be experienced first-hand by the public.

The road to the opening of Heureka included a series of pilot exhibitions to test the interactive exhibition medium, audience interaction and learning. The first

one, titled *Physics 82* (1982) can be regarded as an obvious choice. Many physical phenomena and classical experiments are rather uncomplicated and practical to repeat, observe and understand in real time. The second pilot exhibition *Pulssi* (1985) dealt with medicine, but the third *Vipunen* (1987), took its topic from the humanities and was about the origins of Finns and the Finnish language. The emphasis of the exhibition was on linguistics. Visitors could compare sentences in different Finno-Ugric languages, listen to a reconstructed proto-Uralic language and gain understanding that Finnish also belongs to a large group of languages with a similar grammar structure and vocabulary, where many words related to the human body, fishing and hunting are similar.

But how can we make history interactive? You cannot test, repeat and verify history the same way you can test, repeat and verify classical scientific experiments in physics, for example, by dropping a ball and a feather and observing their behaviour in open air on one hand, and in a vacuum on the other. The French revolution does not fit into the test tube.

I joined Heureka to work on a team to create an interactive history exhibition. The 75th anniversary of Finnish independence was approaching. Our task was to tell the story of the modernisation of Finland, not just the 75 years of independent Finland, but rather the 150-year process that led to the modern welfare state. The focus was not on political development, but on social and cultural history, as well as the everyday experience of common people.

In the Finnish museum scene, there were no examples to follow, and internationally the project team knew of only some museums, such as the Imperial War Museum in London, which offered examples of the use of immersive spaces in engaging audiences with history.

One important leading idea in the planning process was empathy. From the classical constructivist hands-on, brains-on method of science centres, we should move towards heart-on: the audience of the exhibition should feel connected with the past and the people who inhabited it. On the other hand, there should also be a differentiating element. Times were indeed different. "The Past is a foreign country; they do things differently there", as the famous line of poet L.P. Hartley goes, from which David Lowenthal took the title for his groundbreaking book dedicated to the uses of history. Lowenthal's (1985) study was one influential inspiration for the project team.

The title of the exhibition *Jukola–Jakomäki–Brussels, Finland 75 Years*, refers to three steps in the modernisation of the country: Jukola represents the thoroughly rural Finland, the vulnerable country of the times when Aleksis Kivi wrote the first novel in Finnish, *The Seven Brothers* (1870), and at the time when Finland suffered the last peace-time famine (1866–68) in Europe. Jakomäki, the next step in the title, is a rapidly-built (1967–69), remote, and in its early days emblematically infamous suburb of Helsinki, which represents the rapid urbanisation and suburbanisation of the country after the second world war. Finally, Brussels, the *de facto* capital of Europe, refers to the future, the European integration process,

which reached Finland through a referendum in 1994, a bit more than two years after the exhibition was opened, when Finns decided to join the European Union.



Figure 1. The poster for the *Jukola–Jakomäki–Brussels, Finland 75 Years* exhibition, the first interactive exhibition about Finnish history (1992). Photo: Heureka.

What were the methods used in the exhibition to build empathy through interaction and engagement? In 1992, the following examples were novel for a history exhibition and part of the terminology (gamification, co-creation, etc.) was not yet in use in the profession:

> Gamification. The famine of 1866–68 was narrated through an interactive computer game *Rescue Your Family*, where the player could use different paths for their family, who had to leave home because of hunger. The storylines were illustrated with historical photos of the tragedy, which was the last peace-time famine in Europe, killing 10% of the population. All options in the computer game led to at least some loss of lives – game over.
>
> Immersive, full-body interface. Travel in late 19th-century Finland was depicted in a story based on Mrs. Alec Tweedie's travelogue *Through Finland in Carts* (published in 1897). Visitors got on a vintage horse cart and travelled through an audiovisual roundtrip in Finland by pulling the reins, experiencing several types of transportation, from trains and carts to bicycles, steam and tar boats.
>
> Immersion. The exhibition had several hands-on immersive spaces, such as a 1930's train wagon, WWII style trenches and dugouts, a 1950's classroom and a 1970's bar atmosphere with a 20-cent slot machine and a jukebox, featuring singles from the Finnish-American Hiski Salomaa from the 1930s to the punk band *Ne Luumäet* in 1992. The Finnish Bank was decommissioning 20-cent coins at that time, but the bank gave Heureka

special permission to distribute them for the exhibition's slot machine experience.

Multisensory simulator. The home-front experience in an air-raid shelter during the Winter War (1939–40) was built in the cellar of Heureka, reached by a spiral staircase from the exhibition gallery. The soundscape narrated approaching airplanes, sirens and bombardment getting closer, finally hitting the target – the building right above the visitors. The effect of the explosion was fortified by a pneumatically moving double floor and theatre smoke that floated in through the ventilation. The simulator elicited powerful emotional reactions in some of the visitors, as they relived their childhood trauma. The exhibition gave many older people the opportunity, and perhaps even permission, to share their wartime experiences with their children and grandchildren.

Personalised experience. *Alcohol*, the multimedia game about the history of alcohol consumption, offered the user the possibility to choose from beer, wine, a gin long drink and spirits for a typical week in their life, and then the program calculated their annual consumption. The program also estimated how much weight the person would gain if they would otherwise have just enough calory intake in their diet, with any drinking on top of that. The program also asked the user if the given volumes of weekly alcohol intake should be tripled, because research of drinking habits had proved that people consume three times more than they indicate. The visitor's alcohol consumption was also compared historically with the average Finn and citizens of some European countries representing beer (Belgium and Czechoslovakia), wine (France and Italy) and hard-liquor drinking (Poland and the Soviet Union) cultures.

Co-creation. *Memories from the Drawer* was a thematically organised exhibition of photographs selected from what the audience had sent to Heureka as memories that they felt were meaningful. The project was carried out in collaboration with the newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat*, and thousands of photographs were also used to make the cover story of the monthly supplement of the newspaper. This was the first time that this magazine had contacted its readers directly. The themes that popped up repeatedly from the photo collection included harvesting, coffee drinking and the new cow, horse or car of the family. Another exhibit showed visitors' messages to decision makers.

All these engagement methods are still valid in the 2020s and have, as a matter of fact, become mainstream in Finnish museum exhibitions, although it has taken quite some time. As Hanna Forssell discusses in this volume, the plans that were made in 1995 to renew the main exhibition of the Finnish National Museum were still entirely object-focused: "Show what we have". In these plans, modern computer technology was also understood as an object for display rather than an actual communication or engagement tool: "Computer equipment should be present in most of the rooms", was one of the aims of the renewal. Memorable

experiences and audience friendliness were mentioned in the process, but not the methodology on how they could be achieved. The renewal that was executed at the National Museum in 2000 was still based on behaviouristic pedagogy – top-down, from the researcher and curator to the audience.

The evolution of technology has changed museum exhibitions, but this change can remain technical and superficial if it does not deepen interaction or engagement with the audience. In recent years, the most fundamental change has taken place in the methodology to include communities around the museums and to invite them to the planning-table, in order to produce more relevant content for the audience (Simon 2016). Viita-aho discusses in this volume how participatory methods can be used to the extent that they even question a museum's authority and power.

Heureka invited experience experts to its exhibitions for the first time in 1994 during the *Crime and Fake* exhibition. The police car exhibit was from time-to-time attended by the police, and the audience could have direct interaction with these professionals. Similar collaboration was organised during the *Forest and Me* exhibition (1998), where crafts teachers assisted visitors in using a crafts class and its equipment to make simple woodworks which could be taken home.

A deeper collaboration with experience experts was organised through the three dialogue exhibitions, which by their nature totally relied on the presence of the expert guide/inspirer. In this case we called them ambassadors too, because they bridged the gap between them and us. The ambassadors were blind or visually impaired individuals in *Dialogue in the Dark* (2000–2001), sign language speakers in *Dialogue in Silence* (2007–2008) and 70+ year olds in *Dialogue with Time* (2016–2017). These exhibition concepts, which were developed by social entrepreneurs Andreas Heinecke and Orna Cohen, were based on Martin Buber's philosophy that all learning happens in dialogue. These exhibitions were built as platforms for encounters where the ambassadors, who represent marginalised disabled groups, are portrayed through their strengths, skills and experience, and the visitors, who mostly feel able-bodied are put in a position where they lack skills and discover the experience and creativity of the differently-abled (Cohen and Heinecke 2016, pp. 55–58).

When Heureka decided to consider making an exhibition on mental illness and mental well-being, there were many issues to consider.[1] There was no doubt about the importance of the topic. According to an international research group, more than 20 percent of EU citizens receive help for mental health problems in their lifetime. Similarly, in the United States, the health authorities estimate that nearly 20 percent of the US population suffers from some type of mental health disorder. The topic concerns us all, either personally or through someone near to us.

1. I have treated this topic more in length in my article Myllykoski (2016), written in Finnish for the publication initiated by the Finnish Association of Science Editors and Journalists.

We were aware that discussing a taboo subject, such as mental health, would not only be ground-breaking and fascinating, but also challenging. Science centres are all about making science fun, and the audiences are usually children and families. At Heureka, as in most science centres, one-third of our visitors are primary-school age or younger. Would this exhibition have anything to offer our youngest audiences, or should we accept it from the start that they and their families, as well as youngest school groups, would stay away from the exhibition? Should a science centre take a risk and potentially alienate its most loyal visitor groups?

With the topic of mental health, Heureka would also intellectually be challenging its own role and core ideology: sharing the joy of discovery. Could learning about psychosis, anorexia or depression be a source of joy? We decided to accept the challenge, thinking that in widening understanding and creating empathy, we had a lot more to win than to lose. After all, mental health is no longer entirely off limits, and it is widely discussed, for example, in the media. However, it is also a topic that is easy to ignore or to avoid. It is not something you happily chat about at a family dinner.

We expected that an exhibition on mental health would serve as a place where audience members would have the chance and be allowed to talk about matters that are otherwise difficult to broach. In reality, much of the audience visit science centres out of general interest and curiosity, without necessarily knowing which specific exhibitions are even going on. In that case, the exhibition could stimulate potential interest in the general public, who would not be part of the core target group because of their educational and professional background. This could amplify the impact of the exhibition. Ultimately, an exhibition about mental health is an exhibition about the human condition and its many dimensions. The boundary between the physical and the mental has always fascinated humans. Everyone experiences the mind and its wellbeing on a highly personal level.

We also took these initial considerations about the risks of a taboo topic to an international level and suggested the exhibition theme for a European consortium collaborative. Our partners were equally excited to take the risk, and this exhibition was produced in collaboration with La Cité des sciences et de l'industrie, Paris, and Ciência Viva, Lisbon, with Heureka taking the project lead.

The planning of the exhibition began by contacting the Finnish Central Association for Mental Health, which promotes the cause of psychiatric patients and rehabilitees, and the Finnish Mental Health Association, which supports mental health through preventive action. We invited the two bodies, as well as a number of psychiatrists, psychologists and other scientists, to join our exhibition advisory board. The advisory committee urged us to focus on the various aspects of mental well-being and how it can be maintained. It was decided that the underlying tone of the exhibition should be optimistic.

The primary experts and advisors we consulted were, however, experts by experience. With the help of the Finnish Central Association for Mental Health,

we found ten people who suffered from mental health problems and who had benefitted from the help they received. They had also been trained to talk about their personal experiences to others. Among the experts by experience were people who suffered from schizophrenia, depression, anorexia, hearing voices (psychosis), bipolar disorder, a former addict who had attempted suicide and a family member of a mental health patient. The experts by experience contributed to the planning work throughout the project and also assisted with the exhibition itself. In addition to one-on-one interviews, these experts met the whole planning team and participated in a brainstorming meeting with the Heureka staff.

Involving experts by experience to the planning of the exhibition was in line with the motto of the disability movement, "Nothing about us without us", and also helped in concrete terms to create a more realistic, effective and humane exhibition experience. The experts by experience helped us develop ideas, commented on and debated them, tested the prototypes and made suggestions for improvements. They were also occasionally available to the exhibition visitors for a chat.

Initially it was thought that depression could be expressed through a grey room with no windows, where the visitor could wear heavy boots and curl up under a lead blanket. This would allow the audience to empathise with what it is like for a depressed person to try to get up and go out. Even some of the scientific advisors thought the idea was good, but the experts by experience saw their own situation completely differently, i.e., when you are depressed, you feel nothing. How can we simulate something than cannot be felt?

This comment changed the idea completely. We decided to look at depression from three perspectives: the depressed person, their spouse and their child. The exhibition experience was built within a living room, where the father, who is depressed, sits in an armchair, the 10-year-old son is playing on the floor and the mother is working in the kitchen behind a glass door. The viewer hears each family member's thoughts as a monologue, so that they can empathise with each of their experiences. All mental disorders, not just depression, affect the family and friends of the person living with the illness. Shedding light on each of the different experiences, therefore, gives a more accurate picture of the phenomenon and of human experience.

The planning process crystallised two central themes for the project: to help reduce the stigmatisation of people with mental disorders and to encourage visitors to look after their own mental health. We specifically wanted to avoid giving the message that the exhibition was a place where one could come and diagnose themselves or others.

The content of the exhibition was built around three themes. The first, *The Labelled*, discussed how mental disorders have been viewed and treated in the past and present. How have people defined normal at different times? The exhibition begins with a boundary stone on the *Borderlines of Insanity*, with a constantly moving borderline projected around it, which makes the visitors think about the

question of what we mean by madness. Some of the many dark chapters in the history of mental health care are not that distant in history. For example, the lobotomy was invented as late as the 1940s. Cutting off connections between the frontal lobes and the rest of the brain will remove the symptoms of the mental disorder, but also drastically alter the personality of a human being. Awarding the Nobel Prize in 1949 to the Portuguese neurologist António Egas Moniz, who developed the lobotomy, is considered one of the most unfortunate decisions made by the Nobel Foundation.

The second central theme of the exhibition, *How Does it Feel?*, aims to simulate what it feels like to live with a mental disorder. The audience of the science centre knows to expect new and surprising – and often lifelike – multisensory experiences relevant to the topic at hand. In addition to the depression scenario described above, *When Reality Distorts* is an immersive representation of the experiences that a psychotic might go through. In this experience, the visitor sits down in a chair at a barbershop and starts hearing voices that are talking about them. At the same time, some of the surfaces around the customer take a surreal and scary appearance, created by means of projections.

One of the simulations is the *Schizophone*, an acoustic installation created by the Parisian artist Pierre-Laurent Cassière. The installation is a simple headset with two funnels that direct the hearing of the user to the sides so that they can hear even quite distant sounds as long as they come directly from left or right, but any sound made in front of them is practically inaudible. Wearing the headset gives an experience of fragmented reality. The user might be hearing words or conversation that their visual perception does not corroborate. According to one of our experts based on experience, using the Schizophone felt very similar to when he hears voices. Obviously, the Schizophone cannot simulate the entire life experience of a person with schizophrenia, but it does offer the visitor a glimpse into a situation where perceiving the reality around you makes no sense.



Figure 2. *The Schizophone* by Pierre-Laurent Cassière, a simulation of schizophrenia in *Heureka Goes Crazy* (2013) exhibition, was exhibited in Ciência Viva as "Loucamente" (2014). Photo: Courtesy of Ciência Viva, Lisbon, Portugal.

The exhibition experience also makes use of Edvard Munch's expressionist painting *The Scream* (1893), in which a figure, whilst holding his ears, seems to be purging all his anxiety. The entire landscape seems to be screaming. Munch himself wrote about the moment depicted in the painting: "I stood there trembling with anxiety … and I sensed an infinite scream passing through nature" (Stanska 2016). The painting is shown on a screen, framed like a real painting. The frame hides a video camera that captures the face of the visitor approaching the exhibit and replaces the face in the painting with that of the visitor. The title of the installation is *Is it Me?* Within the context of the exhibition, the video work is humorous, but with a serious edge that elicits empathy. The visitor gives their face to the screamer; it could be me.

How Does it Feel? is the exhibition section that gives voice to experts based on experience. Their stories told by themselves can be heard at the *My Life* exhibit – what was the process like to fall ill, to seek treatment or get help and get better. The people are shown as life-size video images. When watching the recording across a round table, the visitor encounters each expert by experience face to face. The situation is non-hierarchical and respectful, aiming to create a sense of trust and empathy.

The third theme of the exhibition is *Service Station for the Mind*. This section encourages visitors to express and identify emotions, to process their problems and promote mental wellbeing through social activities. It has exhibits that are of most interest to the youngest audiences, such as the video installation where eyes are gleaming in a dark forest at night. By waving a hand in front of scary images, they turn into stardust and then into harmless animals. Some of the eyes are too high for children to reach, so they need the help of adults to face and dispel their fears.

The adult audiences will probably enjoy the *Worry Shredder*. Visitors can write down their worries and feed it into the absurdist machine, which turns these worries into a flow of shredded paper. In addition to being fun, the exhibit also makes a serious and useful reference to a technique that a stressed-out person can use to manage worries that might keep them up at night, i.e., write them on a piece of paper for later reflection.

The Service Station for the Mind also provided an opportunity to participate in an ongoing research project. Visitors could take an extensive series of cognitive tests and, if they so wished, permit the use of the results and their personal data by a research group studying schizophrenia at the University of Helsinki. The long-term study aims to establish whether cognitive tests could indicate susceptibility to schizophrenia.

The definition of a sound mind changes over time and varies among cultures. During the planning stage, decisive differences between the European consortium members came to the fore concerning the nature of mental health. The understanding among Finnish experts is that mental health should be seen on a spectrum; a person may be healthy at one point in their lives, and they may

become mentally ill at another point. It follows from this assumption that a person who is healthy today may have mental health problems in the future and, conversely, someone who is ill today, may be later free of the illness. The French expert advisors found it impossible to accept this approach. They saw mental health more as a dichotomy: a person is either well or ill, and it is not even possible for everyone to become ill. Seeing mental health as a continuum, for them, would deny people their differences and, ultimately, their illness. However, we found a way of negotiating around this issue, because everyone ultimately agreed that the primary goal of the exhibition was to coax the audiences into thinking about mental health and those who live with mental disorders. The focus of the exhibition was never to be on clinical diagnostics, but rather on different personal experiences.

Patients from a psychiatric hospital in Lisbon who were interviewed as experts by experience for the My Life videos appeared without their faces showing. The hospital had decided to protect the anonymity, especially of the schizophrenic patients, in case they might later regret their decision to participate in the exhibition. To treat all participants equally, the faces of all experts by experience were eventually blurred. Here, the well-intended protective measure does, however, turn against itself; it is as if a person recovering from mental illness is not a fully capacitated citizen. Hiding the face also conveys the message that the speaker has something to be ashamed of – they literally lose their face. This choice is proof in itself that the goal of the exhibition, destigmatisation, is a rightful and ambitious one. Suzie Thomas discusses in the ethics section of this volume the museal silence and its eight ways, as suggested by Mason and Sayner (2019). Here we see the museum's collusion in society's silence out of overprotection and, I would say, misunderstood respect for privacy.

The most significant practical differences between Finland, France and Portugal had to do with the naming of the exhibition, communication and marketing. After long consideration, Heureka decided to name its exhibition Heureka Goes Crazy. We consulted out stakeholders and experts by experience about the name, especially the use of word crazy, which is a disrespectful word in Finnish, but can figuratively have positive connotations. The mental health field had previously criticised, for example, Stockmann, a Finnish department store, for using the word crazy or mad in their marketing in a commercial context. However, the exhibition title Heureka Goes Crazy was unanimously approved by all experts. They felt it would attract attention and curiosity among those members of the public who would not be interested in a more moderately and non-controversially named exhibition. "An exhibition that takes such a respectful view of the theme, with the aim of destigmatising mental health problems and supporting people who are recovering from mental illnesses, deserves all the attention it can get," stated the Finnish Central Association for Mental Health (Myllykoski 2016, p. 189).

In Portugal, the exhibition was named *Loucamente* (Madly), an edgy expression, which has a clinical meaning, but especially in the parlance of the young, is a

positive term, a similar notion to what the word can have in Finnish. *Loucamente* means madness in the sense of testing your extreme boundaries, knowing yourself. The name was chosen because Ciência Viva wanted to market the exhibition from the perspective of mental health, not mental illness.

The French decided to go for a name which is based on the English term mental disorder rendering it into French as *MENTAL DESORDRE*. The name was disorderly on many levels. The proper term in French is something completely different: *troubles psychiques*, mental disorders. In the poster, the letters were laid out in a disorderly manner and in the title, the noun and the adjective had changed places. According to French colleagues, MENTAL DESORDRE could also be associated with a rock band, being modern, inviting and impressive. The subtitle of the exhibition helped explain the unusual exhibition name: *Change your view on mental disorders* (*Changez de regard sur les troubles psychiques*).

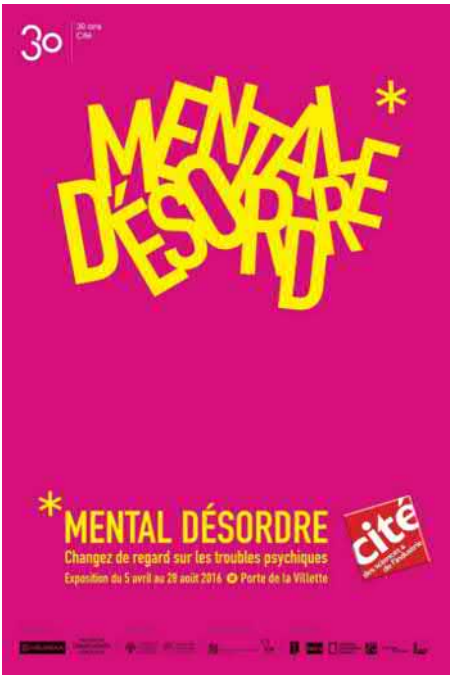


Figure 3. The poster for the French version of *Heureka Goes Crazy*. Photo: Courtesy of Universcience, Paris, France.

Heureka Goes Crazy was the recipient of the 2014 Roy L. Shafer Leading Edge Award for Visitor Experience, which was presented at the annual conference of ASTC (Association of Science-Technology Centers) in Raleigh, North Carolina. Following this recognition, many Northern American science centres showed interest in the exhibition. We received the most enthusiastic feedback from Eric Jolly, President of the Science Museum of Minnesota. Jolly said he had been looking for his next socially meaningful exhibition project following the 2007 exhibition *RACE – Are we so different?*, which he curated in collaboration with

the American Anthropological Association and which was very controversial, and even led to threats being made against him.

The Science Museum of Minnesota studied the exhibition thoroughly and decided to bring it to North America and take responsibility for its tour there. However, the title had to be changed; the use of the word crazy was totally out of question. Another modification was that when the original text described patients suffering from a mental illness, in the American version they were more neutrally living with the illness. After long considerations the American title of the exhibition became *Mental Health: Mind Matters*. A recent study about controversy in science exhibitions takes Mental Health: Mind Matters as an edgy and provocative example of how science museums can responsibly deal with complex socio-scientific issues and not remain "temples of, and for, scientific truth" (Pedretti & Navas Iannini 2020, p. 160).



Figure 4. *Heureka Goes Crazy* exhibition goes to America as *Mental Health: Mind Matters*. Photo: Courtesy of Science Museum of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN, USA.

In the exhibition content one element was sorely missing, from the American perspective: the exhibition does not discuss post-traumatic disorder, PTSD, at all. According to estimates, 3.5 percent of the US population suffers from PTSD, which was classified as a mental disorder in 1980 owing to a high number of PTSD diagnoses made for veterans of the Vietnam War. In the rest of the world, it is estimated that 0.5–1 percent of the population suffers from PTSD. Approximately 9 percent of the US population suffers from PTSD during their lifetime. Up to 20 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans are estimated to suffer from PTSD. The Ontario Science Centre in Toronto also showed interest in hosting the exhibition and similarly pointed out that PTSD is also an essential theme for Canadian war veterans. Moreover, PTSD is caused not only by war experiences,

but also by any violent incidents, traffic accidents, natural disasters and other life-threatening situations.

Understanding the Audience and Inviting Them to the Planning Table

Formal learning is measured by examinations, tests, grades and certificates, but the museum cannot be passed or failed, and performance cannot be measured. "Nobody ever flunked a science museum," Frank Oppenheimer famously summarised. Here, Oppenheimer recognised an essential strength of museums; they engage their audiences, without the pressure to perform and pass a test. An interactive exhibition offers an opportunity to create dialogue with nature, its phenomena and its diversity. Oppenheimer called Exploratorium "a museum of science, art and human perception" and "a community museum for awareness".

Museums are said to be informal learning environments for all ages. This is true, but why be satisfied with a definition that is based on negation: informal? It is typical for science centre visits to be fuelled by the visitor's own choices and own actions – learning by doing. For this reason, the form of learning can be more accurately described as free-choice learning (Falk 2001, pp. 6–8).

When free-choice learning is taken seriously, we have to review some traditional museum practices. The traditional term for a professional interpreting the content of a museum is a guide. The term comes with a top-down connotation: the guide takes the lead and the visitors follow. This does not invite visitors to take an active role. There is a similar connotation with the other term in use, facilitator. There is a difficult topic, and the facilitator makes it easier (Latin: facilis = easy) to understand. Even the French term *animateur* leaves a visitor in the passive role, when an animator makes a dead exhibition come alive. To solve this problem and to address a more active and participatory role for the visitor, Heureka introduced new terminology in 2008 and renamed its guides inspirers, who are there to inspire the audience. The term assumes a positive follow-up from the inspired audience.

Enough research has been conducted on learning at science centres that we are already able to describe many aspects of their impact. A valuable insight about the educational value of the constructivist museum, both in theory and practice, was written by George E. Hein, *Learning in the Museum* (1998) and a more recent volume by Falk and Dierking, *Learning from Museums: Visitor Experiences and the Making of Meaning* (updated edition 2018). Interactive exhibitions produce several different types of learning results. For example, interview-based research has examined the experience of the public immediately after a visit, but has also surveyed what people remember months afterwards. Learning results can roughly be divided into four types: knowledge and skills, perspective and awareness (new angles on a familiar topic and understanding the bigger picture), motivations and interests and last, but definitely not least, social learning (Falk et al. 2004, pp. 180–181).

Typically, each visitor reports that they experienced several different types of learning. Over time, knowledge and skills will fade from their mind, but in some cases the memories might even grow stronger. One particularly fascinating type of learning is the last one on the list, i.e., social learning. Science centres are almost always visited by groups; less than one percent of Heureka's visitors come alone. Interactive exhibitions place each visiting group in a new situation. This situation creates interaction in which the knowledge, skills, experiences, ideas and questions of the group's members emerge. The members of a group learn from each other, but also about each other.

There are ways to invite and include potential visitors to the planning process of an exhibition. One practical approach is the use of front-end studies, i.e., listening to the potential audience at the preparatory phase of the planning process. Here the voice of the visitor is heard before important decisions about the exhibition planning are made. The front-end studies are meant to tap the project planning group into the knowledge-base, attitudes and expectations of potential visitors.

A good front-end study employs open-ended questions; to hear the language of a potential visitor is a valuable part of accumulated understanding. Even the tone of voice is important and sometimes crucial to understanding different registers of language and meaning. Therefore, it is best if the exhibition project group executes any front-end interviews itself and does not outsource it to others. *Questioning Assumptions* is a practical and valuable handbook about executing front-end studies, co-authored by Lynn Dierking and Wendy Pollock (1998).

When science centre exhibitions are planned, a number of critical factors that aid learning and memorability should be taken into account. For example, it is important to give the public genuine opportunities to exercise choice, rather than merely offering one-way content. This means that visitors to the exhibition are in charge of their own visitor experience and that each experience is personal. On one hand, a museum visit should be a comfortable, stress-free and pleasant. On the other, it should also be appropriately challenging – intellectually, but why not physically challenging as well? A multisensory phenomenon experienced with the whole body is more memorable. In the best case, interaction is two-way; the exhibition audience is allowed to comment or leave their mark on the exhibition and its content by some other means.

In planning science centre exhibitions, a wide diversity of visitors should be considered. Rather than just age, sex and educational level, attention should be paid to the public's expectations and motivation for their visit. For example, Heureka has found it beneficial to understand the five different types of audiences suggested by John H. Falk in his *Identity and the Museum Visitor Experience* (2009). Falk's classification identifies groups in the science centre's, or any museum's, audience that attend for completely different reasons.

Explorers are usually curious and mainly interested in whatever is on offer at the time. Facilitators are primarily satisfying someone else's needs, e.g., of their child, their partner, a friend or relative. Hobbyists and professionals visit

the museum because they have a clearly defined interest in a particular topic. Experience seekers are looking for unique offerings in order to tick off their experiences at the science centre's most famous attractions. Rechargers want to enjoy the atmosphere and ambience rather than find out about a particular topic.

The identities behind these visits are situation-specific; the same person can visit the exhibition for different reasons on different days. They might bring their child to the science centre today on the child's terms, but decide to come back another time and do the things in which they themselves are interested.

In surveys, we have detected that all these identity groups are present among our audiences. Falk's identity model has influenced our planning ever since we created the *Heureka Classics* (2009) exhibition, which is still on display (partly renewed) due to its successful design solutions that accommodate the needs of various visitor identities. The exhibition design pays special attention to the child-adult or explorer-facilitator collaboration, e.g., by offering table-top exhibits at two different heights, depending on which side of the table you are standing (Myllykoski 2010). The minimalistic design approach with few colours and durable materials, such as massive birch, stainless steel and thick acrylic plates, are also meant to please the eye of the recharger. In Heureka Classics we introduced exhibition texts in digital format for the very first time, which enabled us to add text and languages. In addition to Finnish, Swedish and English, we added Estonian and Russian. This was done without occupying much space, for those who wish to know more, i.e., professionals and hobbyists. The identity model has also shaped the way we frame the questions in our standard visitor surveys (ca. 1200 annually). Instead of asking about general visitor satisfaction, we ask what the visitor's main expectation for the visit, and then to what extent this expectation was met by the actual visit. We have also carried out non-visitor surveys to better understand reasons for not visiting. "It did not occur to me" is a stronger reason than location or price, which has given an incentive to invest in marketing and communications.

Conclusion

The idea of the constructivist museum, a museum that engages its audience in active inquiry and free-choice learning, arrived in Finland with the birth of Heureka, the Finnish science centre, which applied the interactive methods of science centres to historical and societal exhibitions. The future of Heureka's engagement strategy is to further consider its impact on society. How could the joy of discovery reach more people and thus become more meaningful and relevant?

A useful concept to frame this kind of societal impact is science capital (Archer et al. 2015), which derives from Pierre Bourdieu's concept of cultural and social capital and covers science-related forms of it. This refers to individual's exposure and knowledge of science from values and attitudes to knowing people in science-related professions and having science as an everyday topic to discuss, to name a few aspects of it. Looking at the spectrum of how science, or knowl-

edge, thinking now of the larger meaning of the Finnish word *tiede*, science, can enrich human lives in diverse ways, museums can certainly identify new ways to be relevant to their communities. The notion of science capital helps in identifying the haves and have-nots, in detecting inequalities in participation and, finally, in promoting social justice. As the debated suggestion for the new museum definition states in its democratising spirit, "Museums aim to contribute to human dignity and social justice, global equality and planetary wellbeing".

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Entering the Mystery – *Helsinki Noir*, a fictional detective story created in a museum space

Sanna-Mari Niemi[1]

Abstract

Helsinki Noir – A Crime to Solve (17.9.2015–9.1.2017) at the Amos Anderson Art Museum in Helsinki was an example of a contemporary museum exhibition where fictional storytelling took a novel and emphasised approach. The exhibition, scripted by the curator, was built around a fictional murder mystery set in 1930s Helsinki. Coupled with lots of textual material and an open ending, the story called upon reader-visitors to assume the role of detective. The nature of the detective genre itself invited visitors to participate, fill in the gaps and thus co-author the exhibition narrative. This chapter analyses how textual elements and a multimodal museum exhibition design were used to provide visitors with the sense of a sequential storyline that could be read as an embodied version of detective fiction. This illuminates some of the special narrative features of museum exhibitions: their storytelling potential combines multiple sensory and semiotic channels, genuine artefacts, spatiality, temporality, full-bodied experience, interactivity and social experience.

Helsinki Noir included elements promoting immersion, interactivity and co-creation, one manifestation of this being a writing contest for upper-secondary school students to produce optional endings, incorporating the winning text into the exhibition booklet as an epilogue. I argue that Helsinki Noir aids our understanding of how fictionality, open subjectivity and changing the narrative role of the visitor can be used as a tool for audience engagement, and how certain textual strategies reflect contemporary ideology to discuss and share some of museums' institutional authority with their visitors.

Keywords: exhibition narrative, fiction, embodiment, spatial storytelling, audience engagement

Introduction

As a storytelling environment, museum exhibitions differentiate themselves from many other art forms, such as literature and cinema. Museums let their visitors encounter authentic objects in a multi-sensory manner and in a physical environment that is simultaneously intimate and social. The museum architecture and multimedia elements can be invested with meaning, and the whole exhibition narrative typically unravels through the movements and actions of

1. This chapter has been peer reviewed.

visitors, appealing to their many senses (on multisensoriality, see Levent & Pascual-Leone 2014). Museums have an institutional role in mediating accurate and research-based information around their collections. Therefore, subjectivity and fictionality might not strike us as typical expectations linked with museum narratives. However, storytelling is seen as an increasingly important tool for creating engaging and resonating museum experiences (Bedford 2014). What happens when a fictional detective story becomes the main theme of an art museum exhibition and visitors are invited to co-author the narrative? How does crime fiction engage the reader-visitor?

In this chapter, I analyse the exhibition Helsinki Noir – A Crime to Solve of the Amos Anderson Art Museum[2] as a multimedia text and a spatialised application of crime fiction. In addition to a theoretical background of museum studies and detective fiction criticism, my analysis is supported by a theme interview I conducted in 2018 with Susanna Luojus (interview 1), the museum curator and creator of Helsinki Noir. In this semi-structured interview, my questions concerned issues such as the exhibition process from the curator's perspective, and especially the ideas behind choosing the detective fiction genre as a mediating strategy for art. Through personal visiting and documentation, I have taken into account the various elements of the exhibition, such as displayed artworks, lighting, audio material, as well as architectural and spatial elements linked with the narrative. I also apply an artefact review (Thomas & Koskinen-Koivisto 2016, pp. 65–66), a combination of exhibition texts, leaflets, online information and other associated material.[3]

My main objectives are twofold. Firstly, to explore the strategies by which fictional storytelling contributes to the exhibition experience and audience engagement in meaningful ways. Secondly, to show that spatial and embodied qualities of the museum exhibition as a medium add layers to textual narrative as well. I find that the physicality of reading museum narratives is particularly interesting in the case of Helsinki Noir, a murder mystery, as detective fiction often emphasises the corporeality of both its victims and detectives (Plain 2001, p. 9). On a textual level, Helsinki Noir is a classic and arguably quite conservative example of a detective story. Yet, I argue that by providing a fully embodied experience, and thereby combining the elements and strengths of both the detective fiction genre and the museum exhibition narrative as a medium, Helsinki Noir established new kinds of relationships with its reader-visitors, inviting them to co-author the mystery narrative.

2. Amos Anderson (1878–1961) was a Swedish-speaking Finnish businessperson, newspaper publisher and patron of the arts. The Amos Anderson Art Museum functioned in Helsinki during the years 1965–2017. In 2018, the association founded by Anderson, Föreningen Konstsamfundet, opened a new museum, Amos Rex, in Helsinki.

3. I am grateful to Susanna Luojus and the museum Amos Rex for allowing me to consult archival material of this exhibition, including the curator's documentation of the exhibition-making processes, working stage exhibition texts and floor plans.

Detective fiction is a genre known to address hermeneutic activity, narrativity and intertextuality (Pyrhönen 1994, pp. 36–41). Typical of detective fiction, the Helsinki Noir exhibition script is a clear example of Barthes' hermeneutic code, which consists of various terms suggesting an enigma and aiming to hold reader-visitors in suspense throughout the narrative (Barthes 1990, pp. 18–20). Part of the hermeneutic code, a desire to find out, has been suggested to create a driving force for reading crime fiction. Therefore, I argue that Helsinki Noir gives us an insight into the possibilities of using fictional storytelling in museums as a method for audience engagement. To explore how a fictional detective story took physical space in the exhibition, I look at how the plot was divided into chapters along a circulation route, through textual elements and multimodal exhibition design. To address the question of audience engagement, I look at how the exhibition concept called for active visitor participation on several levels, both textual and other. Here, I apply a view of interactivity as a dialogic and reflective exchange between reader-visitors and exhibition elements, instead of physical or mechanical interaction (Roppola 2012, pp. 44–45). Firstly, the application of the crime fiction genre implies co-authoring from the reader's part in following the clues and solving the mystery. In Helsinki Noir, visitors were placed in the role of detective and thus invited to make a co-authoring reading of the museum narrative. Secondly, as the enigma only had partial closure and was left open-ended, visitors' output and imagination were needed for full disclosure. By organising a writing contest for young people and publishing the winning text as an appendix to the exhibition booklet distributed to all visitors, the museum showed an interest in and an appreciation of the visitor perspective. Thirdly, both texts and other exhibition design elements were used to add immersion and excitement throughout the circulation route. Furthermore, intertextuality, classical detective story topoi and detailed Helsinki-centredness added possible points of reference to make the exhibition experience more engaging and personal.

This chapter is part of an on-going discussion about new narratives and multiple voices in museums. As someone with a background in comparative literature and museum studies, I have taken an interest in fictionalisation and playfully innovative museum narratives. Authors and artists from Henry James to Marcel Duchamp, Thomas Bernhard and beyond have used the museum as a setting or metaphor over the centuries. In recent decades, museums themselves have become more active in experimenting with texts and the museum exhibition medium, as my examples in this chapter illustrate (see also Roberts 1997, pp. 76–77). Often, this is done in co-operation with artist-curators or artists-in-residence, but as Helsinki Noir showcases, curators themselves can lean towards a more creative style as well. One of the interesting aspects about openly fictional museum narratives is connected to the inherent discrepancy between fictional storytelling and the institutional role of museums in promoting balanced and research-based information about their collections. The Museums Act and ICOM's *Code of Ethics for Museums* highlight the mission of museums in con-

veying reliable, well-founded and accurate information in their exhibitions.[4] It is relevant to ask how fiction fits with this mission. This is an on-going discussion, as many contemporary museums use fictional storytelling as part of their exhibition approaches. There are even museums built around a fictional concept. Well-known international cases include Orhan Pamuk's Museum of Innocence[5] (Turkish Masumiyet Müzesi) in Istanbul, and Dennis Severs' House[6] in Spitalfields, London. Both Pamuk and Severs have created a physical museum and a relating book explaining the fictional contexts of their collections. These places have become popular attractions that open up explorations to the chiasmic relations between history, memory, imagination and personal and collective experience.

Already in 1995, Blais (1995, p. 314) raised the question of the possible poetic function of an exhibition text. Hourston Hanks (2012, p. 21) also asks what happens as a text goes beyond basic visitor information and collection interpretation and becomes "the very content, method or meaning" of a museum exhibition. Here, I ask a similar question around fictional museum texts. What is to be expected or gained by adopting a popular fictional genre instead of a so-called typical museum text? I maintain that introducing a high level of subjectivity and fictionality into museum exhibition narratives is not just about enter- or edutainment, but that it participates in a larger discussion about museums as knowledge-producers and mediators of collections and research. It is part of a trend that places visitors and personal experience in the focus of museum exhibitions. Multiplicity of textual styles highlight the importance of narratives and resonance in the context of both the museum experience and museum learning (MacLeod, Hourston Hanks & Hale 2012; Falk & Dierking 2000, pp. 177–189). This is a logical continuation for development in fields such as museum pedagogy, curation and the study of museum texts, as well as in redefining the mission of museums. The study of narrative has been introduced to new disciplines, such as architecture, cultural studies and museum studies, giving way to new understandings of how museums function as narrative spaces. Before entering the crime scene of Helsinki Noir, I look at some of these developments.

Theoretical Background Behind Creative Museum Texts

The museum environment is a powerful medium for storytelling purposes, because it provides an embodied, multi-sensorial spatial experience among authentic artworks and artefacts. MacLeod, Hourston Hanks and Hale (2012) see narrative as a promising mediating strategy in museums, a way to create museum environments that encourage engagement, memory and imagination.

4. ICOM *Code of Ethics for Museums*, available online at https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ICOM-code-En-web.pdf [Last accessed 4 March 2021]

5. Curiously enough, the Museum of Innocence received the European Museum of the Year award in 2014. I find that this reflects the recognition of the power of storytelling in museums of today.

6. According to *Dennis Severs' House*'s website, Severs (1948–1999) referred to the time capsule creation as a still-life drama: http://www.denisseversshouse.co.uk/the-tour [Last accessed 4 March 2021]

They accurately point out that narratives enable us to bridge some of the many gaps that museums deal with: temporal, geographical, cultural and physical (MacLeod, Hourston Hanks & Hale 2012, p. xxiii). The example of Helsinki Noir shows us that museum narratives do not have to be limited to bridging gaps in information, but can also have goals such as promoting interactivity, the aesthetic pleasure of language or intermedial relations between text and artworks. Especially with new digital technology, there can be many types of stories for various audiences in an exhibition space, and some of these can be fictional, be it a dramatized interpretation or re-enactment of history, an artistic intervention or a piece of literature. Hein (2002, pp. 168–169) suggests that drama and theatrical techniques can provide a way of engaging visitors emotionally, intellectually and sometimes even physically, thus bringing them closer to the contents of museums. I argue that the same applies to creative museum texts.

Especially since the 1980s, several significant shifts have affected our understanding of museum narratives. Both theoretical and practical, they have influenced, for instance, museum architecture, exhibition design and the study of museum texts. The so-called narrative and spatial turns have brought novel theoretical and interdisciplinary approaches to museum exhibitions and how artefacts and space interact, in fields such as architecture, art history and comparative literature (Ryan, Foote & Azaryahu 2016). In approaching museum communication and reading the museum exhibition as a text, I continue the discussion of, e.g., cultural theorist and critic Mieke Bal (1996) and linguist Louise Ravelli (2006). Another important approach is to look at the museum exhibition as narrative space. Researchers such as Tzortzi (2015), Roppola (2012), Ryan, Foote and Azaryahu (2016) and Bünz (2015) have all explored how museum architecture and spatial design can support, add and convey museum meanings in exhibitions. They have shown that through mindful planning, visual axes, corridors and transitions can become meaningful and affect the pace of a walking tour. It is also interesting to see how circulation routes and bodily movement are connected to plot development. There is a lot to discover from the viewpoint of literature as well. By looking at museum narratives, we gain new perspectives on story-space-relations and interactive storytelling. My research continues with this line of research, combining museum studies with the study of narrative. Yet so far, most of the research has been concentrated on the most typical museum exhibition narratives, such as chronological narratives in history museums. Although chronology and periodisation are still characteristic ways of organising museum exhibitions, other ways have started to gain importance as well, including the thematic exhibition. My contribution is to look at cases where textual narrative takes new roles, namely when a fictional text becomes the focus of an exhibition.

From Being an Authority Towards Co-authoring – Textual strategies for discussing the institutional voice

From the perspective of museum studies, we can point out that both pedagogical and museological shifts have affected contemporary museum narratives. The so-called new museology, starting in the 1980s, has brought in a critical reassessment of power relations, knowledge and representation in museums, leading to closer scrutiny of display techniques and labelling (Stam 2005, pp. 54–69, pp. 63–65). Instead of top-down master narratives, more attention is given to microhistories, groups that have previously been marginalised in official history, and more communal exhibition processes (MacLeod, Hourston Hanks & Hale 2012; Svanberg 2010). A large cultural trend, story-centredness, can be linked with museums moving their emphasis from objects to visitors and experiences (Henning 2006, pp. 90–91). As part of this process, instead of focusing on their authenticity, artefacts may be used even as reproductions and virtual models. In an experience-oriented or story-centred exhibition, the coherence of the story is emphasised over any specific artefact (Henning 2006, pp. 91–92). This applies to Helsinki Noir, which can be described as an experience-oriented or story-centred museum exhibition. In Helsinki Noir, artworks were largely used as supporting a fictional story, providing scenes and characters, corresponding to descriptions in literature.[7]

From the perspective of museum texts, Roberts (1997, pp. 1–6) traces a significant shift in museum narratives back to the 1970s and 1980s, reflected by visitor studies becoming more common and museum educators being introduced to exhibition teams. Introducing more visitor perspective alongside traditional curatorial practices led the way towards co-existing interpretations and epistemologies, taking steps towards shared authority over museum meanings and acknowledging that the very act of presentation is fundamentally interpretive (Roberts 1997, p. 2, pp. 72–75). As contemporary museums are striving for more inclusive and interactive practices, adopting multiple voices and styles in museum texts makes museums' communication more transparent, both from the viewpoint of museums and the exhibition medium. Openly fictional museum texts can be one way of emphasising the constructed nature of museum exhibitions, by drawing attention to their literary and institutional origins. Such self-reflexivity can encourage visitors to construct their own narratives about what they see (Roberts 1997, p. 143; Roppola 2012, p. 27).

One recent trend having influenced a rising level of creative museum texts and fictionality (such as in Helsinki Noir) is the popularity of the artist-as-curator (Tzortzi 2015, pp. 60–64; see also Paunu, this volume). Although museums

7. Although paintings and sculptures had an exhibit label, the story did not explicitly encourage visitors to read them. In fact, reading the labels could have caused an unnecessary pause to the plot, similar to long descriptions in a realist novel. Labels drew attention to the museum environment and thereby to the structures and practices underlying the exhibition medium itself, causing breaks in the visitor's immersion in the storyline.

have presented various storytelling elements before, we are witnessing a growth in creative museum texts done in co-operation, both in the form of audience interaction (visitor labels, Twitter hashtags, etc.) and artist/author/poet interventions, and in general, introducing a higher level of subjectivity in the museum exhibition. Often, these exhibitions show self-awareness of museum exhibition processes, playing with the ideas of how museal display and the museum institution influence artefacts. Recent examples of playful use of popular genres in Finland include the Tampere Art Museum's counter-fictional art exhibition *Is This for Real?* (20.5.2011–28.8.2011), which was curated and imaginatively scripted by science fiction novelist Johanna Sinisalo (2011). In Serlachius Museum Gösta's exhibition *The Model and the Mad Painter* (14.6.2014–7.5.2017), novelist Riikka Ala-Harja's fictional texts were focalised through models in the artworks, thus giving an active role and voice to those usually in a passive position of being looked at. In Turku Castle, the exhibition *A Few Words about Women* (8.3.2019–8.3.2020) popularised recent scholarship about women of 17th century Turku by using women's magazine styled texts. To complete the exhibition experience, on sale at the museum shop was a whole glossy-paged pastiche issue with articles such as interviews, love stories and career or fashion tips.

In Helsinki Noir, the museum curator took on the role of author (or became the curator-as-artist), by inventing a creative fictional story around both pre-existing and custom-made artworks. However, not only was the exhibition built around artworks, it was also partly generated by them. As the curator set out to make a fictional crime story, they commissioned the crime, or in this case, the victim, from contemporary artist Jarno Vesala. Vesala had a free hand to come up with a mysterious crime scene, and after the work was created, curator Luojus decided on the type of crime that would become the starting point of Helsinki Noir. There is interaction, or dialogue, as Bal (1996) might put it, between curator, artist, artworks and eventually visitors, as I shall discuss further.[8] Openness to such interaction has become an increasingly important part of current museum work. In what follows, I look at Helsinki Noir as a case study of a fictional museum exhibition text that encourages dialogic interaction.

Entering the Mystery of Helsinki Noir – Introducing the concept

The exhibition Helsinki Noir – A Crime to Solve was scripted and curated by Susanna Luojus and built around a fictional murder mystery set in 1930s Helsinki. Upon entering the Amos Anderson Art Museum and purchasing their ticket, visitors were given an exhibition guide called *Helsinki Noir – A Deadly Proposal* (Luojus 2015) that mimics pocket-book detective stories (figure 1). This booklet, as well as the whole exhibition, was complete with art deco style

8. According to Bal (1996, p. 3), museum exhibition can be regarded as discourse, and the gestures of showing and display can be understood as speech acts. Bal sees the museal display as a form of conversation where a first person, the narrator, tells a second person, the visitor, something about a third person, the object on display (ibid, pp. 3–4). All these parties bring something to the conversation.

graphic design by Minna Luoma. The dark blueish tones emphasised a sense of mystery and the visuality drew links to film noir imagery. The booklet included the exhibition story in three languages (Finnish, Swedish, English), a total of 64 pages, which is a considerable length for a museum exhibition leaflet. The story was divided into 13 chapters that each had a corresponding wall number and thus reading place in the exhibition. The narrative was sequential, a combination of literary text and spatial elements. The reader-visitor walked along a route where suggested points for stopping and reading had been marked.

In detective stories, the labyrinth is a recurrent motif, and the act of detection is often epitomised by finding the "red thread". Etymologically, the word clew refers to a ball of thread, such as the one helping Theseus out of the mythological maze, leading to the detection staple, the clue, something leading you out of a maze or helping you solve a problem (Irwin 1994, pp. 176–177). To find the solution of Helsinki Noir, visitors had to orient themselves through partially maze-like architecture. Some of this was undoubtedly due to the museum building's physical layout, but some was the effect of scenography (such as the use of added walls, roughly resembling residential blocks of the Töölö district, with colours matching a painting by Marcus Collin). The exhibition started on the 4th floor of the Amos Anderson Art Museum, then continued half a floor downstairs, and finally led to floor 4½, where it ended. The wall texts and floor stickers helped orient visitors. Nevertheless, there was a possibility for visitors to start from different floors and disregard the suggested route. Museum guides helped visitors to minimise the risk of confusion.

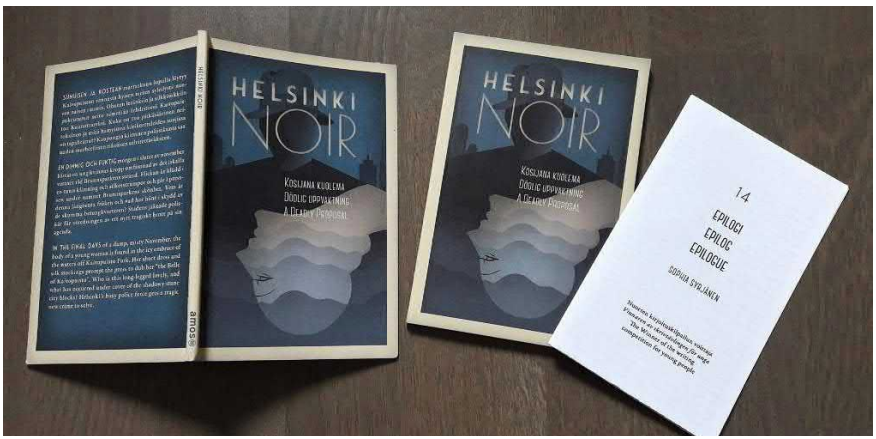


Figure 1. The booklet *Helsinki Noir – A Deadly Proposal* (Luojus 2015). The winning entry for the museum's writing contest for young people was added to the booklet as an epilogue. Photo: Sanna-Mari Niemi.

At the entrance, an introductory wall text explained that the exhibition concept "makes the viewer part of a crime drama", and is a "fictitious dramaturgic composition, partly based on a series of historical crimes". The historical crime series in question was revealed at the end of the exhibition and is discussed later in this

chapter. As the suite of the introduction text and the subtitle of the exhibition suggested, reader-visitors were encouraged to participate in solving the mystery.

In a theatrical manner, the story began as the curtain was lifted (this time, by visitors entering the exhibition). In the first exhibition room, there was another curtain, and visitors would find themselves at the scene of a sinister mystery. Shall we step into the darkness?

At the Crime Scene – The reader-visitor as detective

> Floating in the murky water was a long-legged young woman in a short dress and silk stockings, her hair spread out like a fan. Her face had that serene, coolly peaceful expression so typical of many of the recently drowned. (Luojus 2015, p. 44)



Figure 2. Jarno Vesala: *Behind the Curtain* (2015). Mixed media, including a video projection, audio and selected objects. In the back of the installation, the projection reveals the victim's corpse floating on the waves. Amos Rex Archives/ Photo: Stella Ojala

The story begins on a damp and misty November night in 1930s Helsinki with a sinister discovery. In the first exhibition room, a custom-made multimedia installation by Jarno Vesala called *Behind the Curtain* (figure 2) became visible and played with darkness and sweeping light illuminating the elements in sequence. On the front right was a dressing table with a mirror and some small items, including a set of letters. In the back of the installation emerged the body of a young woman, seemingly washed ashore by the undulating waves. The installation itself was ambiguous, but texts directed reader-visitors by raising the key questions: who is this "Belle of Kaivopuisto"[9], as the press dubs her, and – most importantly – whodunit?

9. Kaivopuisto (Swedish: Brunnsparken) is one of the city's oldest parks, located in the Southern tip of the Helsinki peninsula.

The beginning follows a long tradition of detective fiction by showing the discovery of a young and highly aestheticized female body and describing how it creates a sense of disorder in the community that needs to be amended (Plain 2001; Bronfen 1992). The victim is aestheticized both stylistically in the text (with terms such as "long-legged lovely" or "quite innocent and attractive in demeanour", Luojus 2015, p. 44), and through the installation. It is an artwork, meant to be looked at. "Reading" this body opens an interesting duality. Like an artwork that becomes readable for viewers and connoisseurs of art, in detective fiction the victim's corpse is textualized for the clever detective to read, becoming a corpse-as-text (Plain 2001, pp. 12–13; Bronfen 1992, pp. 6–7). And just like museum visitors, the fictional public swarms around the crime scene, camera shutters click and the press is "greedy for headlines that would sell papers" (Luojus 2015, p. 44). This echoes how the detective story genre has been accused of voyeurism; it pivots on people's appetite for crime, murder and the macabre, and the solving of the crime means going through all clues, including private lives and intimate documents (Pyrhönen 1999, p. 156). The museum utilizes the same curiosity to motivate the reader-visitors of Helsinki Noir.

The discovery of the body launches a puzzle of solving the crime, or a game between the reader-visitor detecting and the curator-narrator trying to keep the suspense going until the final revelation at the end. Part of the reading pact around classical detective fiction (unlike thrillers) is the fair-play method, which implies that the reader must be given every clue, so that there is a fair chance for them to solve the case (Sayers 1988, p. 73; Pyrhönen 1994, pp. 17–18). This aspect may have encouraged museum visitors to follow the given exhibition itinerary in its entirety. According to Luojus (interview 1), many visitors wanted to follow the storyline in its intended itinerary to see how the story unfolds.

The plot includes multiple elements of a classic detective story. The linguistic level emphasises this, although the old-fashioned style of the narration can best be seen in the original, Finnish version of the text. As visitors walked around the three exhibition floors, they found marked places for reading the next chapter in the booklet and could look at artworks providing milieus for the events and features for the main characters. The victim is quickly recognised as Kaarina Vehmakoski, a young bank cashier (in old-fashioned Finnish *pankkineiti*). During police investigations, Vehmakoski's flatmate Elsa Rikman sheds light on her character and background, as well as the events of the weeks leading to her disappearance. The letters which were seen in the first installation become a key to the mystery. After answering a newspaper advertisement and starting a passionate correspondence, Kaarina Vehmakoski has fallen in love with a stylish and continental businessman called Karl Eugen Kramer. A recurrent theme and clue in the chapters is money: possessions of Kramer, Vehmakoski's inheritance, gifts exchanged between the lovers, financial planning, not without troubles, for their future home and investing in a lot in the developing Kulosaari area. Eventually, the man turns out to be a confidence trickster named Karl Oskar Pettersson. Several crimes intertwine in the end: the trickster swindling Vehmakoski's inherited money, an embezzlement of almost a hundred thousand

marks from the bank where Vehmakoski worked before her untimely death and finally, the death of Vehmakoski. The trickster is caught and his seduction plan revealed, providing a partial dénouement to the narrative. Kramer-Pettersson is found in possession of a large sum of money, and evidence suggest that Vehmakoski is likely to be the person behind the embezzlement. But was her death a suicide or murder? As this is left unknown to the police at the end of the booklet text, visitors could come up with their own theories. I analyse this aspect more in a subsequent section about participation.

In addition to the classic whodunit, Helsinki Noir includes elements of the hard-boiled detective novel and film noir. Already the *Noir* in the title suggests a close link, and the open-endedness accentuates the connection. In the hard-boiled tradition, the quest for solving the crime often becomes more central than the actual completion of the plot; emphasis is on the detective's character, vulnerability and inner struggle to find reason in a crime-ridden society (Grella 1988, p. 115). Whereas the classic detective story typically happens in a bucolic setting, hard-boiled novels focus on cities of stone (Grella 1988, p. 116). Helsinki Noir contrasts an urban locale epitomised by "shadowy stone city blocks" with the countryside: Vehmakoski has moved from central Finland to Helsinki's Kallio, with "old wooden-house areas now riven by great canyon-like streets with their massive residential blocks" (Luojus 2018, p. 45). This symbolises the mixing of the two detective fiction types in Helsinki Noir, while describing the city's development in the 1930s.

Intertextuality and Intermediality in Helsinki Noir

Detective fiction is a genre known for intertextuality (Pyrhönen 1994, pp. 36–48), and this level was evident in Helsinki Noir. The script includes elements from the historic 1930s Helsinki, but also applies popular crime fiction elements found in literature and film. Among other sources of inspiration, the curator Luojus (interview 1) named the classical series of *Inspector Palmu* (*Komisario Palmu*), a character created by Finnish author Mika Waltari and also known from films by the Finnish director Matti Kassila in the 1960s. The city of Helsinki plays an important part in the Palmu stories, and this is something Helsinki Noir shares. The curator also browsed through the *Nordic Crime Chronicles* (*Pohjolan poliisi kertoo*), including police cases and investigation processes in the Nordic countries. Old radio programmes and video clips from 1930s provided inspiration regarding period language (interview 1).

There are several types of text in Helsinki Noir. First there is a paratextual introduction in a neutral style, explaining the exhibition concept. Second is the booklet by Luojus, written in classic detective fiction style, filled with adjectives and descriptive nouns that render the style visual and helped reader-visitors in making connections with the artworks on display: "The country people's market barrows bathed in red by the morning sun and bearing their root vegetables, round heads of cabbage and crispy globes of lettuce, reminded her of childhood summers" (Luojus 2015, p. 47). The exhibition provided a multisensory experi-

ence; in addition to texts, paintings and statues, locations were made more vivid through the use of custom-made audio material by sound designer Johanna Storm. Among the soundscapes included were central sites of downtown Helsinki: the market square near the seaside, the Swedish Theatre and the department store Stockmann with its brand-new lifts. Third is the intimate correspondence between Kaarina Vehmakoski and the trickster Karl Eugen Kramer (or small-time criminal Karl Oskar Pettersson), given for visitors to read as evidence. It was displayed in a strikingly red room, almost like a darkroom, allowing a picture of their relationship to develop from the letter papers (chapter 5).[10] This correspondence was based on historical letters, as the character of Kramer-Pettersson has a real-life counterpart from Finnish criminal history. In the final exhibition room of Helsinki Noir (after the last scene of the story), a documentary film, newspapers and books were on display, telling about the dubious career of Finland's most famous con artist, Ruben Oskar Auervaara (1906–1964). This confidence trickster fooled several women with fake newspaper ads and lured them to fund his lifestyle. Even the name Auervaara has become a commonplace term in the Finnish language, symbolising a serial seducer.

In addition to intertextuality, there were interesting intermedial connections between the text and artworks. The artworks displayed in the exhibition were given multiple roles, as they were presented as a setting to the fictional story. Visitors could look at them both from an art historical perspective as part of 1910s to 1930s Finnish art (there were discreet object labels with artists' names, dates and techniques) but also as part of the story, providing it with locations, characters and ambiances. The exhibition included several portraits of anonymous models, lending their features to the fictional characters. The examples include Georges von Swetlik's *Portrait of a Woman* (1932) representing the victim Kaarina Vehmakoski, and Anton Lindforss' *Portrait of a Woman* (1926) that gave a face to Vehmakoski's flatmate and friend Elsa Rikman. Yrjö Ollila's *The Clocksmith* (1921) represents Vehmakoski's fiancé Karl-Eugen Kramer as a well-dressed, polished and respectable-looking gentleman, and the display with clocks surrounding the painting supported his story about owning a fine-mechanics company. The final scene shows the man with an ill-fitting suit, disorderly hair and suspiciously lurking eyes (Vesala's installation, see figure 3), suggesting the earlier portraiture was conceivably a red herring or a reflection of Vehmakoski's wishful thinking. In the same scene, Tuomas von Boehm's painting *Marionette* (1948) symbolises the trickster's role as a puppeteer manipulating his victim, accentuating the nightmarish atmosphere.

10. The red room in the context of murder mystery could also be a nod to the wordplay redrum-murder, made famous by Stephen King's novel *The Shining* (1977) and Stanley Kubrick's horror movie with the same title (1980). The room had portraits of the two lovers on opposing walls, and the suitor's portrait, Yrjö Ollila's *The Clocksmith*, was surrounded by loudly ticking clocks. The clocks were associated with Kramer's supposed profession as a fine mechanic, but their sounds also made the atmosphere of the red room pressuring. It reminded one that time was running out: For the lovers that were so keen to start a family, but also for Vehmakoski, because reader-visitors were all too aware of the fact that she was near the end of her life.

The landscapes and statues that were mainly parts or smaller-scale versions of Helsinki's public monuments, along with Vesala's installations, played an important part in facilitating spatio-temporal immersion, transporting reader-visitors onto the scene of the fictional events and minimising the distance between the narrator, addressee and the narrated events. Ryan (2001, pp. 121–130) explains that through spatial immersion, the reader's experience combines their intimate relation with the places depicted and the scene of the events in the story. With the help of museum architecture and spatial design, visuality of the artworks, and bodily movement of the visitor, a sense of place and Helsinki's geography was conveyed through many channels, compared to a text-only representation. Particularly through the combination of texts and Vesala's installations, reader-visitors were taken into the narrative scenes, and the distance between them and the narrated events was minimized. This is a significant asset of museum narratives.

Even though the plot of Helsinki Noir is fictional, the curator Luojus wanted to convey historically accurate elements so that visitors had the possibility to either learn or recognise both milieus and phenomena of late 1930s Helsinki, "a lively, rapidly growing capital city" (wall text). During our interview, Luojus (interview 1) explained that locality was an important part of the whole; the artworks, the series of crimes inspiring the fictional story and the whole concept were all rooted in the real history of Helsinki. Luojus mentioned that if they were to produce a similar exhibition in another city or country, they would like to localise the events to make the experience equally engaging. The Helsinki Noir booklet includes descriptive passages painting a picture of the city; the development of the workers' district of Kallio, the market square and the tram routes all came from the archives. Details such as "the local tax on Kulosaari was only three pence per Mark" (Luojus 2015, p. 54) and sipping of the *Green Elevator* cocktail, named after a play the characters see at the Swedish theatre (ibid. 53), seem to be inserted into the story partially for the amusement of Helsinki-based or elite readers, but they also render the historic Helsinki more real in the exhibition. The ending of the booklet *Helsinki Noir. A Deadly Proposal* draws links between fiction and real-life criminal history. Before her death, Vehmakoski encounters her suitor briefly in front of the cinema Joukola at Kapteeninkatu 26. After that, all trails linking the two run out, and a winter storm breaks. The corner of this street is infamous for being the location of police murders by the fugitive Steen Christensen in 1997, leading to an extensive police operation throughout southern Finland.[11] The corner of Kapteeninkatu street and Tehtaankatu street was filled with candles and flowers after the tragedy. Helsinki Noir reminds us how dark history can leave its invisible imprint on the cityscape and thus affect the sense of place.

11. Rytsä P & Harvala J. Yle Elävä arkisto 22.10.2019. Available at https://yle.fi/aihe/artikkeli/2019/10/21/tehtaankadun-poliisimurhat-jarkyttivat-kansaa-1997 [Last accessed 4 March 2021]

Whodunit? Openness to Visitor Participation

As museum curators plan exhibitions with visitor engagement and interaction in mind, museums' limited control over the museum experience remains as a starting point. Henning (2006, p. 101) reminds us that the "exhibition narrative that visitors enact and embody through their movement may not always be an explicit one, that is, neither explicitly intended by the curators nor explicitly read by visitors". Guided by their horizons of expectation, visitors make individual choices while experiencing the exhibition. They may start the tour from different floors, choose not to read the texts or only read parts of them based on their level of interest, alertness and knowledge.

At the core of Helsinki Noir was the concept of enabling a playful museum exhibition experience for all visitors, even adults. The Amos Anderson Art Museum and curator Luojus had done something similar earlier in the exhibition *Forest Outing* (Finnish: *Metsäretki* 1.3.2013–24.2.2014). The target audience in Forest Outing was families with children, and in addition to nature-themed artworks, the exhibition included hands-on elements, stuffed animal mascots for the tour and a children's book intended to accompany the museum experience and to continue it at home (Luojus 2013). With Helsinki Noir, the main target group was older (interview 1), but the role given to visitors was one that called for imagination and was based on fictional storytelling.

As we look at how museum texts can inspire personal involvement and interactivity with exhibition contents, it is relevant to consider how the text addresses reader-visitors and what kind of roles or positions are implied (Ravelli 2006, p. 71). Are visitors, for instance, supposed to digest predetermined information, or take a more reciprocal or creative role? Positioning reader-visitors is inherently linked with questions of control and authority, even (or especially) when aiming for an active visitor role. The concept of Helsinki Noir was clearly framed, and visitors were expected to follow the story in a certain order, yet the genre expectations and the hermeneutic code linked with detective fiction, as well as the final open-endedness, gave way to varying responses. Visitors were explicitly called upon to participate using the second-person tense ("Come and enter into (sic) the mystery!" as stated in a wall text), starting from the exhibition's subtitle inviting visitors to solve the mystery. The exhibition texts and the accompanying booklet aimed at filling in the blanks. Many of the chapter endings or beginnings provided a hook for continuing, such as at the beginning of chapter 4: "So, who was the man who had been so courteous to Kaarina Vehmakoski in the square?" (Luojus 2015, p. 48), and the ending of chapter 5: "Was life bringing her an unexpected stroke of luck, after all … ?" (ibid. 50) or ominous statements of the narrator: "It did indeed appear that Kaarina had now found success" (ibid. 52).

As explained earlier, the exhibition gave no right or wrong answers about the whodunit, which emphasised the importance of reader-visitors' imagination. The museum organised a writing competition for young people to produce optional

endings for the story. The competition was marketed to students in comprehensive school and secondary education, especially in their studies of Finnish language and literature. Student groups also came to the museum as part of their literature courses. Even though actual entries in the competition were few (five potential epilogues were sent to the museum), some teachers told the museum staff they used the task in schools as an additional activity after their exhibition visit. The winning text was printed and distributed as part of the booklet (figure 1). The epilogue offers one possible explanation to the mystery.[12] By giving a young visitor's interpretation this kind of recognition, the museum showed a good level of participatory effort and responsiveness in their museum pedagogy.[13] Perhaps if the competition had been open to all, and the possibility to participate promoted in the exhibition itself, they might have received more texts, which would have given us valuable information about how the story was received and interpreted.

Another way in which competition and locality were related to engagement in Helsinki Noir is that visitors were encouraged to recognise various depictions of early 20th century Helsinki and its surroundings. The exhibition included a questionnaire box for finding missing addresses for the landscape paintings on display. This competition named *Find Helsinki* was both a challenge for visitors and a way for the museum to get new metadata of artworks in their collections. Visitors were also encouraged to choose their favourite artwork in the exhibition, resulting in additional feedback about visitors' responses to the displayed works.

Bodies in the Museum – Reanimating objects through immersive displays

To investigate further the connections between crime fiction and the embodied museum exhibition experience, it is worthwhile to explore Helsinki Noir as part of a longer tradition of immersive and exciting exhibition strategies. At various points in history, museums have been accused of being cemeteries of dead objects. Especially for the early 20th-century modernist and avant-garde movements, museums characterised a reactionary Victorian attachment to the past (Henning 2006, pp. 37–44). Museums preserve and display artefacts from times and lives long gone, and, especially in the case of archaeological and natural historical collections, they literally contain stuffed specimens and human remains (on the latter, see also Wessman, this volume). Therefore, it is not surprising that many developments in the area of exhibition display have originated as an attempt to bring inanimate objects and history to life. This also

12. In Sophia Syrjänen's text, Kaarina Vehmakoski was murdered in cold blood by Kramer-Petterson's wife, due to fear of losing her husband.

13. In *The Participatory Museum* (2010) Nina Simon makes a distinction among contributory, collaborative, co-creative and hosted forms of participation, depending on how much visitors are involved and to what extent museums dictate the outcomes of participation (pp. 190–191). In Helsinki Noir the role of visitors was contributory, as they were solicited to participate in an institutionally-controlled process of completing the exhibition storyline. (See also Viita-aho and Salo, this volume.)

goes for display types such as dioramas or habitat displays, as well as the use of mannequins, tableaux and museum guides in period costumes, to name but a few (Henning 2006; Sandberg 2003). All this puts the choice of crime fiction and the mysterious corpse in an art exhibition in a rather quirky light.

Simulation-based museum displays and crime fiction share a common feature in that they allow access to exciting experiences and events without being subject to physical harm. In an analysis of late 19th and early 20th century wax museum displays, Sandberg explains that the appeal of tableau techniques was that they offered visual access to scenes, without subjecting spectators to any physically harmful effects. "Actually being there could conceivably entail danger, embarrassment, discomfort or other risk to one's body, depending on the nature of the scene or person depicted" (Sandberg 2003, p. 95). A similar position applies to Helsinki Noir.

The beginning and ending of Helsinki Noir relied on contemporary artist Jarno Vesala's installations. In the first scene, the body of the victim is behind a curtain, visually available as a reminder of our own bodily vulnerability, yet inaccessible. Particularly the last scene (figure 3) brings to mind a 19th-century wax museum display with mannequins. These displays were often presented in the form of tableaux and even depicted fictional stories, often supported by textual guides.[14] In a pitch-dark room, visitors would unexpectedly meet Kramer, whom they had just learned to be a confidence trickster. The criminal appeared in the same space with visitors, implying that his real-life counterparts have been – and still are – among us. Vesala's artwork simultaneously showed the character of the story, yet left a safe distance for visitors. An uncanny character with animated expressions and a mumbling voice, the mannequin managed to frighten some visitors, according to the museum staff. The curator explained that excitement was also a hoped-for effect when creating an exciting story (interview 1). Experiencing this kind of excitement can give a cathartic sense of relief, as can reading crime fiction.

14. Display techniques such as life or habitat groups, dioramas and *tableaux* were particularly popular between the 1880s and the First World War. They developed in the context of a more widespread fascination with living pictures, such as early cinema and photography, and could be found in natural history museums, folk-ethnographic museums and open-air museums. For instance, wax museums produced living painting scenes with accurate mannequins. The tableaux would often be linked with a printed guide narrating the displayed events. In Scandinavia, tableaux even depicted fictional characters, such as *Snow White*, *Aladdin*, or H. C. Andersen's *The Little Match Girl*. Interestingly, wax museums also utilized techniques imitating a cinematic point-of-view shot, or internal focalization, such as lantern slide projections (Sandberg 2003, pp. 4–8, pp. 80–82, pp. 92–95).



Figure 3. Jarno Vesala's artwork, *Photograph Not Taken* (2013), represented the villain of *Helsinki Noir*. It consists of a figure of a man in mixed media, approximately 180 cm high, with moving expressions, background projection and audio elements. Amos Rex Archives/ Photo: Stella Ojala

The ending of the booklet and the physical exhibition led literally to a dead end, calling reader-visitors to reread the initial scene with information gained during the exhibition (Pyrhönen 1999, pp.13–14). This circular narrative structure was highlighted by the two installations with similar aesthetics, representing the victim and villain, and the text both beginning and ending with the icy winds of a winter storm. In the context of detective fiction, the mirror in the first installation becomes a significant motif. Firstly, it symbolises the imaginative identification of the detective, in this case the reader-visitors, with the criminal (or victim), to better understand their motives and solve the crime (Pyrhönen 1999, pp. 31–32). On the dressing table of Kaarina Vehmakoski, it also echoes how the trickster's manipulation was made possible: the con artist recognised and mirrored the hopes and needs of his victim. Vehmakoski could not see past the charming lies to the real man behind the mirror – or, as the title of the piece suggests, *Behind the Curtain*. Finally, as the image reflected in a mirror is an opposite (left being reversed to right), the mirror reminds us of the splitting of the two antithetic sides of Vehmakoski (Pyrhönen 1999, pp. 31–32). During the story, the previously so "calm, meticulous, reliable and diligent" (Luojus 2015, p. 46) person turns into an actor in a bank embezzlement. The Helsinki Noir plot plays with contrasting light and shadow, which is also seen in the exhibition architecture. This aspect was emphasised by the beginning and ending, their darkness reminiscent of black-and-white noir films.

More Museum Mysteries

The mystery format relates to museums' continuous challenges in getting their visitors' attention. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, people's expectations were influenced by novelties such as early cinema, department stores and railway

travel. Now there are things such as digitalism, video games, social media, AR and VR, as well as an endless flood of pictures and videos. As a response, museum designers of the 19th century started producing more immersive, mimetic and illusionistic exhibitions (Henning 2006, p. 53). As museums keep competing with other pastime activities in the so-called experience economy, the same qualities are still an important side of a memorable museum experience.

When Helsinki Noir was on display in 2015–2017, it had the asset of novelty and surprise. Now, participatory mystery games and dark history tours have made their way into museums, both in Finland and internationally. In Finland, the murder mystery concept has been used in the Palander House of Hämeenlinna City Museum in 2018–2021, and their theatrical and participatory tours with three different plots so far have shown a high demand for such activities. The Museum of Finnish Book Pukstaavi created an escape-room concept instead of a traditional museum exhibition to acquaint people with detective fiction as part of their literary pedagogy. Pukstaavi's Museum escape: *A Threat Looming over the City* (1.5.2019–31.10.2020) resembled the initial idea of Helsinki Noir in many ways: something strange is happening in the city that puzzles the local inspector, so visitors were to assist in detecting the case. To add some international examples, the Natural History Museum in London has organised criminal investigation mysteries titled *Crime Scene Live* for adults in recent years. In November 2019, the National Gallery in London organised a murder mystery tour *Whodunnit? A Halloween Late* as part of their Young Producers programme. Many museum murder mysteries let visitors meet and interview characters inspired by museums' artworks, thus creating alternative, story-led art experiences. How such experiments with fictionality affect people's connection with actual artworks is an interesting topic for further study.

The above-mentioned cases are different in their approaches, ranging from event-type games within the museum milieu to fully curated exhibitions. What is common to all, nevertheless, is that they have all been either temporary exhibitions or events. As visitors seek novel and fun experiences from museums, ephemeral mystery tours provide a change, something unexpected and exciting. They may draw in both old and new audiences and cater to different tastes and age groups. Luojus (interview 1) explained that Helsinki Noir brought into the museum some new audience groups, such as crime fiction amateurs, specifically to experience the detective story. The popularity of mystery games seems to have a similar attraction and has become a regular thing in many museums. At some point the trend of using detective stories may become saturated, but other popular fiction genres also have the potential to provide surprising and exciting story-led experiences in a museum exhibition space.

Conclusions

As museums seek fresh approaches and have turned more and more towards their audiences, textual styles and storytelling in their exhibitions have become increasingly multifaceted. The use of fictional museum narratives is not an entirely new

approach, but participates in, or rediscovers, a long tradition of storytelling in the exhibition space. It is in line with maintaining visitor attention and providing possibilities for engagement. As our understanding of the museum as narrative space and storytelling medium becomes increasingly nuanced, museums have the possibility to create even more comprehensive narrative experiences for all of the senses. Digital devices and virtual applications may bring about more possibilities, but it may also be refreshing to see creative narratives that rely heavily on classical museum media, and at the same time bring interesting authentic objects within visitors' reach.

As a curated art exhibition where interactivity was intellectual rather than hands-on, Helsinki Noir – A Crime to Solve differentiates itself from the many escape-room or event-type mystery concepts that have since gained popularity in museums. It was built around the story, not just as a story, and was therefore quite unusual. The fictional plot generated the exhibition, and the text became its core meaning. It provided a highly subjective interpretation of the works displayed. Even though the artworks were put in an atypical position, as the art historical context was kept to a minimum, fictional elements did not replace all research-based curatorial knowledge, but instead brought a contrast to it. In a way, presenting the crime story and traditional labels side by side mirrors the change in the centuries-long discussion about whether crime fiction is part of low- or high-brow culture. In recent decades, this separation has become largely irrelevant and has largely faded away. Against this, Helsinki Noir takes a stance for adding more varied and visitor-oriented labels alongside traditional ones, in favour of a higher level of engagement.

Helsinki Noir gives us an example of how museums can apply elements from various literary genres to create narratives that invite visitors to do a reading based on shared cultural competence and a familiarity with genre features. Intertextuality is one of the defining features of detective fiction, and especially for amateurs of the genre, Helsinki Noir enabled the pleasure of recognising familiar elements. Through the mystery format, visitors were invited to do a co-authored reading of the museum exhibition narrative. The hermeneutic code was activated from the beginning, and visitors were given the role of detective as they followed the chapters to unravel a course of events leading to the initial discovery of the victim's cadaver.

Participation, experientiality and co-creation are wider trends in the museum field. As the detective fiction genre calls for the readers' participation, using such a genre in a museum exhibition, as well as the writing contest and the related appendix of the winning text being included in the exhibition booklet, emphasises openness on the part of the museum towards the visitors' perspective and co-authoring. The texts of Helsinki Noir were written in a style that fed upon questions and invitations for the reader-visitor. Giving only partial closure to the detective story had several major implications. On one hand, it suggested that visitors' output as imaginary response was needed to fill the blanks. On the other hand, the process of detection by following clues and documents could

be seen mirroring the museum processes behind looking for archival evidence and bridging gaps in historical events.

Besides detective stories, other popular genres provide one way of increasing engagement in museum exhibitions. Story-led exhibitions based on popular genres can draw upon people's knowledge of the genre's features to create stories that show both objects and history in a new light. When accompanied by research-based information, fiction may increase engagement and curiosity, and thus learning. Stories have been linked with resonance, learning and remembering and theatrical techniques by bringing visitors to the scenes, and bringing events closer to them through shared humanity (Bedford 2014; Hein 2002; Hooper-Greenhill 2006).

From the viewpoint of literature, the spatialisation of narratives brings interesting possibilities. The circulation route, visuality, audio elements, embodiment and physicality of the experience brought a new level of concreteness to the detective story. Detective fiction often plays with embodiment and corporeality (both that of the victim and the detective), so creating a story within a physical environment can be meaningful. In Helsinki Noir, the displays with contemporary, purpose-built art installations were used at the beginning and end of the narrative to provide a strong sense of immersion. Visitors were standing face to face with both the victim and the perpetrator, through utilising the multi-sensory channels available in the museum exhibition medium.

Detective fiction often reflects its own narrativity and plays with the narrative structure (Pyrhönen 1994, pp. 32–36). I argue that something similar happens in a museum exhibition that experiments with the possibilities of fictional narratives. In recent decades, the rise of different types of storytelling and the use of multiple voices is connected to rising self-awareness of authority and meaning-making within the museum medium. To conclude, I suggest self-reflexivity can be seen as a shared element, both in detective fiction and in current trends in museum exhibition narratives.

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About Transhistoricity – The Old Masters exhibited with contemporary art

Minna Tuominen

Abstract

The anthology, *The Transhistorical Museum – Mapping the Field* (Bühler et al. 2018) is the first scholarly attempt to compile an overview and theoretical mapping of transhistoricity in the field of museum studies. It provides the grounds for further research and is a demonstration of common practices. In this chapter, I discuss the possibilities and limitations of transhistoricity in the exhibition *Still Life – The World on Display* which I curated for the Sinebrychoff Art Museum in Helsinki in 2016. In this exhibition, Dutch and Flemish Old Masters' art were juxtaposed with Finnish contemporary art. I reflect on the goals and subject matter, as well as the overall strategy of representations, with the concepts provided by the 2018 anthology. What does transhistoricity add to the established exhibition programme of a museum or to the art historical content of an individual exhibition? What kinds of insights are possible to produce and what is the added value from doing this?

In general, museums feel the pressure to create new content and find engaging ways to reinvent themselves in order to attract new audiences. Fascinating forays or sometimes the compulsion for productions, including transhistoricity, seem to lead to the idea that mixing art historical eras is key in catering to mixed audiences. My chapter reviews arguments and explanations for curatorial or art historical decisions in the making of these exhibitions. What does transhistoricity add to the art historical content of the individual exhibition?

Keywords: transhistoricity, curating, old and contemporary art, exhibition trend, audience engagement

Introduction

> We are always obliged to re-perform the art we have in our collections in a contemporary way, just as an actor, when they perform Shakespeare, has to re-perform it for a contemporary audience, whether in mafia costumes or in drag. James Bradburne (Bradburne 2018)

In general, museums feel the pressure to create new content and find engaging ways to reinvent themselves in order to attract new audiences (Anderson 2004; Häkkinen 2019; Future Museums; Pettersson 2020; see also Pettersson and Paunu, this volume). One way to find inventive solutions has been to exhibit the

Old Masters in multiple ways, along with contemporary art. In this chapter, I take this current trend as a given from the perspective of Old Masters' museums.[1]

The transhistorical museum or exhibition lets visitors look at the past hand in hand with the chosen period of time, creating a bridge for possible new approaches – seeing, feeling, interpreting and learning. This engagement can take place in many different ways. Objects can be combined from different periods in exhibitions or permanent collection displays, as a set of guidelines or as an unexpected intervention (Rikken 2018). Art museums or curators escape from traditional museological hangings based on time-chains (chronology), linearity, media, established master/school/period/geographical area or artist groups, combining them in a new order of dialogue. Expectations for transhistorical hangings can be varied, but for the most part the viewer is the key; new ways of looking at artworks should evoke novel associations. What the added value is, or how it is constructed, is discussed in the following pages. In the first section, I discuss living artists' relation to museums and their potential for exhibitions. Next, I address notions of the concept of time, and then I look at what actually makes a display transhistorical. Is it the institution, the time, the artwork itself or the viewer? In the final part of the chapter, I give an explanation for the chosen art works in the exhibition I arranged in Helsinki, 2016. Social, cultural-historical and iconographical approaches are reflected with the past and with the relevant concepts from the anthology, *The Transhistorical Museum*.

History Lives

How do we engage living artists within the context of museum activities? That is the relevant starting point when we, as curators for transhistorical exhibitions, look for art or artists. Where such courses of action succeed is in revealing the unfamiliar aspects of familiar objects by exposing them in a new context, by taking them away from their customary cultural or time periods. Personal interpretations of history by curators or artist-curators are set in a dialogue with the past. The selected exhibition objects work as evidence from the past, helping visitors to understand single objects in a broader perspective. An additional value for the visitor in these projects is to show the curator's choices concerning how they have selected and come to a conclusion about certain objects, including how they are grouped and displayed. How to elucidate the curator's decision-making process is a big challenge, but when this is made clear, it convinces the visitor to possibly embrace new readings of artworks (Sharp 2018, pp. 134–145).

When museum institutions, such as the Louvre in Paris, the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, the National Gallery in London and the Altes Museum in Berlin,

1. The mixing of the Old Masters with the sale of contemporary art and at art fairs has drawn interest from collectors lately, such as in Frieze New York and in auction houses, for example when Leonardo da Vinci's *Salvator Mundi* was on sale 15 November 2017 at Christie's in New York. Moreover, MOMA rehung some of its master works, such as Picasso's *Guernica* and Matisse's *Dance*, in new contexts (Stoilas 2019).

opened their doors, their mission was to educate contemporary artists about past masters and canons of art, and also to encourage and inspire them. They offered a place to contemplate the Old Masters and to work with their own ideas of art further, also functioning as a work-place. Some artists were involved in founding art institutions. In such cases, they became part of the conversation at the very beginning and they were engaged with the canonisation of art. At the same time, known artists such as Paul Cézanne and Camille Pissarro had very critical opinions of contemporary trends and opposing views about traditions that institutions such as the Louvre had, while they searched for how to express their own art (Sharp 2018, pp. 134–145). For most modernists, the past was something they needed to surpass.

Whether the reason lies in searching for new audiences or not, there are greater objectives for art museums to continue working with living artists, which take us back to the early history of these institutions. According to Jasper Sharp, Curator at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, they show their visitors "where they stand in time and place, within the broader evolution of mankind" (Sharp 2018, p. 143). Transhistorical projects with living artists, as curators or through their selected artworks, at their best communicate with visitors independently through time and place, regardless of when or where the art is made. It also indicates the power of good art from the past, when one is able to create continuity through time. These goals are philosophical and when they succeed, they evoke in visitors deep metaphysical questions. However, these projects are challenging; they provoke a lot of debate and they can be risky, demanding from institutions thorough consideration, knowledge of their own history and well-chosen selections. One aim, according to Sharp, is to seek a natural continuity, where institutions create a dialogue with the past (Sharp 2018).

Time is Not Stable

The cultural theorist, critic and artist Mieke Bal is certain that transhistorical exhibitions can change the reading of works forever. The contemporary view of a subject can also change our interpretation of the original artwork. In general, contemporary culture impacts the past, what we see and how, and this reworks new versions of older images, as well as new images (Bal 2018, p. 56).[2]

One way to discern the connections of art from past and present is to consider anachronism. Acknowledging the past's presence in our present is useful to remember when talking about anachronism, which can be either positive or negative. However, with contemporary eyes, the past looks different, and it is not always fully comprehensible. Many historians consider anachronism to be problematic, and in some cases this can be true. In a way, one can see that an anachronism flattens time and makes everything historically moulded into how

2. Bal makes a note of uncritical touch of practice of transhistorical displays among the writers of the book and is aware of chance that transhistorical displays can become as boring as chronological exhibitions if they are not stimulating enough. See also Bal, 2001.

it is seen today from the present time. As a consequence, historical artworks might be perceived inaccurately. Then a critique is justified, but as Bal sees it, it is possible to get closer to past artworks by using anachronism as "a partner in a discussion of what matters in contemporary culture" (Bal 2018, p. 61), but not as a part of historical heritage. In this way, one can see more clearly how we can observe the past from the present. At its best, anachronism can be a key to history and help us better understand a moment in time, for which it has made contradictory dialogue. Bal thinks that this reasoning is shared by the Baroque and by our time. The common view is that time is not linear, but past and present are co-temporal. Both times are alive at that moment and in that relation. Both time periods invigorate each other, but do not make them disappear in timelessness (Bal 2018).[3]

Bal is critical of the term transhistorical museum itself, preferring to replace it with the prefix inter- to emphasise the multilayered relations between artworks. She thinks that the inter-historical museum would keep us aware of relationships between the art of different times and become prepared to learn more actively of a new constructed exhibition and worlds made around it (Bal 2018, pp. 61–62). The term transhistorical museum or exhibition is not used widely amongst museum professionals in informing about exhibitions, at least not with the wider public. This in itself makes us ask how useful the term actually is (Rikken 2018). A strong opponent of the term transhistorical is Alexander Nagel, Professor at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, who calls it "a relic of historicism" (Nagel 2018, p. 84).

Transhistorical Meaning Produced

According to the curator from the Old Masters and collection department of the M-Museum Leuven, Peter Carpreau, a transhistorical presentation is impossible for interpreting the meaning of a work, either through the artist or the artwork itself. What is left is the beholder, who shapes the meaning of an artwork and its transhistoricity. There must be at least two artworks from different periods in such a dialogue. According to Carpreau, a lifetime would be the measurement for a time difference, which means that history starts when remembering ends, a period of at least 50–75 years (Carpreau 2018). Nagel is very sceptical of specific definitions of historical periods, and whether they are needed at all, because art is not made for a certain time period, but just for the sake of art itself. He questions what the present time and contemporary art actually are, because the contemporary moves with time and contemporary art is not as contemporary as it was just one moment ago. In addition, the concept of time is not the concept to all people. When does contemporary art change into historical art, and become a past phenomenon? (Nagel 2018, p. 84).

3. See also Nagel's views of anachronism, such as anachronism as a feature of art (Nagel 2018, pp. 85–86).

Even older art is not just passive, static images, but actively impacts later times as well. One can draw fresh views and questions over and over again from it, as with art from other periods. There can be other ways of reading artworks than setting old and new art in conversation with each other; recontextualization can occur without pointing out oppositions or formal aspects. According to Nagel, the trend of transhistorical displays is a passing one, but there might be deeper interest in continuing comparisons within a transhistorical mode. Further, Nagel thinks that this is not going to change anytime soon (Nagel 2018, p. 90).

Peter Carpreau emphasised the concept of a meaningful presentation, so that artworks impact each other when they are set into a dialogue (Carpreau 2018). The Director of Lisbon's Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Penelope Curtis, is also interested in this connection of artworks and the time difference that they represent. She asks why we still understand the transhistorical approach as new and unusual, because in many cases it is the norm. Examples with relevant artworks include private collections and home museums, where collections have been put together and displayed many times purposefully, with mixed art from different periods, not to mention non-artistic spaces, such as ordinary homes. In a way, all museums, collections and exhibitions where artworks exist together, that originate from different places and times, are essentially transhistorical. Of course, there can also be instances where one can misread the purpose of the connection between contemporary and historical pieces, or where objects lose something of their specificity if they do not communicate at all with each other in the new constructed context around them (Curtis 2018, p. 100).

In addition, even art in many national museums can be used in a questionable way, when objects made in the past are removed from their original context to the museum for the sake of preservation and continued reuse. They also might be cared for in the wrong way, for example by over-cleaning. Curtis also mentions, for example, the misuse of some objects by the Nazis for their own very selective aesthetic classification, when classical sculptures were the standard for the right kind of race. As has become clear, transhistoricity and mixing art and other objects from different periods can cause problematic interpretations. If one considers how objects can yield to conversations with each other and present this to audiences in the optimum way, new insights may emerge. For example, there might be objects that in a vague context do not attract attention, but when they are put into a different context they may show real continuities, both in formality and function, if they help to interpret each other's meanings. Curtis continues that one can construct the relationship between the old and the new by considering material, arrangement, motif, composition, social relations and cultural usage. An open way of providing information about an object's period and original context will help visitors to open themselves up to additional meanings, which are exposed through new settings, in addition to old ones, or as Curtis puts it, transversal meanings (Curtis 2018).

When Jasper Sharp and Philippe de Montebello discussed over-representing old and contemporary art, it was pointed out that Old Master institutions always

receive criticism when they decide to display contemporary art on their premises, even though contemporary art museums have long done the same thing. They have loaned ancient pieces to multiple exhibitions, but the audience response is different (Montebello 2015).

Beside the fact that there is nothing new about transhistorical representations, Curtis notes that most museum and gallery art is grouped more by artists' nationality and school than by time periods. More relevant would be that artworks exist in various ways when they reveal a continuity of doing, seeing and understanding. According to Curtis, transhistoricity gives the opportunity to combine different themes without specific time periods or classifications, such as historical, local, international and gender, or artists with varied statuses. This sort of exhibiting can lead to combining different sorts of audiences and creating new insights into art (Curtis 2018, pp. 103–104).

Social, Historical and Knowing Approaches in Practice

In this section, I show examples of my own selections of contemporary art in conversation with older art, and I contemplate the possibilities concerning what associations and meanings could be produced for understanding the artworks or themes around them.

As a case study, I present my own intentions shown in three cases in the exhibition Still Life – The World on Display. I curated it for the Sinebrychoff Art Museum in 2016. What are the methods that I used, and that came into play? To begin with, I considered the contrasting nature and scarcity of the artworks when choosing the pieces of contemporary art. This meant that there would be only one or two pieces of contemporary art per exhibition room, each of which contained four to ten Old Masters paintings. The Finnish contemporary art and artists that I chose had a larger message for the whole room. The contrast came from the content, such as opposite pairs of poor and rich by Anu Tuominen's artwork and from the gender-based questions in Henrietta Lehtonen's artwork. A formal similarity of a skull, but from a different time in the Old Master painting by Edwaert Collier's *Vanitas,* and in Jiri Geller's sculpture, created questions about whether the meaning of the content has changed or not, and how it is possible to combine meanings.



Figure 1. Anu Tuominen (b. 1961) *Hunger*, 1997. Objet trouvé, found mittens, 5.5 x 17 x 17 cm. Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, N-2001-20. Photo: Minna Tuominen.

Inequality – Anu Tuominen

In this exhibition context, Anu Tuominen's (b. 1961) *Hunger* (1997) served as a reminder of the inequitable distribution of the world's food supply (figure 1).[4] The artwork consists of a pair of mittens sewed up which were clearly somewhat worn and bent slightly upright. The association of this position with begging is clear, finished with a label. These mittens are set in a room where the opposite wall was full of paintings depicting mostly food ingredients, showing worldly abundance in the 17th century. They depicted fruits in different formats and sizes, big and luscious vegetables, meat in the form of a living animal or dead game, a fresh fish catch from the sea or a fish cut into juicy pieces and some exotic imports.[5] These types of depictions originated on the walls and tables of privileged rich people, who used to own the paintings in the 17th century, and *Hunger* juxtaposed with them a reminder of the existence of poor people with very low social status. The association with begging could influence viewers' feelings in very different ways, not least because at the time of the exhibition in Helsinki there were more street beggars than before, and the decision-makers and citizens were diffident and confused about what to do about this social problem, which was due to mass migration into European countries (Lakialoite LA 42/2016 vp). In addition, the cold Finnish weather made begging especially difficult. This was expressed by the hand-made mittens, which are used in wintertime. They also suggest the issue of gender, as most handicrafts are done by women, and they are also used mostly by women and children.

In general, in Tuominen's art, the discarded mittens and the other recycled materials are given a new lease of life and a fresh artistic purpose. She plays with words and concepts, and creates analogies with the material she uses, along with how she handles and represents it; there are no secrets, even though it is conceptual contemporary art, because it explains itself (Rautio 2003; Kantokorpi 2001). I chose to show the mittens in a glass case, in a museal way of displaying precious objects. The resulting gesture suggests ways for raising awareness of inequality.

4. Anu Tuominen (b. 1961) *Hunger*, 1997. Objet trouvé, found mittens, 5.5 x 17 x 17 cm. Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, N-2001-20. Available at https://www.kansallisgalleria.fi/fi/object/625703 [Last accessed 10 October 2019]

5. Paintings included, for example, Floris van Schooten: *Kitchen Interior with a Woman Scaling Fish*, Gustavianum, Uppsala University Museum; Jacob Gillig: *Still Life with Fish*, 1684, Ostrabothnian Museum; Clara Peeters: *Still Life with Game*, Art Museum of Estonia, Kadriorg.





Figure 2. Henrietta Lehtonen (b. 1965) *Porcelain Tower*, 1993. Installation 120 x 96 x 40 cm. Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, N-1994-55:A-Ö1. Photo: Minna Tuominen.

Figure 3. *Delft Vases*, 17th century. Porcelain h. 62/ 60/ 63. Sinebrychoff Art Museum, S 553/ S 554/ S 552. Photo: Minna Tuominen.

Woman's Morality – Henrietta Lehtonen

Henrietta Lehtonen's (b. 1965) *Porcelain Tower* (1993) rebels against tradition (figure 2).[6] Here, the carefully executed items are carelessly painted, in contrast with the usual precision and feminine beauty given to a décor of porcelain items. The porcelain itself can be associated with femininity, and as the pieces are designed after older models they refer to the upper classes and traditional homes, where they were looked after carefully, where they indicated the household's status and where they can be further understood as a woman's territory, as they were used to serve a meal. You can find hand imprints and blemishes all over Lehtonen's tableware, and in the serving sets, plates, jugs and vases. Even the handle of the cake server is blotched with colour. This can possibly remind us of bruises, being blue in colour against the white porcelain, which then leads to thoughts to domestic violence and definitely to inequality between husband and wife, man and woman (Aarnio & Sakari 2005, pp. 81–85).

The criticism levelled at an activity traditionally thought of as a feminine pursuit is contrasted with a series of 17th-century porcelain items, the Delftware vases, (figure 3)[7] which represent rather masculine and hard-edged commercial activ-

6. Henrietta Lehtonen (b. 1965) *Porcelain Tower*, 1993. Installation 120 x 96 x 40 cm. Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, N-1994-55:A-Ö1. Available at https://www.kansallisgalleria.fi/fi/object/595507 [Last accessed 10 October 2019]

7. *Delftware Vases*, 17th century. Porcelain h. 62/ 60/ 63. Sinebrychoff Art Museum, S 553/ S 554/ S 552. Available at https://www.kansallisgalleria.fi/fi/object/380851 [Last accessed 10 October 2019]

ities (Dam VII). In the 17th-century Dutch home, for which this blue-and-white porcelain was produced, they were also a symbol of wealth. The association with Lehtonen's porcelain comes from recognition of the feminine use of utensils, and by that, marking the place called home. Women's morality in 17th-century Dutch homes was measured through tidiness, cleanliness and orderliness (Salomon 2004; Jansen 1996). This is in great contrast to Lehtonen's porcelain, which almost abusively points to another kind of home, a home were such things are not in order. Lehtonen's porcelain pieces are muddy and unordered, and therefore morally dubious.

The other level of reading, which I pursued, was the background of the production of porcelain. The well-recognised blue and white dense floral pattern in the Delftware vases in the Sinebrychoff Art Museum collection also recalls their Asian origin. Seventeenth-century imported porcelain refers to global trade, which was largely organised by the Dutch East and West India Companies. Therefore, the Delftware stands for the competitive tensions inherent between imported goods and locally produced wares. At first, large amounts of porcelain were imported from China, but conflicts in China gave the Dutch an opportunity to launch mass production in the Netherlands. In no time, more than 20 competing faience factories were operating in Delft. Delftware became very popular (and remains so), but here it also serves as a reminder of long-term developments from world trade, including the problems it created, such as slavery (Dam VII; Tuominen 2016, p. 71).

Masculinity is connected to the idea of masculine work on ships, masculine trade and slavery. But it is also connected to the manufacture of porcelain. How is this involved with Lehtonen's artwork, which portrays blemished femininity, referring to the broken role of a woman? A man can play a role in Lehtonen's porcelain as well, as a participant in a domestic situation. Both artworks speak about culturally produced roles.



Figure 4. Edwaert Collier (1642–1708) *Vanitas*, 1661. Oil on panel 63.5 x 47 cm. Sinebrychoff Art Museum, A IV 3457. Photo: Minna Tuominen.

Skull for Death, Skull for Life – Edwaert Collier and Jiri Geller

The skull in Edwaert Collier's *Vanitas* painting (1661)[8] stands for the 17th-century *vanitas* concept, which itself is one of the most controversial pictorial concepts within the methodological debate of Netherlandish art history of the mundane world (figure 4). Collier's *vanitas* symbolism is obvious: the skull refers to the inevitability of death, but the wreath of ivy twisted around the skull is a symbol of resurrection, and both the crown and the sceptre stand for the vanity of earthly power at the hour of death. Symbols of resurrection promise eternal life. In Christian belief, one should always remember death and prepare oneself for it by living a good life, so as to achieve an eternal afterlife. In general, it can be said that the vanitas tradition is a continuation of the ideas presented in the *memento mori* tradition.[9] Even though the central idea of *memento mori* was to remind one of the blessings of death, it also reminded one of life. The metaphor consisted of abstractions, namely the limited span of life, worldly vanities and death itself (Tuominen 2015, pp. 64–65).



Figure 5. Jiri Geller (b. 1970) *Dead Boy, Melting,* beige in the series *Way to Go,* 2006. Cast plastic, automotive paint 25 x 32 x 29 cm. Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, N-2007-48:A-C. Photo: Minna Tuominen.

Artist Jiri Geller (b. 1970)[10] plays with one of the most known iconic pop and rock staple when he sets his plastic skull on display. The difference is that the

8. Edwaert Collier (1642–1708) *Vanitas*, 1661. Oil on panel 63.5 x 47 cm. Sinebrychoff Art Museum, A IV 3457. Available at https://www.kansallisgalleria.fi/fi/object/481168 [Last accessed 10 October 2019]
9. *Memento mori* (Lat.), "Remember that you must die". This was used to remind the viewer of the transitoriness of human existence by vanitas symbols such as a skull, candle or hour-glass, or perhaps an insect.
10. Jiri Holopainen took his name from illusionist Uri Geller.

skull is about to melt away in Geller's series *Way to Go* (2006), dripping drops from its own puddle as if whatever remains of the spirit that once lived in it is vanishing (figure 5).[11] Throughout art history, the skull has served as the symbol of death and mortality.

In his early years, Geller found his place in the punk world and soon was a singer in punk band. When music began to lag, Geller pursued a silversmith education. He soon realised the discrepancy between traditional sculpture and the immaterial, digital contemporary world. While he was looking for his own direction, he was interested in testing different materials, and realised that "sculpture offers great opportunities to stretch and alter reality" (Juntunen 2017, p. 69). His works were confusing in the 1990s Finnish art world, when he was mixing new materials and well-known subjects such as Jesus, Shivas, Donald Duck, stars, balloons and skulls, but in bright colours, made to look as light as air. They looked as though they were made effortlessly, and for the viewer it was impossible to guess the materials they were made of, which seemed perplexing. At first glance, Geller's sleek skull appears lightweight and easy to produce, but in actual fact preparing the plastic mixture used to make it was a time-consuming process carried out by hand (Siukonen 2008). He made skulls as a series, and combined them with comic strip and pop culture characters such as Donald Duck's head. One aspect that Geller noticed from the commercial world was that everything was always splashing (Jaukkuri 2017, p. 29).[12] It became a feature of his images; many of his works seem to flow and splash. *Way to Go* is also well leaking and flooding or dripping away, making the illusion of something disappearing in front of our eyes.

Curatorial points for choosing these skulls for a dialogue made me ask what ideas, differences or similarities the painted *vanitas* skull and the sculptured rock skull carry with them. Clearly, there is similarity in formal appearance, which helps the viewer to start justification; but there also exists wide substantial values. As legendary symbols, they represent the transience of human life. The artist tells the viewer that he chooses generally-known subjects for his imaginary worlds, and not ones that would only be known only in their own time and culture. A skull as an iconographic symbol includes two worlds for a viewer as well: the life that we are living and the hereafter, existing somewhat on the border, because of its *memento mori* message. Time is the shared concept for these two skulls, which combines and creates a never-ending continuation. At the same time, time is also a distinctive factor – both skulls refer to time which is out of our control.

This universal subject matter, the skull as death, should also be recognised easily in many different cultures, and not limited only to certain religions, areas or specific worldviews. Even though it has been taken into the central message of

11. Jiri Geller (b. 1970) *Dead Boy, Melting,* beige in the series *Way to Go,* 2006. Cast plastic, automotive paint 25 x 32 x 29 cm. Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, N-2007-48:A-C. Available at https://www.kansallisgalleria.fi/fi/object/623229 [Last accessed 10 October 2019]

12. Maaretta Jaukkuri notes that sociologist Zygmunt Bauman saw in the movement and adaptability of fluids a key metaphor of our whole (post)modern age.

vanitas paintings, it is a universal and living symbol in popular cultural genres, such as in alternative music genres, horror films, pirates and Halloween, among others. For Geller, coming from a punk rocker background, there lives a critical aspect of the fake in the world we are living in, such as the world of commercials, and setting a phony skull on show recalls the phony world of illusions with which we are surrounded. Commerciality is involved with fast-changing powers in the capitalistic world, which already worried people in the 17th century and was clearly stated by the upside-down crown in Collier's painting. Even in this short exploration, it is shown that a skull can have strong symbolism, whether used in current image catalogues or in 17th-century art.

Theories and Explanations

Independent curator and writer Abigail Winograd did an exhibition called *A Global Table* in the Frans Hals Museum in Haarlem, the Netherlands (2017), where she researched the tradition of food still lifes from the Dutch Golden Age, from the viewpoint of world trade and the effects of colonialism. She pointed out what these paintings reveal from the political and cultural effects of the food supply. Her mission was to exhibit 17th-century still lifes as historical texts. The very central question that she asked was why power and wealth was, and still is, shared unequally through the consequences of colonialism. She visualised the questions of the environmental, social and economic impact of food production, reflected from the 17th century. These questions seem to be as relevant today as they were then (Winograd 2018, pp. 185–186).

Works of contemporary art enabled comparisons of historical and colonial development and critical dialogue, gave counterforce and created a visual dialogue with the Old Masters. Obviously, contemporary art brought the questions nearer for present-day viewers to contemplate, and even made it somewhat touching, which was the same feedback that I got from the Still Life – The World on Display exhibition (Kiiski 2016; Toivakka 2016; Hujanen 2016; Tiittanen 2016; Kaiken aikaa 2017). In recent decades, artists have given a lot of thought to food production and the ethics around it. Everyday staple food production and transportation demands have grown into even more complicated systems. This exhibition asked current consumers the same questions: Where does my food come from? How it is produced and transported? Who makes it? How does it affect the environment and local farmers' conditions? (Winograd 2018).

As well as contemporary art, cultural historical research enables fresh views to be used as the backbone of an exhibition. Winograd used anthropologist Sidney Mintz's research *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (1985) as her theoretical model for the exhibition. Mintz argued that taste and the pursuit of foodstuffs shaped empires. His research showed changes in global politics and trade throughout the history of sugar. The consequences have been ecological, economic and social. With the help of the cultural history of sugar, Winograd saw that the history of trade could be shown, understood and interpreted in a new light. For comparison, a significant source of motivation for my

exhibition was Julie Berger Hochstrasser's research *Still Life and Trade in the Dutch Golden Age* (2007) where she, like Mintz, penetrates the dark histories of the acquisitions of imported commodities, which were displayed lavishly in paintings. Hochstrasser showed the tension between fashionable representations of objects and commodity histories, which production or purchase included the abuse of other people, capitalisation or moral instability. When Hochstrasser's views are highlighted in the exhibition, the knowledgeable viewer will probably not see the symbolism in the same way anymore or what these paintings traditionally carry or represent in an exhibition. Still Life – The World on Display exhibition offered aesthetic as well as symbolic joy to the viewer, but the booklet, exhibition catalogue and contemporary works of art offered a different way of looking at it all (Tuominen 2016).

Winograd, as well as Hochstrasser, also pointed out that reality was different for the beneficiaries of the trade and those devastated by colonial regimes. Colonialism involved the brutal conquest of territory, the suppression of local populations, the use of slave labour, the import and export of African slaves and the exploitation of natural resources. It transformed people into commodities (Winograd 2018; Hochstrasser 2007). When concentrating on an interest in the politics of food, not only by artists but also by contemporary society, it shows that these questions are relevant to us. Inequality is such a large issue that it is challenging to showcase it in an exhibition, but it is important to create a bridge, in the sense of transhistorical representation.

I took the notion of the inequitable distribution of the world's food supply as the basis for a discussion with Anu Tuominen's *Hunger*, suggesting that there is not enough food for everyone due to differences in social status. Winograd also asks why inequality, which was created during colonialism, is still present (Winograd 2018, p. 188).

In both juxtapositions, the paintings of abundance with Tuominen's *Hunger* and Delftware with Lehtonen's *Porcelain Tower*, older paintings and objects were status symbols themselves of the wealthy home. Delftware became then, and still is, very popular, but was included in the exhibition as a reminder that long-term development based on world trade, including both objects and the food supply, is connected to such problems as colonialism**.** Morality, both of nations and individuals, becomes a focal point.

At the End

Today's challenges for museums concern how they remain stable in their core functions, while at the same time reinventing themselves (Montebello 2015; Boodt 2018; Spijksman & Lehmann 2016). Their job as repositories do not stop, even if they have to close their doors. Reinventing has more to do with time and how to make time traps for audiences, where they can take a long look at and repeated visits to a world that has become faster and more superficial (Montebello 2015). "I'd like to think that we are teasing out all of the ideas and concerns

and dreams and nightmares that are buried in all of the historical works that we have", as Jasper Sharp put it about transhistorical presentation (Siegal 2018). Although museums are under pressure from a number of directions, all of the authors in *The Transhistorical Museum* look for quality and true engagement over time and with their audiences. Peoples' stories come with the items and objects depicted in transhistorical exhibitions, which add to the complexity of the collections' meanings. Transhistorical curating involves building up multifaceted knowledge of items in a museum's care. The living artists' potential for curating and as an institutional strength is also recognised. Working as curators, their arguments for selections fall into the realm of the professional field. However, many parties can be involved in this. For example, artists and researchers from different fields can curate jointly.

Even though the term transhistorical was challenged by Mieke Bal and Alexander Nagel, among others, transhistorical hangings are accepted based on quality criteria. The last key for making transhistorism happen, regardless of the time periods in question, is challenging the viewer through new ways of seeing.

Winograd's interdisciplinary approach to her exhibition project showed the effects of colonialism, some of which are still with us. A common goal for Winograd's and my curating was to make viewers think about the larger worldview through food (with Anu Tuominen's *Hunger*), and reflect on attitudes beyond the timeframe when the artworks were made. Secondly, I worked with the theme of gendered assumptions with factory policies in the old times (with Henrietta Lehtonen's *Porcelain Tower*). Here, Lehtonen's installation was about femininity struggling out of its role, with a company of masculinity just next to it. Commerciality was an issue brought to light, both in comparisons of Lehtonen's artwork with Delft porcelain and of Geller's *Way to Go* with Collier's *Vanitas*. A skull holds strong iconography, which lingers still well into our time and culture. It is imbued with commerciality, making it a living, flexible and usable symbol, even today. All of these examples and notions confirm that there is always another way of seeing, feeling and learning about the present and the past, which will enrich museum collections, as well as adding multiple layers to the conversation with our audiences.

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Section V
Ethics

Ethical issues are changing the ways in which museums and museum professionals working with cultural heritage conduct their work. These issues have a strong influence on the museum field and have also been widely debated for the past few decades. Professional codes of ethics, such as the ICOM *Code of Ethics for Museums*, which was adopted in 1986, steer the museum profession, even though they are not legal documents (Kidd 2017). Not only museum professionals and researchers need to consider the ethics of their actions. A discussion regarding proper and respectful conduct has entered various areas of science and research, and this is changing our views on how to handle and display, for instance, human remains in museums.

Ethical contemplations are often considered to be theoretical in nature. In general, these discussions include both how to present museum collections properly and how to relate to various ownership issues. The authors in this section highlight these topics in Finland and discuss ICOM's role in these processes. ICOM's ethical guidelines are at the core of this discussion, as is highlighted in Eero Ehanti's chapter.

In everyday museum practices ethical considerations can result in very practical outcomes, as is the case of repatriation projects that museums have been involved with (Edbom 2005; Harlin 2008 for Sámi repatriation cases). In October 2019, the National Museum of Finland decided to repatriate its Mesa Verde collection to representatives of Native American tribes. The collection includes 600 items consisting of human remains and grave artefacts originally compiled by the Swedish geologist Gustaf Nordenskiöld (National Museum 2019) and was finally returned in September 2020 to "a coalition of tribes including the Hopi, the Pueblo of Acoma, the Pueblo of Zia and the Pueblo of Zuni" for repatriation and, in the case of the human remains, reinterring (US Embassy in Finland 2020). Anni Guttorm's chapter concentrates on repatriated museum objects, which have been returned to the The Sámi Museum and Nature Centre Siida, and how these repatriations are vital identity builders for the Sámi community. In her chapter, she states that it is time to interpret the collected information from a Sámi perspective (see also Aikio 2018).

Archaeologists encounter situations in their everyday work that demand ethical attention. The debate about human remains in museum collections is complex, because they all involve different contexts and different time periods. Displaying human remains is a delicate matter. Anna Wessman's chapter positions Finland in the international ethical debate on exhibiting human remains in museum displays. Through an analysis of three Finnish museums, she highlights exhibitions displaying archaeological human remains and how the planning of these exhibitions has raised ethical questions, both among museum professionals and subsequently among the public.

Some museum collections and culturally sensitive artefacts can be too difficult for curators themselves to deal with, and such themes can become self-censored and hidden away from exhibitions (e.g., pornographic materials, homosexuality, Nazi memorabilia or more recent human remains). On the other hand, muse-

ums should perhaps also take a more active part in critical debates on difficult or uncomfortable matters. This is especially the case in showing empathy and sensitivity towards exhibition themes about major disasters, such as displaying objects salvaged from the M/S Estonia, which sank in the Baltic Sea in 1994, drowning 852 people, exhibited in the National Maritime Museum in Sweden (Silvén 2010, pp. 136–140). Suzie Thomas' chapter introduces the readers to difficult subjects (dark heritage) in museum displays and puts Finnish cases into a broader international context.

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The Twin Cornerstones – ICOM's Code of Ethics for Museums and the Museum Definition

Anni Guttorm
Repatriated Collections as a Source for Cultural Revitalisation – Case examples from the Sámi Museum Siida

Anna Wessman
Displaying Archaeological Human Remains in Finnish Museums

Suzie Thomas
Representing Difficult Histories and Contested Heritage in Museums

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The Twin Cornerstones – ICOM's Code of Ethics for Museums and the Museum Definition

Eero Ehanti

Abstract

In this chapter, the *ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums* is discussed based on discussions initiated in 2015 at the Museum Ethics 2.0 seminar at the University of Jyväskylä, which continued within ICOM Finland in the form of written commentaries on the Code. This chapter also takes up the most recent events with the new formulation of the *Museum Definition*, a debate that has been active within the museum discipline during the past decade. The Museum Definition and the Code of Ethics for Museums can be understood as two cornerstones upon which our profession stands. These are also tools for museum professionals to use in their everyday working life.

Keywords: ICOM, Museum Definition, museum profession, museum ethics

Introduction

In this chapter I discuss two current debates within the museum sector. First, I discuss in detail the ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums and then shed light on the current situation of the ICOM Museum Definition. I give a background to the code, present all the specific principles and discuss them in the light of recent commentaries from Finnish museum professionals, gathered together by ICOM Finland. The Museum Definition is then presented followed by a discussion about the process of renewing it, which at the time of writing is still an ongoing process.

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

> A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment. (ICOM 2020a)

The ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums gives eight operational principles, which help museum personnel in their daily affairs:

- Museums preserve, interpret and promote the natural and cultural inheritance of humanity
- Museums that maintain collections hold them in trust for the benefit of society and its development.
- Museums hold primary evidence for establishing and furthering knowledge.
- Museums provide opportunities for the appreciation, understanding and management of natural and cultural heritage.
- Museums hold resources that provide opportunities for other public services and benefits.
- Museums work in close collaboration with the communities from which their collections originate as well as those they serve.
- Museums operate in a legal manner.
- Museums operate in a professional manner.
  (ICOM 2020b)

Together, the Museum Definition and the eight principles of the Code of Ethics for Museums form the cornerstone of the museum profession. Both are formulated and maintained by an organisation called the International Council of Museums, which is the world's largest network of museums and museum professionals. As the former chair of the Finnish national committee of ICOM, with six years of experience, I have over time gained an insider perspective on a topic that should prove valuable to the reader.

The Museum as a Profession

Museum professionals are privileged in the sense that we have unique access to cultural heritage. We hold a key role in deciding which parts of it are worth preserving and how it should be utilised. We are the ones who manage collections and make them available to the public. We are specialists, with the power to restrict access to fragile and rare artefacts and cultural heritage sites, often in the name of preservation for future generations. Many of us even carry out research on museum objects or at least have a say on what gets scholarly attention. Moreover, we have a privileged position to plan and build exhibitions and make cultural heritage accessible in various other ways.

All this gives us influence on society; one might even call it power, namely the power of storytelling. Our choices affect what is brought to the public's attention and what is not. As professionals we have a variety of possible stories to tell, but which ones should we choose and highlight? If there is, for example, a magnificent museum collection, there are certainly numerous ways to make selections from it for public presentation. Within the museum sector there is always some sort of selection process going on and somebody who is making those choices.

This is one standpoint for us as museum professionals – our special position regarding cultural heritage, both as institutions and individuals. Another aspect

comes from the fact that cultural heritage is not uniform or standardised; every museum object and site is different, in its physical form and origin.

One artefact can be important because it is unique, another because it represents something typical from a certain time or phenomenon. The origin of a collection also makes a difference because it is worthwhile knowing how an object has come to be in a museum's possession. If there are any doubts regarding the acquisition or ownership of an artefact, all museum professionals involved should become cautious. If this object is from a different culture, its original community must be considered, as must the communities involved in its current location. What material is the object in question made of? Is it made of a sensitive material? Is it in a state of decay because of the inevitable effects of time? In that case, the object needs conservation, which then needs to be tended to. Or, perhaps the object is sensitive in another way, culturally, it might be something not to be dealt with or displayed without extreme caution (see also Guttorm, this volume). This might be the case with objects that include human remains, such as hair or bone, or even complete body parts (see also Wessman, this volume). Objects that are connected to ritual processes are also sensitive to display. A breakthrough in research methods, such as DNA, brings many new possibilities for advancing our knowledge, but caution is needed when using them on culturally sensitive materials. The increased role of the media and commercialism can play a role in our everyday decisions as museum professionals.

These are fundamental questions for museums today. How museum collections are formed and maintained and how museums should encounter different audiences and communities are just some questions to think about. This is basic stuff for us as museum professionals, but things are seldom straightforward or easy. The Museum Definition and the eight ethical principles given at the beginning of this chapter offer a framework that guides our work. However, we must remember that these are not easily adaptable rules and we can't regard them as an inflexible operating manual.

Of course, there is also legislation and guidance from national governing bodies that affects museums and the museum profession. In Finland, the relevant legislation has recently been updated as a part of the process of creating a national museum policy programme. This programme, published by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2018, outlines success factors for Finnish museums up to the year 2030, with a vision that by that year Finland will have the most up-to-date museums and the most enthusiastic audience in Europe. It highlights museums' roles as experts, partners and enablers, and gives them an important role in creating a culturally, socially and ecologically sustainable society (Mattila 2018).

Furthermore, it proposes common values for us working in the Finnish museum field. These values are community and interactivity, reliability and continuity, pluralism and democracy, and last but not least, courage and open-mindedness. The programme also focuses on themes such as encounters and partnerships, utilising museum collections and the possibilities of digitisation and the like,

with clear measures listed for various actors in the field. The publication of this programme also included a renewal of the Finnish museum system, with the establishment of nationally designated museums, but also by clarifying the roles of national-level museums. The programme's focus on development also touched upon more sustainable and flexible funding systems for the museum sector. The Museum Act (729/1992) was also assessed within this process, with the result being a newly-formulated act that came into effect on the 1st of January 2020 (Finlex 2019).

The renewed act outlines the purposes of museum work and specifies requirements for state subsidies for museums. Here several points ring a bell, especially when considering the principles in ICOM's Code of Ethics for Museums, in spite of not being referred to directly in the act. Still, the new Museum Act is not enough. Legislation on its own can't naturally cover all aspects of our multifaceted profession, and this particular law is valid only in Finland. Legislation differs very much depending on the country, and something more is thus needed in order to guide us in our museum profession, something that is independent from national legislation.

ICOM – The world's largest museum network

ICOM was established in 1948 under the umbrella of the recently-created UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), with a focus on developing the museum sector (ICOM 2020c). As the years passed, ICOM grew into the world's largest network of museum professionals and now has more than 40 000 members worldwide. The organisation consists of a secretariat based in Paris within UNESCO, National Committees, one of which is ICOM Finland, and more than 30 International Committees focusing on various subjects or fields within the museum sector. Individual members belong to a National Committee and to a freely chosen International Committee (ICOM 2020d).

Early on, ICOM took a leading role in matters related to ethics. The most relevant outcome has been the ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums (ICOM 2020b). But why do we need a code of ethics? The idea is that commonly established ethical principles allow us to be more confident of our professionalism, and they build up trust that colleagues, wherever they might be, can be capable of undertaking complicated tasks within the profession, building their decision-making on common ground. The public should recognise this and trust that their cultural heritage is in good hands. Simply put, ethical guidelines are needed for maintaining professional conduct, securing vital internal coherence and gaining the public's trust. We as professionals have to earn the trust of society. This can happen only slowly and by working consistently. As for internal coherence, the lack of internal trust within society surely has a negative effect on a community. These are ideas I noted when Janne Behm, an ethics consultant, gave a speech about professional ethics to us museum professionals at the Museum Ethics 2.0 seminar in 2015 in Jyväskylä. Indeed, the museum field is not an exception for

having a designated code of ethics; many professions have similar codes, and any profession would benefit from having one.

Our Code and its eight principles outline the responsibilities and tasks of the museum institution, as well as the rights and duties of a museum worker. It is a common reference tool, which provides guidance in everyday professional practice. Its background is international, but naturally it also relies on national legislation. The rules are not strict, straightforward rules, but more like recommendations, guidelines and principles.

The Code of Ethics for Museums can be seen as having three aspects. Firstly, it defines the responsibilities and tasks of a museum institution (institutional ethics). Secondly, it defines the rights and responsibilities of a museum worker (professional ethics). Thirdly, it can be seen as having a communicative role towards the public, as it tells what can be expected from museums and their staff.

Worth noting is that all ICOM members are committed to respecting the Code of Ethics for Museums. There are national committees, whose task it is to make the code known in each country. This means, for instance, that they may translate the code into a local language and help individual members familiarise themselves with the code. This task is not to be underestimated, as legislation and management of cultural heritage issues varies worldwide. The code is also an updated and adaptable document, essentially a tool that helps museums and the people working in them with their day-to-day business. ICOM's committee on ethics (ETHCOM) works on updating the code, and in 2019 a new international committee for ethical dilemmas was created. The latter promises to become an open forum for ICOM members to join when discussing ethical dilemmas (IC Ethics 2020).

The Museum Definition

What is the Museum Definition? It is "the backbone of museums", stated Jette Sandahl, previously director of the Museum of Copenhagen and founding director of both the Women's Museum of Denmark and the Museum of World Culture in Gothenburg, in September 2019 at ICOM's General Conference in Kyoto, Japan, when presenting the outcomes of the standing committee for Museum Definition, Prospects and Potentials (MDPP). Sandahl was the chair of this committee, which was established at the previous General Conference in Milan, Italy, in 2016 with the task of renewing the Museum Definition, something many looked forward to very much, as the definition was felt to be somewhat outdated.

> While this definition is meant to define the essence of what constitutes a museum, it is also understood as an ideal, which is interpreted somewhat differently by museums, and ICOM recognises as members also institutions which only partially or to varying degrees fulfil all the criteria or functions. Over the decades minor adjustments have been made to this definition. In December 2018 the ICOM Executive Board decided that it is time to develop an alternative definition which will be more relevant

> and appropriate for museums in the 21st century and future museum landscapes. (Sandahl 2019, p. 3.)

In principle the definition explores what museums are, what we do as museum professionals, how we do it, and last but not least, why we do it, as Sandahl outlined in her speech in Kyoto. It should also convey these principles, both inside our field and outside to the public, and as such it guides and supports museums in their everyday practices, as well as their visions for the future. Furthermore, she concluded, the definition should be a dynamic tool, meaning that it should be a valid, functional definition, not a static one, but one open to continuing assessment and modification.

The Museum Definition is relevant to us all, a fact which became evident in the halls of the Kyoto conference centre during the 85th General Conference in September 2019, when delegates from all around the world entered a heated debate about the proposed new Museum Definition and the processes as to how it was created.

The proposed definition is as follows:

> Museums are democratising, inclusive and polyphonic spaces for critical dialogue about the pasts and the futures. Acknowledging and addressing the conflicts and challenges of the present, they hold artefacts and specimens in trust for society, safeguard diverse memories for future generations and guarantee equal rights and equal access to heritage for all people.
>
> Museums are not for profit. They are participatory and transparent, and work in active partnership with and for diverse communities to collect, preserve, research, interpret, exhibit and enhance understandings of the world, aiming to contribute to human dignity and social justice, global equality and planetary wellbeing. (ICOM 2020a)

This proposed definition was neither accepted at the General Conference, as the original plan was, nor rejected. After intense debates, the General Assembly voted for a postponement of the whole process. This means that at the time of writing, ICOM does not have a renewed definition. Nevertheless, what was proposed in Kyoto was the outcome of three years of work within the definition working group, which had been engineered by an extensive worldwide process of gathering opinions from all committees. Roundtable discussions were also organised in Finland, and the results were forwarded to the international working group. In the end, every ICOM member was free to submit proposals for the definition. All this information was processed in the working group, whose members then modified definition proposals for the Executive Board to decide. The proposed definition was finalised there.

ICOM Finland's round table discussion was an intense discussion with museum professionals at various stages of their careers. As instructed by the MDPP, a set of given questions was discussed. As for the role of museums in decades to

come, the Finnish delegates saw museums as forums and enablers for societal discussions. Moreover, they saw museums as providers of information, and thought that museums can even have a role in promoting peace in society. As for threats, increasing inequality, along with political and economic polarisation, were mentioned as things to deal with in the future, as well as climate change. Museums can provide tools for tackling these issues, if resources are sufficient, which they are not, unfortunately, at the moment. Questions directed towards current trends and threats raised many thoughts. Opening up to the public and having more inclusiveness were seen as relevant in today's environment. Visitor numbers are rising in Finland and museums are seen as being in a strong position at the moment, but the question of how to maintain this when public funding is getting scarcer needs to be asked. New funding models are needed to meet all the expectations that people and society have towards museums, but they should not jeopardise their core functions. Good strategic planning and models from private corporations should be brought more into the museum field also in Finland, where museums have traditionally been maintained largely by the government (ICOM Finland 2018).

This was our take on the questions the MDPP commissioned national committees to discuss. Our roundtable discussion reflected on thoughts about the Finnish museum sector and the results of these discussions were passed on to ICOM's secretariat, as instructed. The other ICOM committees did the same, and later on an open call for definitions was launched, resulting in hundreds of wordings from around the world. All this means that the MDPP committee and ICOM had extensive material to work on when formulating the proposal for a new definition.

This process shows how the huge network within ICOM can be mobilised to work for a common goal. It also reveals the flip side of the coin, namely the difficulties involved in trying to come up with wording and a solution suitable to all parties. National committees are, however, all very different. Something that might be relevant to us here in Finland might be far less important to members from developing countries, who live in completely different geographical, economic and political realities. Nevertheless, the proposed definition as such speaks a great deal about today's museum world, which is why I set out to discuss it at the end of this chapter, after first walking through the Code of Ethics for Museums.



Figure 1. The *ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums*. Photo by the author.

Walking Through the Code of Ethics for Museums

Let's now take a closer look at the code itself. While going through the eight principles, I also refer to a commentary we carried out on them in Finland. This was initiated in a seminar titled Museum Ethics 2.0, organised jointly by ICOM Finland and the student association Corpus, from the University of Jyväskylä. These discussions were published (mainly in Finnish) in a publication series of the Finnish Museums Association (*Museoetiikka 2.0* – Mylläri et al. 2016).

To further promote the discussion within the museum field, ICOM Finland invited eight museum professionals to comment on one principle each, and write a blog post about it. The commentators were chosen by the Board of ICOM Finland, and they represented various positions and aspects of the museum field, ranging from people occupied in hands-on museum work, to a professor of museology, to the Director General of the Finnish Museums Association. The outcome was a deliberation on problems regarding the code, its strengths and validity in today's environment and observations of issues needing updating. All blog posts were ultimately translated into English, published on ICOM Finland's website and distributed through ICOM's network, in order to give the international field a possibility to reflect upon Finnish views regarding the code (ICOM Finland 2017).

As I present the Code, the quotes are the titles of individual principles and the wordings as they stand in the code. I then summarise what they cover and introduce the Finnish comments.

Principle 1: Museums preserve, interpret and promote the natural and cultural inheritance of humanity.

The first principle and its subdivisions go on to set some of the very basic premises of museum work. "Museums are responsible for the tangible and intangible natural and cultural heritage", it says, and for this a proper institutional standing with clear objectives and policies, adequate physical premises with suitable environment and security, competent staff and financial resources are required. The rule also concerns sources of funding. Whatever the case might be, museums should maintain control and integrity of their programs, exhibitions and activities. Non-commercial aspects are found there as well, which have been included in the Museum Definition. In short, income-generating activities should not compromise the standards of the institution (ICOM 2020b, pp. 2–6).

I took a close look at the first principle. Of course, these are the essentials, including the premises, staff and so on, and as such, the principle's points are very important reading for any museum professional for better understanding our institution. In Finland, we are fortunate enough to have many of the points covered by legislation. If an institution here calls itself a museum and wants to be part of the state funding system, the museum law sets very similar requirements to the ones listed in this first principle of museum ethics. However, what I came to deliberate on was the overlying tone of the rule, the huge burden it seems to place on our shoulders. Can we really be responsible for the tangible and intangible natural and cultural heritage? Does this steer us towards an exhaustive sense of duty? In reality, not all heritage gets attention, only what is chosen or possible to preserve and highlight. This should be acknowledged. There is no need to take on all that responsibility, especially alone, as today's mood in the museum field is very much inclusive; communities are invited to participate. It is very good that the latter rules include and emphasise communities and co-operation (Ehanti 2017, pp. 6–8).

Someone must also facilitate all this preservation. If there are no resources, how are we to preserve anything? This leads to the currently obvious issue museums are facing more and more, even in countries such as Finland, where cultural heritage work has been largely funded by society. This is where we might find ourselves involved with the non-commercial nature of museum work lurking in this first principle, and in the very definition of a museum (Ehanti 2017, pp. 6–8).

Principle 2: Museums that maintain collections hold them in trust for the benefit of society and its development.

One of the cornerstones of museums, namely collections, is discussed in the second principle, which highlights the importance of them as significant public inheritance. Museums have a duty to acquire, preserve and promote their collection, and within this public trust comes the notion of stewardship, which includes rightful ownership, permanence, documentation, accessibility and responsible disposal (ICOM 2020b, p. 8).

This principle calls for consistent and sustainable collection work. A written collections policy addresses acquisition, care of collections and their proper use. Sources of collections cannot be illegal, not even questionable, and ownership must be lawful. Special attention is required when dealing with culturally sensitive materials, whatever they may be (ICOM 2020b, pp. 9–11).

Another burning issue of the day, the deaccessioning of collections, is also touched upon here, although not in any depth. Therefore, the ETHCOM committee expanded this second rule in 2019 by publishing separate guidelines for deaccessioning (ETHCOM 2019). This was needed, because there are plenty of aspects to be considered when deaccessioning items from museum collections. Collections formed over long periods of time might contain objects which are no longer suitable for a museum. And museums are naturally also concerned with the costs of maintaining their collections.

There certainly are valid reasons for including deaccessioning as a relevant and natural part of collection management, but the process was felt to be too time-consuming and difficult. This is one of the findings Nina Robbins made in her 2016 doctoral thesis on disposals in Finnish art museums. Her thesis also researched views on different methods for actually carrying out deaccessioning (Robbins 2016).

One option could be to donate objects to other museum collections, specifically to those with greater interest in a specific set of objects. That would be an easy way, and is also the preferred method of deaccessioning among the art museum professionals that Robbins interviewed. The second method was destruction, after thorough documentation. The third method was returning the object to the previous owner, and the fourth was donation. So what about selling deaccessioned artefacts? Art museums do sell certain paintings, which do not fit into their collections policy, and they use the money for acquiring other works of more significance to them. Selling artefacts to another museum ranked as the fifth most popular method in Robbins' thesis (Robbins 2016, pp. 174–175). Her study covered art museums in Finland; the picture is most likely different elsewhere and with different materials. Selling artworks, for instance, most likely ranks higher in societies where museum funding is organised differently from here.

ICOM's new *Guidelines on Deaccessioning of the International Council of Museums* lists ten reasons for deaccessioning. It also guides how to make a deaccessioning decision in a legitimate way. "In no event should the potential monetary value of an object be part of the motive for determining whether or not to deaccession", the guideline says (ETHCOM 2019). It is indeed interesting to discuss monetary values here, as selling museum objects might potentially be profitable for a museum. The code does not outright ban selling deaccessioned items as a means of disposal, nor does the accompanying guideline, as long as funds are used for the benefit of the museum collection, i.e., for acquisitions and the taking care of the same museum's collection. However, they both warn against using the proceeds of sales for the costs of regular museum administrative expenses or maintenance.

Even though the path to smooth museum deaccession might be laborious, museums are increasingly heading in that direction. This means that museums need to update their collection policies about deaccessioning processes and issues. The National Museum of Finland is one such example.

Furthermore, the Code's second principle contains a highly relevant point, i.e., a museum should maintain its collections properly. It should have clear procedures and responsibilities outlined, proper storage facilities, documentation and, of course, conservation by preventive and, if needed, interventive means. All this is intended to make sure that a museum collection is maintained and preserved, so that it remains available for exhibition, loans, research and other uses. This might be quite a challenge for a museum, and even in some cases a cause for deaccessioning. If a collection cannot be preserved, should it be deaccessioned somehow in order to facilitate its better preservation and use elsewhere, thus freeing resources for something else? (ICOM 2020b, pp. 14–15).

Nina Robbins, who currently works both as a university level teacher and museum professional, commented on this principle, together with Päivi Ukkonen, a lecturer in conservation at the Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, and Minna Turtiainen, curator of collections at the Kerava Art Museum. They deliberated on the influence of museum collections and the energy within them. They acknowledge that museums must constantly justify activities that don't yield short-term profits. Great efforts are needed for collection management. Does this have an influence? Do collections work somehow for the benefit of society? Yes, answer the commentators, "Collections are the core of the operations that will stand the test of time". They are the capital only museums can possess, something definitely not to be wasted! "Each object has characteristics exceeding its information value" (Robbins, Ukkonen & Turtiainen 2017, pp. 10–11).

Principle 3: Museums hold primary evidence for establishing and furthering knowledge.

The third principle clearly indicates the value of museum collections as primary evidence, something a museum should acknowledge in its collections policy. In principle, it states that museums have responsibilities "to all for the care, accessibility and interpretation of primary evidence collected and held in their collections". The principle clearly calls for making collections and all relevant information available as freely as possible. The principle states that a museum should carry out research and do it according to a policy or principle. In other words, research should be consistent and serve the institution's aims, even if they happen to be in conflict with individual workers' research interests. So, an individual museum worker researching items from the museum's collection must secure permission to do so. The principle also leads to something obvious, namely documentation, which should always be done, especially when talking about destructive analyses. Furthermore, "research of human remains and materials of sacred significance must be accomplished in a manner consistent with the interests and belief of members of the community, ethnic or religious groups from which the objects originate" (ICOM 2020b, pp. 18–21).

Minna Sarantola-Weiss, Research Director at the Helsinki City Museum and Adjunct Professor of History at the University of Helsinki, commented on this matter by outlining a set of questions on which any museum could potentially deliberate. Is the value of collections as research material clearly identified in the collection policy of a museum? Is this in accordance with the museum's stated mission? Are popular trends allowed to affect this? How much do individual researches consider their employer's strategies, and where is the line between an employer's rights and obligations? How long can a researcher sit on material for some possible research use? Do museums dare to challenge or even change predominant truths? Does funding influence research topics? On what principles are results published? Is there a research policy? Indeed, how much research does a museum carry out or facilitate to meet the demand that museums really should produce information and make it available to the public? (Sarantola-Weiss 2017, pp. 13–15).

Principle 4: Museums provide opportunities for the appreciation, understanding and management of the natural and cultural heritage.

"Museums have an important duty to develop their educational role and attract wider audiences from the community, locality, or group they serve", starts the fourth principle. Interaction with communities is highlighted here as an important part of museums' educational role (ICOM 2020b, p. 24).

An obvious way to fulfil this principle is to organise exhibitions. According to this principle, exhibitions should be in accordance with the stated mission, policy and purpose of the museum, and constructed so that proper care and conservation of collections is not compromised. Information presented must be well-founded, accurate and give appropriate consideration to represented groups or beliefs. Unprovenanced material should not be displayed. Reproductions may be used as well, but if they are, museums should respect the integrity of the original when replicas, reproductions or copies of items are made. All such copies should be permanently marked as facsimiles. Again, it should be stressed that human remains and materials of sacred significance should be acquired only if they can be housed securely and cared for respectfully. This must be accomplished in a manner consistent with the interests and beliefs of members of the community, ethnic or religious groups from which the objects originate (ICOM 2020b, pp. 24–26).

This was commented on by Reetta Karhunkorva and Leena Paaskoski from the Lusto Forest Museum in Punkaharju, Finland, where the former works as Senior Forest Culture Specialist and the latter as Development Director. They brought forth the concept of communities in their discussion. What is a good functional relationship like? How do we interact with the people who surround us? Yes, we definitely have an educative role and other well-intentioned functions, where we give something of value to people, but surely this isn't a one-way street. Mutually beneficial co-operation with the various actors is very possible. Indeed, it is a must these days, as museums are expected to widen their funding basis. Could

it be like a good romantic relationship, where both parties share, trust, take responsibility and eventually benefit? (Karhunkorva & Paaskoski 2017, pp. 17–18).

Principle 5: Museums hold resources that provide opportunities for other public services and benefits.

"Museums utilise a wide variety of specialisms, skills and physical resources that have a far broader application than in the museum." This opens up possibilities for co-operation and the provision of services to other actors, which is a positive, as long as those activities are in accordance with the museum's mission. Identification of illegally or illicitly acquired objects, authentication and valuation (appraisal) are mentioned here, but caution is called for. Where museums provide an identification service, they should not act in any way that could be regarded as mainly benefiting themselves from such an activity, either directly or indirectly. Valuations may be made for the purposes of insuring museum collections. Opinions on the monetary value of other objects should only be given upon official request from other museums and competent legal, governmental or other responsible public authorities (ICOM 2020b, pp. 28–29).

In her comment to this principle Satu Itkonen, Head of Public Programmes at the Ateneum Art Museum, noted that the code might give a somewhat restricted view of potential co-operation. The code underlies museums' duty for co-operation with public actors in the identification, authentication and valuation of things, for instance. Indeed, we can and do help certain authorities. But how about taking a broader view and thinking about how our expertise could be shared with the social and health sectors, for instance? Why do our museums lack the courage to expand beyond their stated mission? This question is actually a quite relevant one, and not just regarding this rule, because in several chapters of the code it is stated that "it must be in accordance with the museum's stated mission", whatever that might actually be in any given situation. Mission statements should be written in such a way that creative interpretations are not excluded (Itkonen 2017, pp. 20–21).

Principle 6: Museums work in close collaboration with the communities from which their collections originate, as well as those they serve.

Then there's the principle of collaborating with the communities from which their collections originate. Museum collections reflect the cultural and natural heritage of the communities from which they have been derived. As such, they have a character beyond that of ordinary property, which may include strong affinities with national, regional, local, ethnic, religious or political identity. One obvious way to do this is to cooperate by sharing knowledge, documentation and collections with museums and cultural organisations in the countries and communities of origin (ICOM 2020b, pp. 32–33).

The return of cultural property is discussed here. The code guides museums to be prepared to initiate dialogues for the return of cultural property to a country

or an indigenous group. Furthermore, when a country, people or place seek the restitution of something that can be demonstrated to have been exported in violation of international and national conventions, and shown to be part of that country's heritage, the museums concerned should, if legally able to do so, take prompt steps to cooperate in its return. Items originating from conflict zones are mentioned here, as well as things not to be purchased by any museum (ICOM 2020b, p. 33).

The other big thread in this principle is the aspect of respect towards contemporary communities, which is something seen as vital these days, especially when museums actively want to be involved with the surrounding society. The principle calls for a respectful and harmonious relationship with communities (ICOM 2020b, p. 34).

All this cannot be overlooked, but listening is one thing, and believing or acting upon it is another. Is the customer really always right? The Director of the Finnish Labour Museum, Kalle Kallio, commented upon this principle, that the code seems to warn against hurting anyone, in stating so clearly that communities should be respected according to their wishes and conditions. "Surprisingly many rules in the code seem to have been created for the needs of a postcolonial museum world", he writes, and finds "shame about innocent people exploited, robbed and racialised by imperialist museum system", in the wording of the principle (Kallio 2017, pp. 23–24).

While this is a genuine concern, it is a poor match for the ethical problems of Finnish museums, where a more current concern is how an overly sensitive approach can leave sore points of the past untouched. Is there a hint of postcolonial shame lurking there?

In addition to underlining dignity, the code fortunately states that museums should also promote human well-being, social development, tolerance and respect by advocating multicultural and multilingual expressions. As a matter of fact, these higher values, which are based on the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), should be emphasised, instead of naive talk about communities (ICOM Finland 2017, pp. 23–24).

Principle 7: Museums operate in a legal manner.

Museums must conform fully to international, regional, national and local legislation and treaty obligations. In addition, the governing body should comply with any legally binding trusts or conditions relating to any aspect of the museum, its collections and operations. (ICOM 2020b, p. 36)

The legal framework is outlined in the seventh principle, with a listing of relevant international legislation. Why does the code states that museums must act in a legal manner? Kimmo Levä, the Secretary General of the Finnish Museums Association, who commented on this principle, asked why. It might seem odd to highlight such an obvious thing. Following the law is hardly a choice, let alone an ethical one. On the other hand, do museums fully conform to this rule? I'm

thinking about ambiguous copyright and personal data laws, which, if followed fully, would destroy the foundation of all collection work. Rather than pledging us to conform "fully to international, regional, national and local legislation and treaty obligations", should the principle instead be modified to say something value-based about how museums must promote justice, particularly from the perspective of their key task and related questions? Alternatively, one could just omit the word fully from the text (Levä 2017, pp. 26–28).

Principle 8: Museums operate in a professional manner.

> Members of the museum profession should observe accepted standards and laws and uphold the dignity and honour of their profession. They should safeguard the public against illegal or unethical professional conduct. Every opportunity should be used to inform and educate the public about the aims, purposes and aspirations of the profession in order to develop a better public understanding of the contributions of museums to society. (ICOM 2020c, p. 40)

Various important aspects of professional conduct are handled here, including the familiarity of relevant legislation, knowledge of professional responsibility, academic and scientific responsibilities, confidentiality issues, museum and collection security, personal independence, etc. Another set of points covers the conflicts of interest that a museum professional might face (ICOM 2020b, pp. 40–44).

Janne Vilkuna, professor of Museology at the University of Jyväskylä, commented upon museums operating in a professional manner by asking: "Do they?" and continued, "Museums do not operate or do anything at all." According to him it is the people who operate a museum, while doing their jobs and getting paid for it. In doing so they have to keep in mind all 16 prohibitions and their 18 subsections if they wish to respect the code. Vilkuna finds the code to be a list of "musts and thou shalt nots" of almost biblical character. What is the point of all these obligations and responsibilities, all of which are placed upon the employer, when there is nothing gained in return? Do the goals of our work become evident enough from the code? (Vilkuna 2017, pp. 30–31).

Challenges in Ethics

Although the present set of principles remains valid and should be familiar to all museum workers, it seldom offers easy answers, as situations differ. For instance, one museum's justified artefact or exhibition might be ethically questionable from another museum's point of view. How about the issues of confidentiality? Are they easy to follow? Perhaps not, if legislation happens to contradict ethical confidentiality responsibilities.

There are also risks in taking all of this too seriously. Ethically strict interpretations of the code might prevent the spreading of information and drive people to search for information from less qualified sources. One thing is that many of us

seek to publish and communicate with the media as much as possible. Of course, this is fine, but publishing and gaining personal prestige through museum work might be selfish self-promotion, which is in principle against the code.

I have also reflected at length on being a professional and how it relates to the professional community. Can one act for the profession but against the professional community? Or, should one always be loyal to their professional community, even though it might mean degradation of the profession's status in society?

Redefining the Museum

Let us now retreat back to the meeting halls and corridors of the Kyoto General Conference, where a proposal for the new Museum Definition was strongly debated during that week in September 2019. In fact, the debate had already started in July, when the proposal was first published. Here is the proposal once again:

> Museums are democratising, inclusive and polyphonic spaces for critical dialogue about the pasts and the futures. Acknowledging and addressing the conflicts and challenges of the present, they hold artefacts and specimens in trust for society, safeguard diverse memories for future generations and guarantee equal rights and equal access to heritage for all people.
>
> Museums are not for profit. They are participatory and transparent, and work in active partnership with and for diverse communities to collect, preserve, research, interpret, exhibit, and enhance understandings of the world, aiming to contribute to human dignity and social justice, global equality and planetary wellbeing. (ICOM 2020a)

What was swiftly brought forth by several committees, led notably by ICOM France and the ICOM Europe regional alliance, was a disappointment regarding the process of how this proposal was formulated. Despite wide rounds of discussions and an open, worldwide call for definition proposals, there were not enough chances to reflect on this proposal before the Kyoto Conference, many felt. Perhaps another round of comments from committees before going to the vote would have been beneficial, and would have given more choices in the actual vote. As it turned out, there was only one formulation that was brought for voting. Many proposed postponing the whole process.

Nevertheless, the process was agreed upon back in 2016 at Milan's General Conference. This is why ICOM Finland, together with other ICOM Nord committees, did not favour postponement. "Call the question!", as one of the delegates urged us all to do. "We cannot change the process now", reminded many; the vote was in the accepted meeting agenda. But eventually the votes were cast for postponement of the process. Because ICOM is based in France, the meeting followed French legislation, thus making the postponement possible. The result of the vote was postponement, with a great majority, and the process continues.



Figure 2. ICOM members in the Museum Definition panel in Kyoto General Conference, Kyoto, Japan, September 2019. Photo by the author.

At the time of writing this chapter, this process is continuing. The standing committee MDPP continues its work with a modified assembly. The deadline will be extended to allow good time for committees to participate, for which there clearly is a huge need among members. ICOM Finland, together with all the other committees, now looks forward to receiving guidelines for mobilising our members in this longstanding but important discussion.

The process is one thing, but what about the exact wording of the proposed definition? Its content and humanistic message is something very few in the museum field would oppose, I think, and so said many in the Kyoto debates, including our fellow Nordic committees. Together we decided to vote for the proposed definition in the final voting, which did not happen. Such a definition would have worked, we thought. But we represented the Nordic countries, where such an open and perhaps vague definition would have been well received. However, in countries where the definition is more tightly linked to legislation and funding models for museums, it might not have.

One could argue whether this is actually a definition at all, or more of a vision statement. Some of the terms and expressions in the statement (e.g., polyphonic space, contributing to planetary wellbeing, etc.) are quite vague. Moreover, the definition is very wide and it could mean that any institution or actor could claim museum status and thus enjoy its benefits. Governments also differ in various countries and they change regularly, which means that a museum definition that is too vague could be interpreted and utilised by different governments very differently. On the other hand, it was deliberated in the discussions how such a definition would make it possible to establish

a museum, which in some political climates could be quite challenging, in light of the present definition.

Then there was a debate about the exact words, which either were or were not in the proposal. Education was one of the missing words, a key one, many thought when they expressed amazement that such a key activity of museums was not specifically included in the wording. This was a concern of many hereabout as well, which many voiced in discussions in online forums and at ICOM Finland's events after the Kyoto conference. I must of course underline that although the board of ICOM Finland took a favourable view of the proposed definition in accordance together with other ICOM Nord committees, opinions of course differ here as well.

I think that this is the beauty of discussing something this important in such a huge and varied network of museums and professionals. But it is a curse of sorts as well. How can one in the first place come up with a definition suitable for all?

Conclusion

The twin cornerstones of museums are the Code of Ethics for Museums and the Museum Definition. But can these together provide us with a professional identity and give us the tools we need in order to succeed confidently in our daily work?

The preamble of the code states that it "presents a minimum standard for museums. … It is also intended that individual nations and the specialised organisations connected with museums should use this Code as a basis for developing additional standards" (ICOM 2017).

The relevant thing here is the notion that the code should be used as a basis for something additional. Each national committee should review and discuss the code within its local cultural heritage field. This was done by ICOM Finland, both with the seminar and the commentaries referred to above. Moreover, even individual museums can complement the principles so that they to better meet the needs of a specific museum and community. National Committees can also assist in this work, since it is also their duty. ICOM Finland has also organised discussions in individual museums, and we regularly give lectures about museum ethics for museology and conservation students. The process of renewing the ethical code never ends, because the code is an adaptable tool.

The present text of the code is the result of years of discussions; the ETHCOM committee will now continue this work with recently-published guidelines on deaccessioning. Other additions are also on the way, namely on acquisitions, sponsorship and fundraising.

As for the Museum Definition outlined by Jette Sandal at the beginning of this chapter, we must also remember that this is broad and complex. Covering such a concept in one single definition proved to be challenging. As with the ICOM

Code of Ethics for Museums, the Museum Definition can also never be final or static. It is also an adaptable tool, whose reviewing process never ends.

One of the best things with ICOM is its huge network of museum professionals from all around the world, who gather at events or online forums to debate relevant issues. This is what I found myself thinking about when sitting at the debate tables in Kyoto, and when listening to opinions from such different points of view, some of which I would never have thought of myself.

The code and definition are, after decades of work, now a part of ICOM, in a very usable form. After the next rounds of updates, they are even more valid for today's society. Certainly, they provide us with vision and confidence, and they guide us in our daily affairs.

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Repatriated Collections as a Source for Cultural Revitalisation – Case examples from the Sámi Museum Siida

Anni Guttorm

Abstract

Repatriated collections are a source of cultural revitalisation because of the tradition, history, knowledge and values that they carry. At its best, the process and outcome of repatriation can empower and create unity in the community. In the chapter these themes are considered from the perspective of Sámi culture. The aim of this article is to present examples of how repatriated Sámi collections can, and have already, helped in revitalising Sámi cultural heritage.

In recent years, the trend of returning indigenous cultural heritage to its origins has intensified. Indigenous communities, museums and cultural heritage professionals are increasingly discussing repatriation. Repatriation processes are starting to take place all over the world as indigenous communities are becoming empowered and reclaiming their rights to own their past. This discussion has also arisen in Finland, where several museums have rethought the destiny of their Sámi collections. This has led to Sámi object repatriations to the Sámi homeland, specifically to the Sámi Museum Siida. When returned home, these collections enable and advance the cultural revitalisation of the Sámi.

The revitalisation of Sámi cultural heritage through repatriated collections happens in many ways. Returned collections represent the right of the Sámi people to manage their own cultural heritage. In the past, Sámi culture has been researched and interpreted by outsiders through objects collected from Sámi homelands. For today's Sámi it is important to be able to manage that information from their own perspective. The practical aspect of repatriation is that the Sámi community can now more easily get access to such objects, as well as benefit from them. Repatriations strengthen the idea of our traditions and heritage, and in this way empower the Sámi as a community.

Keywords: repatriation, revitalisation, Sámi cultural heritage, communality, recalling

Introduction

In the late 1800s and the beginning of 1900s, Finnish painter Gabriel Engberg travelled three times to Lapland, seeking inspiration for his artistic work. In

his two first trips in 1898 and 1905, he spent time in the Inari area and with the local Sámi people. From these trips he bought Sámi objects for the collections of the National Museum of Finland and for himself (Hautala-Hirvioja 1999, pp. 84–87, pp. 95–97). Later he became intendent and director of Häme Museums, and the artefacts he obtained from Lapland thus ended up in the collections of Häme Museums. Engberg was just one of the many travellers who explored Sápmi, or the Sámi homelands in the northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. Many travellers acquired Sámi objects, which then were taken to museum collections and exhibitions outside of Sápmi. Now such Sámi objects are returning home, to Sápmi, through repatriations.

In recent years, the debate about returning indigenous cultural heritage to its origins has become more vocal and more visible. Indigenous communities have awakened to reclaim their rights to own their past. Due to that, repatriation processes are taking place all over the world. Also in Finland, several museums have rethought the destiny of their Sámi collections and have decided to repatriate them to Sápmi, to the Sámi Museum Siida. Now the repatriated collections can enable, further and deepen the cultural revitalisation of the Sámi.

Repatriations have great significance to the Sámi community, because the Sámi as an indigenous people have the right to manage their own cultural heritage. As museums repatriate their Sámi collections to the Sámi community, they acknowledge the Sámi people's right to manage their own cultural heritage. In the cultural revitalisation work of the Sámi, repatriated collections play a key role. Collections carry traditions, history, knowledge and values that may now be used as a source or a basis for cultural revitalisation. Through repatriated collections, the revitalisation of the Sámi cultural heritage happens in multiple layers and ways.

The Sámi Museum was founded in 1959 in Inari as the first Sámi museum in the world. It was founded by the Sámi themselves, through the first Sámi association in Finland, *Samii Litto*. The idea of founding a Sámi museum was to preserve the Sámi cultural heritage that was left after the Lapland war in 1944–1945 had destroyed vast areas in Lapland (Jomppanen 2003, p. 19). In 1998 the Siida building opened, consisting of the Sámi Museum and the Nature Centre of Northern Lapland. One of the Sámi Museum Siida's main tasks is to work interactively with the Sámi community and to intermediate and enable the repatriation and subsequent revitalisation processes through its activities. That is also the aim of the collection's management in the Sámi Museum (Guttorm 2016, p. 5, p. 17).

Through these repatriations, the Sámi Museum's role as a caretaker of Sámi cultural heritage and keeper of the Sámi community's memories is fulfilled and strengthened. Since the collections of the Sámi Museum date mostly from the 1900s, these repatriated objects dating from the 1700s and 1800s complete the collections of the Sámi Museum. The return of the Sámi object collections enables the Sámi Museum to display and examine these objects in the Sámi community. By doing so, previously lost knowledge, know-how and traditions

can be commemorated and brought back into use. In this chapter, I first briefly introduce the repatriation processes that have taken place in the Sámi Museum Siida. The focus of this chapter is on practical examples of how repatriations may enable the revitalisation process. The examples have been taken from the work that we do in the Sámi Museum Siida. My perspective is from the Finnish part of Sápmi, and on repatriations that have taken place in Finland.

Sámi Object Repatriations in Finland

In 2006–2007 the Sámi Museum Siida, Ájtte Museum in Sweden and Varanger Sámi Museum in Norway conducted a project entitled *Recalling Ancestral Voices – Repatriation of Sámi Cultural Heritage*. The project aimed to find out which museums in the Nordic countries manage Sámi objects in their collections. The project resulted in an estimate of about 10 000 Sámi objects being in Finnish museums. Furthermore, there are a great number of Sámi objects in the collections of European museums (Harlin 2008). This project has led the way for the current repatriations of Sámi objects to Sámi museums and communities. Now Sámi communities, in co-operation with Sámi Museums in Norway, Sweden and Finland, are furthering the returning of Sámi objects to Sápmi (for example, Norsk Folkemuseum).

Since 2015 there have been several Sámi object repatriation cases in Finland. As a national museum of the Sámi in Finland, Sámi Museum Siida has nationwide responsibility for collecting, preserving and presenting the Sámi cultural heritage. In 1999, the Sámi Museum became one of 16 special museums of Finland, each of which has their own special tasks and fields of collecting. According to this, the Sámi Museum has a special task in taking care of the Sámi cultural heritage in Finland. This responsibility has been strengthened even more as the Sámi Museum became part of the national TAKO Network (see also Ahola, this volume), which cooperatively coordinates acquisitions for collections. In the network, the Sámi Museum is likewise responsible for the Sámi cultural heritage. Currently the Sámi Museum is the only museum in Finland actively collecting Sámi cultural heritage. This is why the repatriated Sámi object collections have been donated to the Sámi Museum Siida.

The first repatriation to the Sámi Museum Siida came from the Museum Centre Vapriikki in Tampere in 2015. The Sámi collection of Vapriikki consisted of about 40 Sámi objects from the 1800s. They were collected in 1905 from the Inari area by the painter Gabriel Engberg. In 1906 he then sold the collection to the Häme Museums, the predecessor to the Museum Centre Vapriikki. Negotiations between Vapriikki and Sámi Museum started in January 2015 and soon the collection was transported to Inari and integrated into the collections of the Sámi Museum. The collection has mostly artefacts related to clothing and tools (figure 1).



Figure 1. Revealing Vapriikki's repatriated Sámi collection in the Siida's auditorium. Photo: Sámi Museum Siida.

The second repatriation happened in 2016. The Hämeenlinna City Museum repatriated their Sámi collection of 25 Sámi artefacts to the Sámi Museum. The Sámi objects of the Hämeenlinna City Museum had been collected by travellers and officials working in Lapland, from the areas of Inari, Utsjoki and northern Sodankylä, at the beginning of the 1900s. The collection consists mostly of clothes and textiles, as well as bone and antler objects, of which the oldest are from the beginning of the 1800s.

In spring 2017, the National Museum of Finland and the Sámi Museum concluded a letter of intent, according to which the National Museum will donate their collection of Sámi objects to Siida. The National Museum's Sámi collection consists of approximately 2,600 objects. It includes the oldest Sámi objects found in Finland, because the collection has been accumulating since the 1830s. In the collection, there are clothes and parts of clothes, household objects and equipment meant for transportation and making textiles (Puurunen 2005, pp. 25–26).

In 2018, the Forest Museum Lusto repatriated their Sámi collection of about ten objects to the Sámi Museum. The objects in question became part of Lusto's collections when a collection was donated to the museum by the Finnish Forest Research Institute in 1993. The Research Institute began accumulating its collection in the 1920s, and the Sámi objects were also acquired in this period. The objects in the collection relate to transportation and the nomadic lifestyle of the Sámi.

Revitalisation in Interaction with the Sámi Museum's Collections

The Sámi people and their ancestors have inhabited Sápmi since time immemorial. It wasn't until countries began to strengthen their administrations in northern areas in the 1800s that the lifestyle of the Sámi started to gradually transform. For the Sámi living in present-day Finland, the turn of the century signified big changes in societal conditions. Closing the borders between the Grand Duchy of Finland and Norway in 1852 and 1889, and then later in 1920 between Soviet Russia and Finland divided previously well-connected Sámi communities (Lehtola 2012, p. 23). The turn of the century was also a period when countries began to map Sápmi, as well as building roads to the area (Lehtola 2012, pp. 14–15). This led to a situation where the Sámi and Finnish cultures encountered each other more than previously.

Already before the turn of the century, Sámi culture had been researched and interpreted for hundreds of years through immaterial knowledge and objects collected from Sápmi. In Finland, the peak in traditional lappological research dates from the 1910s to the 1930s. At that time, many notable lappologists travelled to the North, meeting the Sámi and gathering information on them (Lehtola 2017, p. 85). That is also the period when Finnish museums were actively making acquisitions of Sámi objects for museum collections. For example, the National Museum of Finland acquired most of its Sámi objects at the beginning of 20th century (Puurunen 2005, p. 15). Years of active collecting of Sámi artefacts came to a halt when the Second World War started.

After the Lapland War ended in 1945 and the Sámi returned home from evacuation, the Sámi way of life changed. During the evacuation to the central parts of Finland, Sámi had adapted many features from the Western lifestyle. Sámi people lost a lot of their material culture such as houses, tools, equipment for transportation and domestic animals due to the Lapland War, and that accelerated a change in lifestyle and in livelihoods. Life had to be rebuilt from scratch. After the war, the public education system was intensified and now all Sámi children had to go to public schools, instead of their earlier itinerant schools. In Sápmi, where distances are great, this meant that Sámi children lived most of the year in school boarding houses (Lehtola 2012, p. 402, pp. 409–411). At this time the use of the Sámi languages decreased, and many Sámi traditions, for example, craft skills, were neglected.

"The past of the Sámi has often been talked about as a history of colonialism, subjugation and repression" (Lehtola 2015, p. 23). The history of the Sámi has many examples of unequal power relations, and the Sámi have been considered victims by outsiders. Nowadays, the Sámi are equals in research, instead of passive objects of the study in question (Lehtola 2015). Therefore, it is now important for the Sámi to be able to use and interpret information collected about and from them, from their own Sámi perspective (Lehtola 2004). In this way, traditional knowledge in Sámi culture is managed by the Sámi themselves.

This makes cultural revitalisation possible. For rehabilitating a culture, it is the traditional knowledge and information within the objects that has significant value. In the repatriation processes, objects are re-socialised by placing them in their original environment, re-creating and recalling meanings for them. Likewise, they may be used as an inspiration in revitalisation (Simpson 2009, p. 122).

The true value and meaning of the repatriated Sámi collections is that by being physically in Sápmi, they are more easily accessible to the Sámi and benefit the Sámi community. In Sápmi the Sámi objects have, of course, special values because many of the repatriated objects can still be traced to their original owners, makers or users. This creates a bridge between past and present Sámi generations. In addition, repatriated objects carry tacit information about traditions, worldviews, ways of making handcrafts and the social system. This information can be understood only by members of the community, so these objects only truly open up in the hands of the Sámi, who have such inner knowledge (Harlin 2017, pp. 75–76).

Repatriated collections make cultural revitalisation possible in many ways. The revitalisation process can be carried out on a community, group or individual level. On all levels, the process of cultural revitalisation is equally important and meaningful. Repatriated museum collections can inspire revitalisation in multiple areas as well. From the Sámi perspective, repatriations can, for example, enable the revitalisation of making handcrafts (techniques, materials, patterns and ways of decorating), ways of using traditional Sámi clothes and other products and Sámi languages, by reviving words related to crafting and the use of objects. To proceed with the revitalisation process, museums must present and examine collections interactively with the community and share the knowledge that they have with community members.

To give an idea of how cultural revitalisation has happened in the projects of the Sámi Museum Siida, I will describe few examples. Each of them talks about the possibility of revitalisation in different ways and on different levels.

Foremother's Shoelaces Brought Back into Use

In the Museum Centre Vapriikki's repatriated collection, there were multiple pairs of fine shoelaces from the 1800s. Most of them were identified by Sámi handcraft artists to be typical of the Inari area. Sámi people use woven shoelaces to tie reindeer skin or fur shoes. Sámi shoelaces carry lots of information about the person who wears them. In many cases, you can see which area the person is from and to which family the person belongs from the patterns and colours of the shoelaces. We soon noticed at the museum that the shoelaces in the repatriated collection would be perfect research material.

This repatriation inspired our intern Laura Aikio in 2016 to study a pair of shoelaces that was included in the repatriation. At the time, Aikio studied Sámi handcrafts in the Sámi Education Centre and was doing her internship in the Sámi Museum's collections. She did research on patterns, weaving techniques,

colours, history and provenance of the shoelaces. She got assistance from experienced elder Sámi handcraft artists in connecting the shoelaces to a certain area and family. What she discovered was a most interesting coincidence. The shoelaces that were returned to Sápmi in Vapriikki's repatriation were woven by one of Aikio's foremothers and therefore the pattern of the shoelaces was her family's. Aikio made identical shoelaces for the collections of the Sámi Museum, for herself to wear. In this way the tradition of making these shoelaces in Aikio's family continues.

This example shows that the Sámi can find handcrafts made or used by their ancestors among the repatriated artefacts, and can become empowered and inspired by these objects. For many Sámi handcraft artists, the process of studying museum artefacts, in this case repatriated objects, is at the same time a process of building a connection with one's ancestors (Harlin 2019, pp. 55–56). Bearing this in mind, museum objects are more than just their physicality, and they get their meaning, story and roots through the process of repatriation, which then leads to revitalisation.

Recalling the Skolt Sámi Root-sewn Boat

In 2014, the Sámi Museum Siida and the Sámi Education Institute in Inari began a project aiming to build a traditional Skolt Sámi boat with root seams. According to Finnish historian and linguist T. I. Itkonen, the Skolt Sámi built their boats without nails until the in the early 1900s (Itkonen 1939). After that, the tradition of making the root-sewn boat was forgotten. Therefore, the main aim of the project was to restore the lost boat-building technique, together with the Skolt Sámi community (Alava & Rantamäki 2016, p. 3).

The oldest Skolt Sámi root-sewn boat is in the collection of the National Museum of Finland, where that boat and boat-building tools were documented carefully. After that, the boat building began in Sevettijärvi, where community members were able to participate in the project. While making the boat, the building process itself, as well as the memories and knowledge of the Skolt Sámi community regarding the root-sewn boat, were documented. Documentation was conducted by photographing, filming, interviewing and taking notes. Finally, the documentation was put together and made into a report and short documentary, both of which are accessible to the community on the internet, as well as to others who may be interested (Alava & Rantamäki 2016, pp. 4–5).

The project was received with enthusiasm by the inhabitants of Sevettijärvi and boat building became a part of activities in the village (Alava & Rantamäki 2016, p. 11). The building project was conducted in a central place in Sevettijärvi, in the yard of the Sevettijärvi school. This made the project more visible to the community and others, as well as making the entire process more inclusive and interactive (Magnani & Magnani 2018, p. 19).

In autumn 2015, the root-sewn boat was finished and donated to the Skolt Sámi community (Alava & Rantamäki 2016, p. 11). Now the boat is in the Skolt Sámi

Heritage House in Sevettijärvi, where it can be viewed during the summer. The boat has also played a part in communal events in Sevettijärvi, as villagers have a chance to row with it during certain events.

This is one example of how repatriation, whether it is material or immaterial, or in the best-case scenario both, can enable the revitalisation of forgotten traditions. The root-sewn boat project brought the community together, not just to build the boat, but to spend time together and share, teach and learn knowledge, traditions and memories. While building the boat, different generations met, and in this way the traditional Sámi way of passing knowledge from the elder generation to the younger one happened naturally.



Figure 2. Three generations, Matti Sverloff, Arttu Niemenmaa and Pieti Niemenmaa, building a root-sewn boat together in Sevettijärvi. Photo: Natalia Magnani.

Making Sámi Cultural Heritage Open and Available to the Sámi Community – Digital databases and 3D

In the repatriation processes, the importance of sharing knowledge with and among the community is vital. Digitalisation is one key to this, as it enables easy access to knowledge and widens the audience, if that is wished. Due to repatriations, the openness and availability of Sámi Museum Siida's collections have become more important and desired. One solution for this is to make objects accessible on the internet. Since a large number of the Sámi population in Finland nowadays lives outside of Sápmi, it is necessary to enable them to examine the collections from a long distance. Since the repatriated collections are the ones that interest people most, we have decided to exhibit them on two different internet databases.

Sámi collections that have been repatriated to the Sámi Museum Siida can be examined on the national online search service, Finna (www.siida.finna.fi). Finna works as a catalogue, where people can browse different collections, download pictures and ask questions about or add information to the objects. For us in the Sámi Museum, Finna has also been an important platform for increasing the use of Sámi languages in the museum field. All the objects of the Sámi Museum in Finna have Sámi names, according to which Sámi language group they belong to or are collected from.

Repatriations have also acted as the starting point for a new kind of research in the Sámi Museum Siida. We have tried different 3D-modeling techniques (see also Immonen and Malinen, this volume) with the repatriated artefacts, in order to find out which technique works best with different types of objects and materials. The aim of the 3D-modeling is to improve the community's access to museum collections, and at the same time to reduce the handling of delicate objects. In some cases, a 3D-model can be shown instead of an actual object, which preserves the object by avoiding unnecessary handling. We are also looking for interactive and innovative ways of exhibiting objects in 3D-models in Siida's future permanent exhibition.

Currently, the 3D-models that have been made from repatriated objects are visible on the internet, and some of them can be viewed in the facilities of the Sámi Museum. When making collections available on the internet, however, it is important to think carefully and in co-operation with the community as to which objects can be published on a public platform. Some objects hold tacit information about the culture that the community does not want to share with people outside the culture; therefore such objects should not be published in an open database. Perhaps the best solution is to think on a case-by-case basis as to which 3D-models can be published (Magnani, Guttorm & Magnani 2018, pp. 5–6).

Opening collections to internet databases makes cultural revitalisation available to and possible for larger groups of people. As mentioned above, because many Sámi live outside of Sápmi, visiting Sámi collections in the museum is not always possible. For them, public and easily-accessible online databases are one way of enabling revitalisation. Even though it is not the same as being physically present, and thus being able to examine and possibly touch them, online databases provide at least the possibility to see pictures of objects and gain access to their provenance. Open collection databases may also inspire and encourage community members and others to actually visit the Sámi Museum's collections.

Digital repatriation or repatriating objects in digital form is one interesting way of returning knowledge concerning indigenous artefacts to indigenous communities. While digital repatriation is quick and easy, and enables access to collections for wide audiences, it also has some challenges. When the objects are digitised and possibly published in some database, indigenous communities may lose control of any knowledge that relates to the objects. Indigenous communities may want to manage such information concerning the objects themselves, de-

cide who can use them and in what way, thus keeping some exclusive rights to that knowledge. Considering all this, digital repatriation does not replace actual repatriation, but is one additional form of it (Christen 2011, pp. 185–187). From the perspective of the Sámi Museum, digital repatriation is a viable option for getting information regarding Sámi collections in museums around the world available to the Sámi community. This is a worthy next step in the repatriation work of the Sámi Museum Siida.

Conclusion

Repatriations represent the right of the Sámi people to manage their own cultural heritage. In their history, the Sámi people and their culture have been researched and interpreted by non-Sámi through the artefacts acquired, bought and in some cases taken from the Sámi. For contemporary Sámi communities it is crucial to be able to manage their cultural heritage from their own perspective. The repatriation process and the results of it can empower and create unity to the community. This happens in multiple ways, of which cultural revitalisation is perhaps one of the most meaningful regarding future Sámi generations. Repatriations strengthen the idea of our traditions and our heritage, and that is a powerful enabler for revitalisation work. The best outcome of repatriations is therefore their symbolic connection with Sámi ancestors.

Knowing your roots and your ancestors is essential in building and strengthening individual identity, as well as a community's group identity. The Sámi Museum Siida has a vital role as a caretaker of Sámi roots and communal memory. Through repatriations, the museum can fulfil its task more comprehensively. The Sámi community can memorise and recall its past, and can return, maintain and strengthen the connection to its ancestors. Repatriations bring past generations, their worldview and the work of their hands closer to the contemporary Sámi community. By bringing them closer and enabling such a connection, revitalisation becomes possible.

In this chapter I have described through examples the repatriation processes in the Sámi Museum Siida, and how this has enabled cultural revitalisation. In the future, repatriation work in the Sámi Museum will continue, since there are Sámi collections around the world to be made accessible to the Sámi community. The repatriation of physical objects will of course be at the centre of this work, but in addition, we will examine other methods of repatriation. After all, the key element of repatriation is to return traditional knowledge and memories within objects. Furthermore, the ways that repatriation enables cultural revitalisation will increase and become more innovative. The potential of repatriated collections is still not fully utilised. Hopefully in the future, we will see more open-minded and inventive projects that will interest and involve the Sámi community as a whole. In this way, the full potential of repatriated collections as a source for cultural revitalisation can be realised.

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Displaying Archaeological Human Remains in Finnish Museums

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Abstract

This chapter discusses the different motives for displaying the dead in museum exhibitions relating to Finnish prehistory. While the act of excavating, storing and displaying human remains can evoke feelings, especially in other countries with larger indigenous populations such as the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, an ethical debate associated with human remains is more or less absent in Finland. Yet when displayed, archaeologically excavated burials awaken much interest among the public.

Ethics are not universal. People with different ideological or religious beliefs may react very differently when being confronted with human remains. Moreover, values can shift and be in conflict, depending on location. Thus, ethics are bound to a specific context.

In this chapter a short analysis of three Finnish museum displays is given. The museums in question are the Museum Centre Vapriikki in Tampere, the National Museum of Finland in Helsinki and the Cultural History Museum of Åland in Mariehamn. I have interviewed the storytellers, namely the museum personnel who are behind the interpretation of the displays, and I have also tried to gain information on what the audience thinks about these displays containing archaeological human remains.

Keywords: human remains, archaeology, museum exhibitions, ethics, interviews

Introduction

Death and burial are crucial aspects of archaeology. Archaeologists not only excavate human remains; they also study and publish them. While there is a lot to be learnt about life and death by studying archaeological human remains, displaying them in museums and making them public can also evoke a range of feelings. Would the deceased have wanted to be put on display in a museum if he/she had a say in it? Is it ethically right? While some visitors are outraged by the "pornography of death" (Gorer 1955), most seem to be fascinated with dead bodies and approach them with great interest and reverence.

1. This chapter has been peer reviewed.

Human remains have been displayed in museums (and elsewhere) for centuries, from the early 16th-century cabinets of curiosity to contemporary museum exhibitions. While the idea of displaying human remains began with pedagogical aspects, in order to learn about human anatomy, it also made people sometimes gaze at them with morbid curiosity (Alberti 2011; Hallam 2016).

Displaying death is not an easy task for curators, who have to make choices and decisions regarding what is interesting, which stories should be told and how they should be presented to the public. When doing this, there is always a risk of disrespecting the dead, and more importantly, the living who feel connected to the deceased. In some museums the dead are hidden behind blankets or in special rooms in order to give museum visitors a chance to decide for themselves if they want to encounter the deceased or not. Curators may also use new technology, such as face reconstructions, or decide to display only replicas of the bones (Swain 2007, pp. 162–166). It is usually "the strikingly 'human' and 'whole' cadavers that have provoked the strongest emotional responses from the public" (Williams 2016, p. 293), which implies that other non-visual human remains, such as cremains[2], are not perhaps as sensitive to display.

There are plenty of ethical guidelines and frameworks for excavating and displaying human remains, but most of these seem to relate to contemporary groups, foreign cultures and to the repatriation movement (Swain 2002, p. 98; Tarlow 2006, p. 200; Swain 2007; Nilsson Stutz 2013). Displaying remains of indigenous people is broadly unacceptable throughout much of the world today, and there are also strict laws and regulations concerning the stewardship of human remains (Chamberlain & Parker Pearson 2001, p. 186; Lackey 2006, pp. 146–147). There are, for example, several museums in the UK that no longer exhibit human remains (Sayer 2010, p. 484), perhaps due to the fact that displaying them is too sensitive and makes some viewers uneasy (see Thomas, this volume).

In Finland, however, there is almost no public debate concerning the display of human remains. This might seem a bit surprising, because the only indigenous people in the entire European Union, the Sámi, live here in Fennoscandia (Harlin 2019). While there have been discussions and several large repatriation initiatives of Sámi cultural objects (see Guttorm, this volume), these have mostly consisted of ethnographic materials (Harlin 2019; Magnani et al. 2018; Harlin 2008). Yet, as with so many other indigenous cultures, Finnish museums also possess human remains from the Sámi population. Some of these have been obtained unethically and have been studied and measured by scientists while others consist of archaeologically excavated burials.

Nonetheless, Sámi earthly remains have been repatriated in Finland. Some 95 skulls, which had been part of the anatomic collections at the University of Helsinki, were reburied in Inari in 1995. Later the remainder of the university's Sámi collection was also repatriated to the Sámi Museum Siida, where the remains

2. The ashes of a human body after cremation.

are still curated (Söderholm 2002; Ranta 2011; for a wider discussion about how these bones were originally collected see Ruohonen 2012). More recently the remains of 25 Sámi individuals were reburied in Lycksele in Swedish Lapland (Skogelin 2019), but a wider discussion about our colonial past or on the rights to curate cultural heritage is only starting (Scarre 2012; Nilsson Stutz 2013). For example, repatriation of the large archaeological collections excavated in Sápmi, the areas where the Sámi people live, has not been publicly discussed. Naturally, this is a delicate and sensitive subject for the Finnish authorities, especially the Finnish Heritage Agency (Harlin 2019), but it should nonetheless be discussed openly with the descendant communities.

Human remains and ethics related to them can be discussed from a variety of perspectives, ranging from archaeology, osteology, medicine, religion, law and philosophy, as well as from minority and indigenous viewpoints (Drentzel et al. 2016, p. 7). Ethical debates often ask who has the right to decide about handling human remains. Do scientists have a monopoly over the past and a priority to study them, or should possible communities of origin and the broader public also have a say about how remains should be treated and what should happen to them? Moreover, how can archaeologists be sure that they are being objective regarding the interests of both the living and the dead? (Scarre 2006, p. 198). According to the Swedish archaeologist Liv Nilsson Stutz, the argument should not be about who owns the given human remains. Instead, it should focus on how these remains are studied, used and displayed. In the end science only "offers one way of seeing and understanding the world", even though this view can be important (Nilsson Stutz 2009, p.168). Alberti et al. (2009, p. 144) have also stated that the question should not be when, where or if human remains can be displayed, but should instead focus on how they are displayed. Thus, sensitivity seems to be important (Sayer 2010).

So, can there even be comprehensive answers to these questions? (Tarlow 2006, p. 215). According to many, ethics is an intellectual debate that should not be superseded by bureaucracy (Tarlow 2006, p. 215; Nilsson Stutz 2009, p. 169). Therefore, it is important to be active in these discussions and also to understand our responsibilities in this discourse, both as researchers and curators. In that sense, ethics are never fixed or final (Nilsson Stutz 2009, p. 169).

Human remains in museum displays have been studied in detail by several scholars before me (Swain 2002; Alberti et al. 2009; Nilsson Stutz 2016; Williams 2016; Albinsson 2018). These papers have discussed cases from Scandinavia, Europe and the United States. However, the topic of displaying human remains in Finnish museums has not been as widely discussed, even though there has recently been increased interest (Vilkuna 2000; Vilkuna 2001; Paasikivi 2014; Moilanen 2014; Maijanen et al. 2019; Äikäs 2020). In an article on the image of Sámi religion in museums, Tiina Äikäs (2020) reflects on a late 16th-century *noaidi* inhumation burial from Kuusamo, which was until autumn 2019 on display in the Lapland exhibition of the Museum of Northern Ostrobothnia in Oulu.

In this chapter, I focus on three museum exhibitions containing archaeological human remains. My research questions have concentrated on the museums' motivations for displaying human remains and on any potential ethical debates these displays have evoked, amongst both museum professionals and the public.

- How was the decision to display human remains taken?
- Was there an ethical discussion prior to this amongst the relevant museum professionals?
- How have the audience reacted to the displays?

The human remains discussed in this chapter all date to prehistory or the beginning of the Christian era, and are interpreted as pagan burials. Yet, one of these displays, the Levänluhta display at the National Museum of Finland, contains human remains which have recently been genetically studied. The results show that the DNA of three individuals (out of 98) closely matched the DNA of the present-day Sámi population. Since the site is dated to the Iron Age (AD 300–800), and located far away from present day Sámi regions, the result came as a surprise to the researchers (Wessman et al. 2018; Sikora et al. 2019). Nonetheless, this is an interesting aspect, which may result in future discussions about the ethnic and cultural affiliation of these individuals, possible repatriation and even their display within a museum context. Recent funding from the Academy of Finland and the Kone Foundation has just enabled more ancient DNA analysis to be carried out, which means that the genetic composition of these individuals will be ensured in the future. However, so far this display has not caused any negative reactions among museum visitors, which is odd, when the debate about the Sámi *noaidi* burial from Kuusamo is taken into account (YLE 2019; Koillissanomat 2019).

Methods

Since many permanent exhibitions regarding Finnish prehistory have recently been renewed, I wanted to take into account the opinions and motivations of museum professionals who have been responsible for planning the exhibitions examined in this study. I interviewed museum professionals from the National Museum of Finland, the Cultural History Museum of Åland and the Museum Centre Vapriikki in Tampere. I also visited these exhibitions and made observations of the displays. Unfortunately, there was no possibility to study audience opinions for this study, partly because one of the temporary exhibitions discussed here had already closed. Therefore, I relied on the visitor feedback that has come up anecdotally in my interviews. However, a recently published questionnaire study from the Museum of Northern Ostrobothnia in Oulu supports many of the results from my interviews, and I cite it when appropriate (Maijanen et al. 2019).

Due to the limited time available, I relied on two main approaches. Firstly, I conducted qualitative interviews at three different museums during the spring

and summer of 2019. Some of these interviews were done in the exhibition space involving the ethnographic go-along method, which involved observing and talking while moving through the exhibition space (for a definition of the method see Kusenbach 2003). Others were group interviews with the exhibition team, some of which were conducted through Skype. I chose this approach instead of an online survey because I wanted to get more comprehensive discussions and not just straightforward questions and answers. A second round of data collection took place in the form of emails, with a set of specific questions for those who had been involved in the exhibition process. I interviewed a total of nine people for this study; six worked at the National Museum of Finland, the Cultural History Museum of Åland or the Museum Centre Vapriikki in Tampere. I also conducted three interviews with people who had been connected to the making of these exhibitions, but who were not employed by these institutions.

I conducted interviews with a semi-structured approach, letting the interviewees talk freely and proceed in the order they felt was best. The interview questions ranged from the first planning stages, the exhibition script and how the displayed remains were selected. I also wanted to know their opinions about displaying human remains and about possible ethical questions relating to this, as well as how visitors have reacted to the displays. The interviews and emails were conducted in Finnish and Swedish, ultimately being translated into English by me. All participants were informed about the intentions of this study and that I would be using the findings of the discussions for this chapter's research. They all signed a written consent form. The interviews were recorded and transcribed by me. I have anonymised the quotes in this chapter in order to make the text more fluent.

The National Museum of Finland

The permanent exhibition about prehistory at the National Museum of Finland was opened in April 2017 (for more about the permanent exhibition reform see Forssell, this volume). The exhibition is not chronological, as its predecessor was, but instead follows six different themes: origins, movement, worldview, identity, encounters and materialism. The museum outsourced the process of writing the exhibition manuscript to archaeological experts from the Universities of Helsinki and Oulu. Prior to this, the museum also arranged a panel discussion, mainly intended for Finnish archaeologists. I was invited to take part in this panel discussion. The displays were designed by Tuomas Siitonen and Panu Heikkilä (Anttila 2017, p. 7; Herva & Lahelma 2017, p. 9). Later, the script was published as a book, which is sold in the museum shop. According to one of the authors of the exhibition manuscript it is "a document about how this exhibition is made … because only a fraction of it is in the exhibition" (interview respondent H5).

Death and burial are introduced in two displays: the Levänluhta water burial site (AD 300–800) and the 11th-century grave number 56 from the Luistari inhumation cemetery in Eura. Levänluhta was in fact one of the examples that

the museum wished architects would address, when they launched the initial architect competition for the exhibition. Levänluhta was prioritised early on because it had scientific interest and was internationally known. "The site was known as an intriguing mystery with many open and unanswered questions. Moreover, it is a special burial, because the bone material is large and so well preserved. We wanted to add the latest research results to the exhibition" (interview respondent H3). According to one of the persons who wrote the exhibition manuscript, Levänluhta stands for movement in the exhibition. "We thought that the Levänluhta site would visualise movement into the afterlife through the element of water, a theme that was a key also in the manuscript" (interview respondent H6).

Even though most of the objects on display in the exhibition derive from burials, the contexts of the finds are not highlighted in any way, or even stated in the exhibition labels. According to one of the persons behind the exhibition manuscript, this was done deliberately. "The exhibition is not meant to be teaching material. It portrays glimpses from an ancient world and is therefore fragmentary. Many other themes and perspectives are invisible in the exhibition too, for example economy and childhood" (interview respondent H5).

In the exhibition, Levänluhta is displayed in a narrow aisle between two larger galleries. The space feels a bit crowded and small, due to a low ceiling. The lighting is dim and it is quite dark in the space. On the left side of the room, there is a deep niche in the wall, which is lit. The lights are focused on an assemblage of human skulls and bones. The atmosphere gets more dramatic because of the dark reddish-brown colour on the bones, which is due to the bones having originally been buried in ferrous water (figure 1). While not many visitors actually spot this, one can look up in the showcase and see water-lily leaves from the underside. This means that the bones are actually depicted to be *in situ*, floating under water as they had originally been placed during the Iron Age (for an overview on the archaeological context see Wessman et al. 2018). "The display of the deceased from Levänluhta in a small enclosed space works quite well in my mind. It gives some kind of impression of being "inside" the pond, something which we also indicated in the manuscript" (interview respondent H4). The grave goods are placed in front of the bones. Opposite from this showcase is a small closet-like dark space with a screen showing images and short videos from the actual Levänluhta site in Ostrobothnia, including drone videos from a bird's-eye view, as well as a video filmed under the murky water.



Figure 1. The grave goods from the Levänluhta burial in the front and the assemblage of human bones in the back of the picture. At the top it is possible to distinguish the painted water lilies, which give the impression that the bones are underwater. Photo: Tuomas Siitonen Office/The National Museum of Finland.

When moving to the neighbouring gallery from the Levänluhta showcase, the visitor encounters burial 56 from Luistari in Eura, an iconic burial site in Finnish archaeology in many ways. The burial is displayed in a showcase mimicking the actual burial as it was excavated. The bones and grave goods lie on sand. An enlargement of the drawing from the original excavation site on the back of the showcase asks, "Who was this rich woman?"

A reconstruction of an ancient dress, based on textile remains from the burial, is displayed on a mannequin on the right side of the burial in a separate showcase. There is also a monitor with a short text about Finnish Iron Age burial customs. The reconstruction of the ancient dress is very well known, both among scholars and the public, partly due to the fact that the former President of Finland, Tarja Halonen, wore a reconstruction of this dress at the Independence Day Ball in December 2001 (Schauman-Lönnqvist 2017). The mannequin and the burial are known as the *Eura Matron*, giving not only a face but also a name to the deceased, thus personifying the deceased in a very concrete way. The mannequin was also an essential part of the previous prehistorical exhibition, and pictures a middle-aged woman with blue eyes and fair hair, which is made into a bun at the back of her head. While this reconstruction should be studied in detail, there is unfortunately no room for it here. It should be pointed out that there is not yet any reliable scientific evidence of either the woman's hair or eye colour.

Even though the Luistari showcase depicts an actual *in situ* burial, it is clear when comparing the drawing and the burial that it is not 100% accurate. Even though it is not stated anywhere on the museum labels, the original stamped bronze sheath from the matron's knife has actually been replaced with a similar one, which was found in the nearby Osmanmäki cemetery, because the original was already destroyed during the excavations due to its poor and fragmented condition (Etu-Sihvola 2019). In addition, the preservation of the bone material is rather poor. It is probable that the majority of the public does not even understand that the fragments in the showcase actually come from a human being. The skull is almost completely missing and only fragments of the long bones, pelvis and finger bones are left. "And in a way when they [the bones] are coloured by the bronze objects … you don't even easily recognise that these are actual bones; this right femur here looks like wood" (interview respondent H4). Hence, the public's focus is probably put on the massive bronze jewellery and the bronze spiral ornamentation, which lines the clothes of the deceased in this burial.

> The Luistari burial was not our [the manuscript team's] proposal and is not as such part of the exhibition's [six] themes. As such is it a bit unattached … also, the location of this burial feels arbitrary. Perhaps the idea is to join it with the "movement theme" in the map application [situated in the same space], but I'm not sure in what way. (interview respondent H4)

According to respondent H4, the idea of this section is to tell visitors about the archaeological research and scientific knowledge that is gained by studying graves, and also what can be learnt from them in order to be able to make reconstructions. "Here we highlight 'the burial', not so much the deceased … the find context is important, how the artefacts have been found together; that is what attracts the eyes first, how the objects are linked together".

Respondent H4, an archaeologist by training, said that Levänluhta is not part of the guided tours because the space is too small and narrow for a group to stop there. Luistari, on the other hand, is included because it consists of both the burial and the science connected to the find.

> Naturally we mention her age and height and what is known about her, but we highlight more the burial tradition, the tradition of burying the dead with grave goods during Iron Age and how this provides us with information. And this, in turn, helps us to do reconstructions like this one. So, we can get an idea of the ancient world and how things looked back then, so a lot of focus here is put on reconstruction of the ancient dress. (interview respondent H4)

None of the freelance guides at the museum has ever reported spontaneously that a visitor would have commented on anything relating to the ethics of displaying human remains, but it should be pointed out that the museum does not ask for feedback or follow this up with their guides either. Only one piece of feedback has come to the museum by email, in autumn 2019, regarding the display of

the Levänluhta water burial. According to respondent H4, the feedback was not so much about ethics, but more about the space in which the remains were on display. "The person said that the spaces were not the best possible and that these [bones] should instead have been on display in a more quiet and calm space" (interview respondent H4).

According to respondent H4 this response was sent around the same time as the first DNA results were published in the media regarding the deceased from Levänluhta (Sikora et al. 2019). Thus, she thought that the feedback was connected to that (and the genetic background of some of the deceased on display). However, she also confirmed that the space is problematic because the display is situated in a narrow corridor where people are passing by and it is not easy to stop by the showcase with a larger group, for example. Moreover, visitors have to pass through this corridor in order to get into the next exhibition gallery, thus not giving the visitors the opportunity to decide for themselves if they want to see the remains or not. There is no other way to move through the exhibition than to go past these human remains.

According to one of the authors of the exhibition script, no discussion about ethics was brought up in the meetings he attended, but he did not bring it up in the meetings either. "Mostly the discussions [in the meetings] were very cursory, about how much and which objects should be displayed and about especially fragile objects involving the conservation team" (interview respondent H5). Yet, according to respondent H4, some discussion about the ethics of displaying human remains did happen.

> We thought that we would try to display these remains in a way so that they could describe the original site, that we would present it with lights, so that we would create an atmosphere as if we are under water, that up there you could see the pond's surface. So, we didn't make any assemblage of these bones or anything. Instead, we wanted to display them [the bones] in a way that they are there on the bottom of the pond. I'm content with this display, but of course I am comparing it to the old [exhibition]. In the old [exhibition] they [the bones] were treated in a very different way, because they were displayed in an assemblage, which was not, in my opinion, a good way. I think that this is a good way. Here you can see the context, that this is an archaeological find from a certain place. We try to explain it by this display and through the photographs in that other room. I see this as a good way to approach this subject. (interview respondent H4)

The respondent is referring to the old exhibition, which was built in the 1990s. There, the Levänluhta burial was on display in an isolated showcase, with human bones piled up on the lower shelves and skulls and grave goods displayed on the upper shelves, with very limited archaeological context. Since the showcase was isolated, it was also very visible in the exhibition space, attracting a lot of morbid curiosity due the large amount of bone material. What the respondent perhaps wants to explain here is that she feels the burial site is now better contextualised,

and is not perhaps so much a focal point in the exhibition anymore, even though the display still contains a lot of human bone material.

The Museum Centre Vapriikki

The *Birckala 1017* exhibition in the Museum Centre Vapriikki in Tampere was a temporary exhibition (9.6.2017–16.3.2019) about the Late Iron Age in Tavastia, and more specifically an exhibition promoting the results of the archaeological excavations of the Tursiannotko settlement site in Pirkkala. The exhibition was so popular that it was extended (Birckala 2019). "We wanted to make the exhibition memorable" (interview respondent H2). The exhibition described both life and death in the Late Iron Age, which meant that burials were also displayed. One of these was *The Janakkala Swordsman*, a 14th-century inhumation burial found by an avocational metal detectorist club called *Kanta-Hämeen Menneisyyden Etsijät* in autumn 2013 (YLE 2013). The burial received international attention upon discovery and is now a famous site in Finland, also known to the public (YLE 2014).

The thing that got me interested in this exhibition was the fact that in this display, even though it depicted the reconstruction of a real inhumation burial, the skeleton was a replica. Moreover, the plastic skeleton was not explained or highlighted in the exhibition texts or in the multimedia elements attached to it. I asked the interviewees about why they wanted to display a replica instead of the authentic bones, and one respondent stated:

> There were two reasons for this. Firstly, the skeleton was in such a bad condition, that I didn't want to handle it at all, because its condition would only deteriorate. So, in a way it's better that all the small pieces that are preserved [from the body] are saved for future research. Another point is that our [plastic] skeleton is almost identical with the drawings in the excavation report. Therefore, the small fragments of bone would not have given the same impression. We wanted to show how it looked [when the burial was opened], and that some bones turn into dust when you excavate them. It is important to preserve everything for later research. We didn't want to take the risk that our handling of the bones would hinder future research, such as ancient DNA research, involving the bones. It was clear when we looked at these bones in the storage room [at the Finnish Heritage Agency in Helsinki] that we don't want to break the bones. (interview respondent H2)

It was evident that this burial had an important role in the exhibition space, probably because it was so renowned. The display was large, taking up a whole room, and depicted its original context, a field with the title *The Janakkala Swordsman – The last pagan in Häme?* (figures 2 and 3).

"We wanted to display the burial in a way so that it looked exactly the same as when the archaeologist opened it" (interview respondent H1). The burial was placed under the floor in a glass showcase. "We wanted to make it impressive

... It was important that one was able to walk upon it" (interview respondent H2). "It was also the fact that we wanted to promote research. We got a good story from the burial and it was a multifaceted site" (interview respondent H1).



Figure 2. The Janakkala Swordsman's display at the Museum Centre Vapriikki. Photo by the author.



Figure 3. A close-up on The Janakkala Swordsman display. Photo: Saana Säilynoja/Museum Centre Vapriikki.

There were also other inhumation burial contexts on display in the exhibition, such as small fragments of skull bones and teeth from an inhumation burial in Ylöjärvi, but the rest of the burial materials consisted of grave goods, which were displayed outside of their original contexts. According to respondent H1 this was done on purpose:

> Sometimes as an exhibition maker, you want to hide the fact that these objects are from burials. We want to talk about life, not only death. You might, for example, display the jewellery inside a jewellery box instead. If you only display burials, then the average visitor won't understand what they tell about the person's life. (interview respondent H1)

The museum never received any criticism from the public relating to ethics. The only feedback they got relating to a burial came from another archaeologist who was not content with how the burial from Ylöjärvi was interpreted. Hence, it was related to scientific aspects and not the display itself. The exhibition project manager said the following:

> I want to make it clear here that we didn't do this [use a replica of the skeleton] out of respect for the deceased. It was the scientific side that was of importance here. We haven't discussed the ethics before this [interview] but perhaps we need to think about this more in the future. Erm, somehow, I feel a little bit dumb because we hadn't thought about this but at the same time, I hope that the Finnish society wouldn't go into this kind of niggling. (interview respondent H1)

> As an archaeologist you are so used to excavating burials, and you know that old burials like these do not evoke strong emotions in the audience. (interview respondent H2)

The Cultural History Museum of Åland

The permanent exhibition about prehistory in the Åland Islands opened in August 2016. While the former exhibition was thematic, the new one is a chronological exhibition about the prehistory of the Åland Islands (Dahlblom 2018, p.14, p. 33; Robins 2018, p. 44, p. 51). In the exhibition space there are human remains displayed in two different places. These remains come from two periods: bones from an adult and a child from the Jettböle Stone Age site in Jomala, a human skull from the Viking Age and cremains, which also date to the Late Iron Age.

According to my interviews, the prehistory exhibition at the Cultural History Museum of Åland is an exhibition that focuses on chronology, archaeological research and its methods, such as human osteology. It was important for the museum personnel that visitors meet people from the past in the exhibition, because they had not been visible in the previous exhibition.

Two Jettböle individuals are displayed on a wall close to the entrance of the exhibition space. This includes an adult, and displayed a bit lower to the viewer's right, a child. The bones are comprised of fragmentary materials, displayed in anatomical order but actually consisting of several individuals, which is also highlighted in the texts, which bear the title *The Jettböle Puzzle*. Some of the bones have traces of cutting, chopping and even traces of fire, which suggests either some sort of complex ritual treatment or cannibalism (see Nuñez 1995; Götherström et al. 2002). The Jettböle site is an iconic Stone Age site on Åland

and it is famous for its Pitted Ware pottery, well-preserved human bone material and clay figurines. Yet, the cannibal theory was not anything that the exhibition team wanted to highlight or even mention. Respondents had the following comments:

> We don't want to make this into a sensation. We want to show that we are serious with this. (interview respondent H8)

> We wanted to show that these Stone Age people were like us, that these are in fact human beings like we are today. But we wanted to do it in a scientific way. (interview respondent H8)

> Their lives are as important as their deaths … but at the same time there is a risk that people might feel that authentic human remains in an exhibition are disturbing … my opinion is that this is so important, that there are so many people who have heard about Jettböle and that there are a lot of misinterpretations regarding it. We want to correct these errors and wrong ideas that the general public might have. Moreover, even if this is delicate, I feel that we need to be brave and also display difficult matters … in an objective way. (interview respondent H9)

Thus, the exhibition team wanted to give the deceased an identity and to show that even though these individuals were buried a long time ago, they are not really any different from people today.



Figure 4. The Jettböle display at the Cultural History Museum of Åland. The remains of an adult and a child are upright on the wall. The *Mystery from Karrböle* is at the bottom right in the picture. Photo by the author.

Besides the Jetttböle Stone Age individuals, there is the skeleton of a dog and one more example of human remains in the same showcase. This is the crushed

skull of a Viking Age man from Karrböle in Jomala, excavated from a burial mound in the 1960s. Only the skull is displayed with the title *The Mystery from Karrböle*. It depicts an abnormal way of disposing the deceased during a time when cremation was otherwise the norm. The text also asked why this individual had a crushed skull and if perhaps he was murdered.

> In a way this skull is a bit more benign [than the Jettböle remains], even though it is a skull, and in another way, I can feel that it is a bit grim, the way it [the skull] looks up at you from the clay like that … but we haven't had any reaction from the public on that. (interview respondent H9)

Since the skull is crushed and it has been taken out of the excavation as part of a larger lump of earth, it is difficult for the visitor to distinguish the actual skull from the earth. Even the exhibition team has questioned the fact that the skull is perhaps not even recognised as human by the public, because it does not resemble a human skull. The team had discussed the necessity of adding a sketch or drawing to the skull, but not everyone in the team agreed to it, so the idea was left out.

> If we would display these out of context and start to show something just for the sensation of it, to display a skull under a strong light for example, that would be tasteless and could be criticised. But when you present something as an object that can be interpreted and can give information about history, then the human remains rises almost to the level of other artefacts in the exhibition. (interview respondent H8)

For the public, the skull from Karrböle might still feel a bit odd in its current context. It stands out because it does not fit into the otherwise chronological theme of the exhibition. Moreover, one may ask why only the skull is on display, and not the rest of the body? As a researcher I also reacted to the use of the term "object" in the context of talking about human remains.

When moving on to the Late Iron Age the visitor meets a cremation cemetery from Svartsmara in Finström with the title *Gifts for the Final Voyage*. The grave goods, which had originally been placed inside an urn, are separated on different shelves. Human bones, bones from a dog, a cat and a goat/sheep are displayed separately, together with the grave goods, which consist of glass beads, a bronze key, pottery, a so-called clay paw and pieces from a comb (figure 5).

When I asked if the curators see any differences between displaying unburned or cremated human remains in regards to ethics, the answer was no. Still, respondent H8 stated that "to the audience it is easier to see bones which are very fragmented because you can't make them into a body part." Because of this, cremations burials do not seem to evoke any strong feelings among the public.

Previous studies have shown that cremains might even be seen as less informative, both by curators and the public, when they lack distinct identities. Thus, they are often seen as less human (Williams 2016).



Figure 5. The Svartsmara cremation cemetery on display. Human bones (numbers 10 and 11), bones from a dog (number 7), a cat (number 8) and a goat/sheep (number 9) are displayed separately, together with the grave goods. Photo by the author.

New scientific methods, such as ancient DNA and isotope analysis, came up in the interviews, because they have been able to give so much new information to archaeologists:

> Human remains almost becomes books, and it is always a valid question: do we dare to open this book and show what is in it? I think it's important to show the context around the human remains and ensure that the story is based on facts. (interview respondent H8)

According to respondent H9 there has been no feedback from the audience related to displays of human remains. However, he said that the exhibition designer who had objected to the idea of displaying human remains in the exhibition from the beginning never came to terms with this part of the exhibition.

> In time he could almost accept the idea that there would be an adult on display in the exhibition but he was never comfortable with the idea that there was a child there: "Oh, my God!" And not any finger bones: "No, no, no!" He was very sensitive about this. I actually think that in the end we designed that part of the exhibition and he just accepted our vision. It was still too much for him. (interview respondent H9)

Discussion

The human remains on display in the three museums I studied range in dating from the Stone Age to the beginning of the Christian Era. They mainly derive from articulated inhumation burials, i.e., from quite well-preserved osteological materials. Only a few cremations were on display in these museums and they were seldom brought up or discussed in detail during the interviews, which implies that they were not really seen as problematic. This fits well into the argument made by Howard Williams (2016) who has stated that cremains are often de-humanised and silent in museums due to their fragmented nature.

Naturally, the fragmented nature of cremated bones also hinders multiple laboratory analyses, such as those utilising isotopes or ancient DNA. It is possible that this makes cremations less interesting from a museum perspective, because their narrative is more limited in regards to inhumation burials. Museums might also favour inhumation burials in their displays, because they are more visual and thus perhaps more interesting from the public's point of view. Recently, unburned human remains, such as, e.g., the Levänluhta water burial, have also undergone a lot of multidisciplinary research, which perhaps gives them a stronger narrative (Wessman et al. 2018; Sikora et al. 2019).

> I would think that cremations are easier to display, because in these the individuality and in some ways also the humanity of the deceased has disappeared. The bones in inhumation burials makes death more visual and more concrete. It's more difficult to deal with them as artefacts. (interview respondent H6)

In this regard, it is perhaps a bit odd that no cremation burials are displayed at the National Museum of Finland. While articulated inhumation remains get more coffin-like showcasing and more space in exhibitions (Adolfsson 2018), cremains become more de-individualised and anonymous in the exhibition narrative (Williams 2016). This fits well with the Svartsmara Late Iron Age showcase from Åland, where the cremains from animals and humans had been osteologically separated from each other and removed from the original burial urn. They had also been assembled on the glass shelves as individual "objects", classified by type, just like the grave goods that followed the deceased into the grave mound.

When one reflects upon which bone materials have been selected for these exhibitions, it is important to remember that there is a very limited amount of human bone materials dating to prehistory to choose from. In Finland, cremation was the prevailing burial form throughout much of the Iron Age and older burials rarely remain preserved, due to the acidic Finnish soils. This naturally makes it difficult for curators to choose "new" or "fresh" burials/remains to put on display, which in turn forces the existing remains to be on display more or less continuously. At the same time, it is a bit odd that the public only meets inhumed bodies at the National Museum, even though they were actually quite rare during Finnish prehistory. It is probable that the fame of these inhumed bodies and their high information value are seen as more important than everything else.

Responses to the interviews were of course varied, but the interviewees in all three museums agreed on one thing: when displayed, human remains were often there to highlight the educational and scientific knowledge that can be gained from studying bones. The pedagogical importance of human remains on display has also been brought up elsewhere (Paasikivi 2014, p. 9; Maijanen et al. 2019, p. 5). It also became evident that most of the human remains on display were carefully selected and given much thought beforehand. Questions regarding their scientific value and their state of preservation were discussed, but only one museum decided to use a plastic skeleton, in order to keep human remains preserved for future scientific purposes. The remains were examples of not so much the death culture in itself, but more about the scientific knowledge that these individuals may reveal to researchers. Several interviewees said that it was important to bring up what can be learned by studying archaeological materials, especially burials. The research results of, e.g., osteology or new scientific analyses were important background information for these displays; the results of these analyses were also used by museum guides on their tours.

Despite the fact that human remains have an educational value, to some curators the motivation to display human remains might also be to show the "wow-factor" and the spectacularity of human remains:

> When you can see human skulls, then that is something that naturally fascinates children. And they want to know more about it ... There is a certain excitement associated with human skulls; they are exciting targets, so they draw attention. (interview respondent H1)

Another interviewee (H4) stated that "skulls are intriguing", at least among the younger museum visitors. Thus, in a way, museums are perhaps offering the public exactly what they want.

The next most flagged issue was the lack of ethical discussions prior to and/or after the exhibition process. Several of the museum professionals pointed out that ethical discussions were not touched upon prior to the exhibition, and that displaying human remains was never seen as a problematic exhibition theme. This might relate to the fact that archaeologists were involved throughout the process and to them human remains are probably more mundane than they are to others, but there might also be culturally-related issues involved in this.

Currently, 72% of the Finnish population are members of the Lutheran state church (The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland website 2019), but when it comes to religiosity, Finland is in line with the other Nordic countries in being quite secular. For example, church-going activity among Finns is very low, limited mainly to baptisms, weddings and funerals (Pantti & Sumiala 2009, p. 125). Only the Cultural History Museum of Åland argued and reasoned with the exhibition designer as to why human remains were important, why they needed to be exhibited, and exhibited in an authentic way. The exhibition designer came from Sweden, a country where ethical debates have a long history and are more frequent, both in archaeology (Drentzel et al. 2016; Iregren & Jennbert 2015;

Karlsson 2004; Iregren & Redin 1995), but also in the media and amongst the public. Recently there has also been a strong debate about the withdrawal of human remains from museum exhibitions, especially concerning so-called anatomical collections (SVT 2019; Sveriges Radio 2019). While I have no knowledge of the designer's personal beliefs, one can only assume that he was familiar with the Swedish debates and/or perhaps possessed strong religious beliefs. This might give an answer as to why ethical discussions took place in this museum and not in others. Åland and Sweden perhaps resonate better with international debates, and Sweden is perhaps a country that contemplates issues surrounding mortality and the display of human remains more than its eastern neighbours do.

There is a major historical difference between Finland and Sweden. While Sweden remained neutral, Finland participated in the Second World War three times (the Winter War and the Continuation War against the Soviet Union, as well as the Lapland War against Germany). Approximately 96 000 Finns died during these wars (2.1% of the entire population), which meant that these wars affected the entire population immensely (Männistö & Kivimäki 2016). It is probable that these wars, including the rebuilding phase afterwards, have played a huge part in how Finns look at life, but also at death (see also Thomas, this volume).

None of these displays contained reconstructions of prehistoric people, with the exception of the mannequin from Eura at the National Museum of Finland, which is not a reconstruction of the deceased *per se* but instead a reconstruction of her ancient dress.

I was mostly struck by the fact that the public does not seem to react very strongly to displayed human remains. While human remains, inhumations especially, seem to awake a lot of feelings and are even seen as offensive in some other countries (Curtis 2003, p. 21; Swain 2002, p. 99) Finland is not (at least yet) part of this debate. This assumption can be confirmed by a questionnaire survey targeted at museum visitors in Oulu 2018–2019, where only 3.2% of the respondents were against displaying human remains in museums. The majority felt that human remains can be on display as long as they are displayed in a respectful and educational way (Maijanen et al. 2019, p. 5, p. 9). Could one reason for this lie in the fact that these remains are prehistoric and thus more distant, with an unclear ownership? Since they derive from prehistoric burials, they might not be seen as spiritually or ethically problematic by museum professionals or the public. According to the questionnaire in Oulu, 18.9% of the respondents felt that only human remains over 100 years of age should be displayed in museums (Maijanen et al. 2019, p. 6), which might indicate that there is indeed an age limit for when displaying human remains becomes problematic.

Alternatively, can the reason be that Finnish museum visitors are reluctant to contact museums with negative feedback, even if they have been offended by the displays? Is this perhaps due to shyness or politeness? This could explain why no negative feedback reached the curators.

According to Hedley Swain (2002, p. 99) and Duncan Sayer (2010, p. 483) the skeleton is not taboo within Western Christian culture. Human remains might help us to empathise with past people. Moreover, personal contemplations of mortality might even nowadays take place in museums, because death is mostly connected to medical institutions (Sayer 2010, p. 481, p. 488). However, this is only true when we discuss human remains that are seen as the ancestors of the majority of the population. If the remains belong to a minority population, the story is very much different (Nilsson Stutz 2016, p. 269).

> Finns have perhaps a more relaxed attitude towards death and corporality, it is like with the sauna and nudity. We are more relaxed with this than other nationalities. My mother, for example, remembers that the dead were placed inside the saunas and … It's part of life … I'm not sure, perhaps we might need to start warn our visitors in the future about this [human remains] at the entry of an exhibition. (interview respondent H2)

Conclusion

Based on my interviews, human remains do not seem to be highlighted as an ethical dilemma within the Finnish museum sector. The human remains that were chosen to be on display in the exhibitions discussed in this chapter were selected based on their archaeological features, preservation or amount of local or national renown. It is evident that inhumation burials have been given more room than cremations in these exhibition displays, perhaps because they are more visual and because they "tell a better story". Moreover, there were only limited ethical discussions within the exhibition teams preceding these decisions. The only museum that stood out in the interviews was Åland, which is both geographically and perhaps also culturally closer to Sweden. The exhibition designers' strong emotional reaction to exhibit human remains was in this context quite substantial.

Moreover, my interviews show that there was hardly any feedback (either positive or negative) from the audience regarding human remains on display. This suggests that death and human remains do not evoke strong feelings amongst Finns, but it might well be that this debate has not yet really reached Finland.

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Representing Difficult Histories and Contested Heritage in Museums

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Abstract

Museums are one source of leisure, with visits forming activities for local community members in their free time, as well as touristic attractions for visitors on vacation. For many people, museums are also a source of knowledge, and they perceive them to be an authority from which they expect to receive verified information. This can take place, for example, through organised school and college visits, visits made in free time or through participation in museum-led projects and events. Therefore, the decisions that museums make about how to present history, and what (or more importantly whose) history they present, and what strategies they employ to present this history, have the potential to inform and influence perspectives on the past in the present. When this contains difficult memories connected to warfare, atrocities or discrimination and oppression based on ethnicity, gender or anything else, museums have to be especially mindful of how they treat and present these topics.

In this chapter, I explore some of the frameworks informing representation in museums and use case studies from within Finland and elsewhere. I investigate some of the ethical questions that emerge around the politics of representation. While there are no hard and fast answers to how museums should engage with difficult and painful history, I suggest reflection upon the impacts of challenging public perceptions through innovative approaches to museum displays. These themes also intersect with the wider question of the social responsibility of museums.

Keywords: contested heritage, museum exhibitions, museal silence, conflict, difficult history

Introduction

Museums are sources of leisure and tourism, as well as for education and knowledge gain. Despite some aspirations of pushing boundaries and challenging preconceptions (Dodd et al. 2013), many visitors still expect an entertaining and enjoyable, possibly not overly intellectually taxing, experience at the museum (Falk, Moussouri & Coulson 1998). At the same time, debate concerning the

1. This chapter has been peer reviewed.

social responsibility of museums continues to take place. Research acknowledges on the one hand that museums are perceived by many as an authority voice, transmitting the truth to its patrons (Ashley 2005), while on the other hand the museum has also been conceived of for some years as a forum, a space in which the visitor can hear and find their own voice (Bradburne 1999). As many of the chapters in this volume reveal, museums therefore find themselves at the forefront of efforts to increase public participation and co-creation or even co-authorship (see also Niemi, this volume). This presents museum staff with more and more ethical dilemmas as they work to interact more fully with society. Greater engagement brings with it greater risks, especially when themes to be discussed do not naturally engender consensus with their audiences.

In this chapter I discuss some of the many potentially difficult or controversial topics that museums might choose (or choose not) to cover in their exhibitions and interpretation strategies, not least the almost universal challenge of how to deal with the legacies of past conflicts. These are a part of the human past that can be considered as contested heritage, since there is rarely a consensus on such events or their legacy and impact, as they often depend on an individual's or community's particular perspective. I first present some examples from Finland, before broadening out to explore the literature on research into this topic from around the world. My Finnish museum case studies primarily address the 20th-century conflict legacies of the Second World War (WWII), and, even more sensitive despite occurring further back in time, the continued impact of the Finnish Civil War[2] of 1918. I then briefly explore the violent and ongoing contested heritage legacies of nuclear warfare and weapons testing with examples from Japan and the Marshall Islands, interpreting or reconciling long-term sectarian violence with an example from Northern Ireland, and the impact of domestic terrorism with an example from the USA.

Difficult Issues

The means by which practitioners, communities and institutions address so-called difficult issues has attracted debate for some time. Scholars such as Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1995) suggest that certain aspects of the past and of identities can be purposefully silenced, subjugated even, as different power struggles express themselves through the creation of official history. Helaine Silverman has noted that the concept of contested cultural heritage has been recognised by researchers from various fields with an interest in human society and activity, as different sectors of society aim to use heritage to suit their own agendas or narratives. She observes that the use of contested heritage can be seen in the ways in which:

2. In Finland there are different names for what is widely known by outsiders as the Civil War, which also indicate the political viewpoints around the conflict, including: "vapaussota (War of Liberty), kansalaissota or sisällissota (Civil War), luokkasota (Class War), punakapina (Red Rebellion), torpparikapina (Crofters' Rebellion), veljessota (the war between brothers)". Available at http://www.war-memorial.net/Finnish-Civil-War-3.35 [Last accessed 28 January 2020]

> … religious, ethnic, national, political and other groups manipulate (appropriate, use, misuse, exclude, erase) markers and manifestations of their own and others' cultural heritage as a means for asserting, defending or denying critical claims to power, land, legitimacy and so forth. (Silverman 2010, p. 1)

Issues of remembering but, equally crucially, forgetting at individual, local, national, regional and global scales have been addressed by many researchers. Paul Connerton (2008), for example, suggested seven types of forgetting for different acts leading to the erasure or forgetting of cultural memory, which work at a societal scale and may be necessary for a society's survival or ability to move on from a traumatic period in its history. The categories that Connerton (2008, p. 59) proposed are:

- repressive erasure
- prescriptive forgetting
- forgetting that is constitutive in the formation of a new identity
- structural amnesia
- forgetting as annulment
- forgetting as planned obsolescence
- forgetting as humiliated silence.

Without expanding too heavily upon these processes here, it is clear that these concepts are also relevant to museum practice, especially to strategies concerning which stories to present and which to omit. As reflectors of society, museums have a role in promoting which histories are remembered and which are not presented. These considerations relate to the well-being of a society, particularly after a traumatic event such as civil war, occupation or colonisation (see also Guttorm, this volume), and reflect again on the perceived roles of museums as representations of the wider community or even nation.

Rhiannon Mason and Joanne Sayner (2019) more recently discussed the ways in which museums use silence, suggesting that this can occur in eight distinct ways:

- silences in the historical record as collected by museums
- museums being silenced by external pressures
- museums' collusion in society's silences
- museums using silence obliquely
- museums thinking they have nothing to say
- silence by design
- museums staying respectfully silent
- communities wishing to remain silent.

Athough they do not reference him, their proposal is similar to Connerton's notion of forgetting, as according to Mason and Sayner "silence is an integral part of processes of remembering" (2019, p. 5). Their eight ways to think about museal silence indicate everything from strategic decisions concerning collection policies, to political forces at play (not least access to government funding, i.e.,

silence by external pressures), to perceived sensitivity towards and with the communities affected (see also Myllykoski, this volume, for a suggestion of an expansion of these silences). Their framework is therefore useful for thinking about how museums deal with contested heritage topics such as uncomfortable or shameful periods in history.

Museums and Difficult Issues

Despite Mason and Sayner's noted forms of silence within museums, museums are nonetheless taking the role of forum or becoming understood as contact zones (see Schorch 2013 for a critique of this viewpoint), and becoming spaces where debate can take place, even about difficult issues. This approach has been very successful in some cases, but has also sometimes caused unexpected problems. It raises questions regarding the responsibility of museums and their staff, and the extent to which they are equipped to deal with the outcomes.

Norway-based museum director Kathrin Pabst has offered insights from her research about contested heritage in museums, and has noted some negative outcomes, where museums and their staff are challenged to deal with the consequences of opening up painful issues. As she observes:

> Projects may deal with themes of war, violence in closed institutions, violation of human rights, the limits of the freedom of speech or the treatment of minorities. It may also touch upon the dark sides of contemporary society: poverty, mental health, or the abuse of alcohol. It is common to all these issues that the themes may trigger strong emotions and reactions among all persons involved: the individuals who are about to relate something difficult and painful they have experienced, visitors who must react to these testimonies and handle their own feelings attached to the revealed stories, the local society and its members who might have to reconsider how they understand their own identity, and not least the museum employees who must respond simultaneously to their own and other people's feelings. (Pabst 2019, pp. 29–30)

It seems reasonable to suggest in this context that some topics are simply too taboo for museums to tackle (perhaps as a part of museums staying respectfully silent), especially if they possess the possibility of acting as a trigger to past traumas (see also Pollard 2016 for a discussion of trigger warnings in conflict archaeology teaching concerning war graves).

Difficult Histories and Contested Heritage in Finnish Museums

My research in recent years has focused on the presentation of WWII, especially the experiences of Finnish Lapland, in museum displays (Thomas & Koskinen-Koivisto 2016; Seitsonen et al. 2018; Thomas, Koskinen-Koivisto & Hekkurainen 2019). In focusing on the material legacy of the so-called Lapland War

(1944–1945) in particular, colleagues and I have noted the apparent down-playing of the experiences of this particular region and its residents, especially in comparison with the wartime narratives of the south of the country (see also Kivimäki 2012, p. 483). Indeed, we found that in national museums such as the Finnish Military Museum, the Lapland War seems marginalized in the narrative presented to the public, in comparison to the Winter War (1939–1940) and the Continuation War (1941–1944)[3], which occupy a far greater area of permanent displays.

Even in the Finnish Sámi Museum based in the Siida building in Inari, Finnish Lapland, the impact of WWII enjoys only passing mention in the museum's permanent exhibitions. This is especially curious given the significant impact of the war on Sámi life, with many experiencing displacement and evacuation during the war, and the period signifying a rupture of Sámi culture (Lehtola 2015, Thomas & Koskinen-Koivisto 2016)[4].

Exceptions to this apparent museal silence on the Lapland War can be found in temporary exhibitions, such as *Wir waren Freunde/Olimme ystäviä/We were Friends*, which exhibited in the Provincial Museum of Lapland in Rovaniemi, running from April 2015 to January 2016 (Alariesto et al. 2015). The exhibition focused on the period 1941–1944, the years prior to the Lapland War itself, when German military and others associated with the German military project of WWII (for example, labourers of Organisation Todt and Soviet prisoners of war) were present in large numbers in Finland's northernmost region. Themes on display included fraternisations between German soldiers and local Finnish women, the system of bartering that developed and the media and propaganda, particularly in newspapers, of the time. An exit survey indicated that the exhibition engendered a range of reactions, which, as has been noted elsewhere (Thomas, Koskinen-Koivisto & Hekkurainen 2019), to some extent varied according to the nationality of the visitors surveyed. Hence, many local Finnish museum visitors were positive about the exhibition's addressing of the realities of everyday life during that period in their region, something that some felt had been neglected for too long. German visitors also often appeared to appreciate an exhibition that did not focus on the negative aspects of Nazism but rather depicted the German soldiers as human beings. However, visitors with other national backgrounds, for example those from Switzerland and the UK, seemed far less comfortable with the whole premise of the exhibition, expressing concerns

3. The Winter War and so-called Continuation War were both fought against the Soviet Union, involved the whole country and garnered the assistance of Germany. In contrast, the later Lapland War focused specifically on the north only, and was against former co-belligerent Germany (at the behest of the Soviet Union following a treaty agreement). It has been seen as both only of marginal significance to the rest of the country, and also as a source of some national embarrassment following the apparent friendship with Nazi Germany (Seitsonen et al. 2018).

4. It is important to note that, at the time of writing, the permanent exhibitions at Siida were due for renovation, and it is likely that the refreshed exhibitions will also address sensitive issues such as the impacts of both WWII and, indeed, of Finnish colonialism on Sámi culture and identity (see also Aikio 2018 for reflections on the need to develop "a Sámi way of doing museum work").

at the lack of problematisation, as they saw it, of the very presence of Nazis in Finnish Lapland, given what we know about the many atrocities that the regime carried out. A consciousness on the part of the museum staff concerning the potential controversy of their temporary exhibition is also found in the fact that the exhibition was timed to be dismantled and removed before late January, a period when many Israeli tourists visit Rovaniemi and the surrounding area (Thomas, Koskinen-Koivisto & Hekkurainen 2019).

Another, in this case more permanent, exception[5] to the apparent marginalisation of the Lapland War is found in the Salla Museum of War and Reconstruction (figure 1) in the Salla municipality, Finnish Lapland. The town of Salla itself is nowadays New Salla, with the original settlement stranded in the buffer area between Finland and the Russian Federation, following Finland's loss of territory to the Soviet Union as a result of WWII. The museum, situated in the former railway station house, features artefacts from the time of the Lapland War, and information about the work of reconstruction that stretched into the 1950s and beyond. The burning of Lapland and the recovery period after the war are bound up with the story of Salla itself, and hence the war and reconstruction are presented and understood as local history within the museum (see also Koskinen-Koivisto 2019).



Figure 1. External view of the *Salla Museum of War and Reconstruction*. Photo by the author.

In addition to challenges in addressing at least some of the events of WWII, researchers have also commented on the apparent enduring sensitivity around the Finnish Civil War, already over a century ago. This war took place shortly after Finland gained its independence from the Russian Empire, with international intervention too as Soviet troops supported the Red side, and Germans the White side (Seitsonen & Kunnas 2009).

5. There are other exceptions too, where there are permanent exhibitions on the Lapland War such as the *Lätäsenon saksalaiset asemat / Järämän linnoitus / "Sturmbock"* 1944 museum in Järämä.

As Anu Kantola (2014, p. 92) has observed, "civil wars in particular give rise to complex memory politics", going on to note that it took 90 years in the case of the city of Tampere, hit by deadly battles that marked the defeat of the Reds in 1918, before it seemed "possible to organise a memorial of the war" (Kantola 2014, p. 93). The *Tampere 1918* exhibition, still a permanent fixture at the Vapriikki Museum Centre in Tampere (figure 2), opened in 2008 alongside a suite of other activities and events intended to help commemorate and also offer reconciliation against the backdrop of still-recognised societal (and sometimes familial) divisions caused by the schism of the Civil War. Elsewhere within Finland, there are memorials for both Reds and Whites, although memorials for the victorious latter group are more prevalent, with White-dominated commemoration events overshadowing efforts to commemorate the Red side for many years following the conflict (Szpunar 2012). There have nonetheless been efforts to document more of the memorials for both sides, with the Finnish Labour Museum Werstas, also in Tampere, creating a database for memorials to Reds.[6] The database contains elementary information and photographs. Anne Heimo identifies the complex nature of the information on this database, even in the present time:

> An interesting feature is that all the photographs have been digitally manipulated so that all the names engraved on the memorials are unreadable. This is to ensure the privacy of the dead, which in this case the Data Protection Ombudsman has regarded important, because the memorials are considered politically sensitive even today. (Heimo 2014, p. 151)



Figure 2. Section of the Tampere 1918 exhibition at the Museum Centre Vapriikki. Visitors encounter a bodiless firing range. Photo: Nina Robbins.

The difficult aspect of this Civil War, like many others across the globe, is the very closeness of it. Not only is it still relatively recent in the sense of having happened only a century ago, but it is also close, as in personal, because so

6. Available at http://www.tyovaenliike.fi/punaisten-muistomerkit/ [Last accessed 28 January 2020]

many families still recognize and carry the legacy of the divisions that the Civil War caused. In national narratives deriving from conflicts against an outside enemy, it is easier for citizens to find a kind of unity against a common other. Geographer Anssi Paasi (2003), for example, has noted the importance of constructing a regional identity in opposition to others on the outside. When the conflict is against fellow citizens, even brothers and sisters, it becomes much more difficult to heal the rifts, and to move on as a nation. These are arguably cases where a museum professional needs to be extremely careful in how they portray past events, "museums' collusion in society's silences".

Difficult Histories and Contested Heritage – A global perspective

In some cases, sites associated with extreme trauma and suffering have experienced a kind of transformation into symbols of peace. This is the case with nuclear war heritage such as Japan's Hiroshima Peace Memorial[7] (including the Peace Memorial Park and Hiroshima's iconic nuclear survivor, the *Genbaku* or *A-bomb Dome*) and Bikini Atoll Nuclear Test Site[8] in the Marshall Islands. Both are now UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and both, despite their association with the most destructive and deadly weapons ever used, are symbols of peace, according to their UNESCO descriptions. Their inclusion, also as reminders of war and destruction (without which these two places would not have been considered for World Heritage nomination) are already somewhat paradoxical to the traditional notions of heritage: "The bomb and the bulldozer symbolise the agencies that transform the world apace at the cost of both[9] aspects of heritage" (Lowenthal 2005, p. 86).

In the case of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, inscribed into the World Heritage List in 1996, it can be seen that the call for peace, and a direct and deliberate association of peace with the city where the first atomic bomb used in war fell in 1945, was sought from early on. Already in 1949 Japan enacted a law to re-plan and rebuild the city, called the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law (Utaka 2007, p. 37). The Peace Museum in Hiroshima takes its own strategy of communicating peace, but also confronting visitors with the visceral, shocking horror of atomic attack through individual artefacts and stories (Giamo 2003, pp. 717–718). At the same time however, observers have also criticized the museum for focusing on the atomic victimisation of Japan and aspiring to world peace through the abolishment of nuclear weapons, without sufficiently acknowledging the other atrocities of the war, including those committed by Japan itself (Giamo 2003). Recalling Mason and Sayner's forms of museal silence, this approach could perhaps represent both "museums being silenced by external pressures" and "museums' collusion in society's silences".

7. Available at https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/775/ [Last accessed 10 October 2019]
8. Available at http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1339 [Last accessed 10 October 2019]
9. In the context of this quotation, Lowenthal refers to both cultural and natural heritage.

The still uninhabitable Bikini Atoll, in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, had its indigenous population evacuated (but not protected from radioactive fallout) to make way for US nuclear weapons tests (Smith 2009). It included in its World Heritage nomination a plan to create a Peace Museum, to be located in the Marshall Islands' capital, Majuro (ICOMOS 2010, pp. 17–18). Although the museum has not yet materialised, the theme continues here of making associations with peace in spite of the Atoll's inexorable connection with nuclear weapons and destruction.

It is not only transnational warfare or state-sanctioned colonial appropriation of places for re-use in military testing that invite questions of appropriate interpretation and musealisation. In Northern Ireland, a British-ruled section of the island of Ireland with a long and extremely complex history of conflict and sectarianism, museums have faced dilemmas concerning what parts of that history to show, and how to do so. Elizabeth Crooke has long documented and analysed the depiction of this cross-community conflict, known as the Troubles. She has noted that the continued sectarian nature of community identity in Northern Ireland has meant that in the past museums have not been willing, or even perhaps able, to address many aspects of Irish history, as it often "has more potential to antagonise than to gratify" (Crooke 2001, p. 120). According to her research, not only is there concern that history may become instrumentalised to prolong and justify continued unrest, but also that the issues behind certain events and how they are remembered are so nuanced and complex that they cannot be displayed without causing personal pain to many. Concerning remembering and forgetting in museums and in society more broadly, she suggests:

> It is also important to be reflective and accept that time must pass before the ability to represent certain aspects of the past will emerge. Furthermore, we need to respect the people and allow some personal memories not to become public history. We may not have the right to all knowledge. (Crooke 2001, p. 136)

Another museum closely associated with painful and difficult events, although confined to one day, is the Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum in the USA. Built on the site of the Murrah Building, where on 19th April 1995 the infamous Oklahoma City bombing took place, its perpetrator a US-born white supremacist terrorist, the National Memorial monument and museum form an important focus for national reflection and commemoration (figure 3). Aside from the national memorial, the museum itself offers an intensely emotional experience, employing techniques designed to make the visitor feel the enormity of the attack and its impact. This includes a moment early on into the exhibition experience where visitors are required to sit in a room and listen to the recording of a court hearing that took place in the neighbouring building. Visitors are told beforehand that some minutes into the recording, they will hear the explosion as it happened. Therefore, with the next part of the museum inaccessible until the recording has played in full, visitors have no choice but to endure the tension of listening to a couple of minutes of mundane discussion, knowing that any

second the explosion, and the screams of fear and panic, will be heard. Rather than forgetting or silencing, every visitor is compelled to remember, and in a way relive, the very moment that the attack happened.



Figure 3. Part of the National Memorial in Oklahoma City, USA. The museum building stands next to the outdoor memorial area. Photo by the author.

In another ethically questionable strategy, photographs from the rescue attempts in the aftermath are displayed, including a once iconic image of a fireman carrying a severely injured little girl out of the wreckage of the Murrah Building. The text explains that the child later died from her injuries, and that both the fireman and the child's family had expressed displeasure at the image's wide use to represent the Oklahoma City bombing. Despite this acknowledgement of their wishes and concerns, the planners of the exhibition nonetheless decided to show this tragic and, in my opinion, inappropriate image. This seems to be the antithesis of "museums staying respectfully silent". It is unclear why the planners made this decision, although the fame of the photograph, a Pulitzer Prize awardee, perhaps led to the planners reasoning that because the image was already so well known it would seem odd to visitors if it was not on display.

The exhibition however, and even more so the National Memorial itself, serve an important purpose in the context of providing a space for collective grieving and memorialisation, and through that process a search for optimism. This has led some observers to label the National Memorial as "an exemplar for how memorials, through the shared experience of grief, communicate renewal" (Veil, Sellnow & Heald 2011, p. 164).

Discussion

In the examples in this chapter we have seen that dealing with contested heritage, and in particular heritage connected to conflict and acts of atrocity, is not a challenge confined only to cultural history museums in Finland, but may be a

universal issue for museum practice and theory. There are many other types of culture or art, which may be difficult to present – for example art installations that address taboo subjects such as sexualities or violence. The focus of this chapter has rather been the impact of past historical events, especially those that have caused continued controversy or that are open to different, contrasting interpretations and understandings. In the case of Finland, perhaps the two best known difficult historical phases are those of the Civil War and WWII. Other periods that may continue to be difficult to address, although they are memorialised in places, include the Finnish Famine of 1866–1868[10].

I have tried to provide a glimpse into just some of the difficult, painful and controversial issues that museums sometimes find themselves dealing with (or not). I have presented some examples from around the world, as well as focusing on some core examples from Finnish museums. As other scholars have noted, museums, as key cultural institutions and transmitters of accepted history, have a particular place in the public understanding and consumption of particular narratives. They also have strategies available to them to help make decisions about what to depict, what to leave out and who to include in or exclude from that process. These can be affected by what already exists in museum collections, but also in the ways in which those collections are interpreted, hence the "museums thinking they have nothing to say" may simply need to re-read their collections to see what other stories can be told through their objects (Mason and Sayner 2019, p. 11). There is a proverb that "time is a great healer", and certainly with regard to traumatic events, it would seem that, as time goes on, it does indeed become easier for certain traumatic pasts to be discussed in a public sphere such as a museum. At the same time, as with the case of the Finnish Civil War, we also see that some events are so traumatic at a national level that their discussion remains difficult, even when later events such as WWII have become open to exhibition and interpretation.

Museums are at once an ideal forum for encouraging societies to reflect upon past actions and their impacts, while at the same time being in a position where it may be difficult and, some might argue, even inappropriate to scratch at some of those wounds. In this sense, it is not only accountability to government or even funders (see also Kaitavuori, this volume) that might affect a museum's willingness to address difficult issues, but also the question of whether museums are equipped to deal with the after-effects, such as triggering recollections of past traumas in its visitors. As Connerton has discussed, forgetting can be just as crucial as remembering, from the individual to the societal level, and in some cases it is an essential element of moving on. These processes also affect museum practice. Hence, the observations of Mason and Sayner on museal silence are likely to continue to be a useful means for making sense of museum exhibitions on difficult issues.

10. Historian Andrew Newby has been documenting memorials, place names and other markers that refer to the *Great Hunger Years* in Finland at https://katovuodet1860.wordpress.com/ [Last accessed 28 January 2020]

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Section VI

Biographies

Teemu Ahola is a museum professional with long and versatile experience in collection management and development. Ahola acts as a head of collections of Tampere historical museums. Previously he has worked as a head of collections and deputy director of the Finnish Labour Museum Werstas. He is also a member of Board of the Finnish Museums Association and Teollisuusperintöseura ry. Ahola has been previously acted as chair of the nationwide collections management network TAKO. His main achievement is the creation of the model for the nationwide division of collecting tasks. In addition to this work with collections management, Ahola is active in themes of built heritage and the history of industrialisation/de-industrialisation. He is also active in the subject of Museology, and has been teaching the subject at the University of Tampere. Ahola's main passion is networking and the co-development of museums and heritage issues on the national and international levels.

Dorothea Breier graduated from Otto-Friedrich-University Bamberg (Germany) and did her doctoral dissertation at the Department of European Ethnology at the University of Helsinki. Her thesis on Germans and their descendants in contemporary Helsinki deals with aspects of transculturality, belonging and (self-)identification of people of such background. With her postdoctoral project at the University of Helsinki, Breier turned to a new field, namely that of grassroot initiatives and their contribution to (social) sustainability. She is interested in how citizens' perspectives can point out issues of society that would otherwise remain either unnoticed or neglected by institutions, and how forms of activism may provide locally specific do-it-yourself solutions for perceived problems.

Johanna Enqvist received a PhD degree in archaeology in 2016 from the University of Helsinki; her dissertation concerned the concepts, discourse and ideology of Finnish archaeological heritage management. Before her doctoral studies, she worked several years as a field archaeologist and heritage official at the Finnish Heritage Agency. Enqvist is currently employed as a research coordinator at the Helsinki Term Bank for the Arts and Sciences (Tieteen termipankki), a multidisciplinary research infrastructure project funded by the University of Helsinki and the Academy of Finland. Relating to her work at the Term Bank, she conducts postdoctoral research on concepts, conceptual systems and discourses of heritage. Enqvist's research interests include politics of the past, key concepts and the theory of heritage studies and archaeology, heritage management, interdisciplinarity and the digital humanities.

Eero Ehanti has an MA in art history from the University of Helsinki, a BA in conservation from Metropolia University of Applied Sciences and some 20 years of experience in various museum positions in Finland and abroad. Early on he specialised in the conservation of cultural historical objects, but has subsequently worked on research, collections management and a wide range of exhibitions. Since 2016 he has led the conservation department at the National Museum of Finland. He also chaired the Finnish committee of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in 2015–2020 and is a founding partner of a small heritage consultation company, For Our Generation (FOGHeritage), based in Tallinn,

Estonia. For Eero, museums are a means for understanding, communication and creativity.

Benjamin Filene is Associate Director for Curatorial Affairs at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, appointed in 2020. In previous positions, he served as Chief Curator at the North Carolina Museum of History in Raleigh, North Carolina, Director of Public History at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and Senior Exhibit Developer at the Minnesota Historical Society in St. Paul. Filene is author of *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory and American Roots Music* (2000) and co-editor of *Letting Go? Historical Authority in a User-Generated World* (2011). He received his PhD in American Studies from Yale. Through a Fulbright fellowship, he worked in Helsinki for five months in 2019, collaborating with the University of Helsinki and the Helsinki City Museum.

Hanna Forssell has worked in the National Museum of Finland since 2000 in various positions, mainly in the field of audience work and museum education, as well as a project manager for the main exhibition reform 2016–2017. She has also written non-fiction books and is a graduate of the University of Helsinki.

Anni Guttorm is a Sámi Curator at the Sámi Museum Siida in Inari, Finland. She works with both the Sámi collection's management and the ongoing repatriation processes at the Sámi Museum Siida. At the moment she is also a board member of ICOM Finland.

Heikki Häyhä MA (conservation) works as Senior Lecturer at the Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Department of Conservation. He is also a partner of the heritage consulting company, For Our Generation (FOGHeritage).

Visa Immonen is a Professor of Archaeology at the University of Turku, Finland. He worked as an Assistant Professor of Cultural Heritage Studies at the University of Helsinki in 2016–2017. Immonen was a postdoctoral fellow at the Getty Research Institute in 2015–2016, and a visiting scholar at Stanford University in 2010–2011. Immonen's research focuses on medieval material culture, but he is also interested in the use of digital media in heritage work. Presently he is directing a research project which explores the 3D digitalisation of archaeological finds.

Sari Jantunen MA (education, craft science) is a former Collection Curator in Lusto – The Finnish Forest Museum. Since spring 2018 she has worked as a curator in the Craft Museum of Finland, specialising in information services.

Kaija Kaitavuori received her PhD in art history in 2015 from the Courtauld Institute of Art, London. Her thesis investigated participation in art and is published under the title of *Participator in Contemporary Art* (2018). She has previously held senior roles at the Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art in Helsinki and the Finnish National Gallery, working in museum education and institutional development. Her post-doctoral research (University of Helsinki) investigates organisational change and the implementation of New Public Man-

agement in the Finnish National Gallery. She teaches at the Academy of Fine Arts and Aalto University in Helsinki.

Kimmo Levä is Director General of the Finnish National Gallery. His previous positions have included Managing Director of the Finnish Museums Association and its companies, Museum Director at Mobilia (National Road Traffic Museum), and Director of Museum Services in Turku City. He has served as a board member of many museums and associations, including the Finnish Postal Museum, Aboa Vetus & Ars Nova (Museums of History and Contemporary Art), the Culture for All Association, Europa Nostra Finland, and the Finnish Museum Directors Association. He also has experience in international museum organizations, such as the ICOM International Committee for Museum Management (INTERCOM) and the Network of European Museum Organizations (NEMO). Kimmo specializes in the commercialization of museum services, and the strategic and financial management of museums. He holds an MBA from the University of Wales and an MA in history and political science from Tampere University. He has published several books, articles and numerous blog posts in connection with the museum field.

Teija Luukkanen-Hirvikoski is specialised in corporate art collecting and corporate art programmes. She is working as a University Teacher in art history at the University of Jyväskylä, Deptartment of Music, Art and Culture studies. Her PhD research *Corporate art collections in Finland. Collecting policies, practices of displaying art and meanings of art in business* (2015) was the first doctoral dissertation on Finnish corporate art collecting. Her working experience covers art history research, teaching, art consultancy, museum education and marketing communications. Luukkanen-Hirvikoski has been working both in the public and private sectors. Besides corporate art programmes, her research interests are art object studies, the art market, modern art and contemporary art.

Ismo Malinen is the Chief Curator of picture collections of the Finnish Heritage Agency. He has worked in various museums since the late 1990s. Malinen's work focuses on collections and their use, but he also actively develops digitalisation and digitation, both in Finland and on a European level. Presently one of his activities is directing a 3D digitation project at the Finnish Heritage Agency.

Mikko Myllykoski is the CEO of Heureka, the Finnish Science Centre. He has worked in multisensory science engagement since 1990, mostly in interactive exhibition production. He is a board member of ECSITE, the European Network of Science Centres and Museums, and has chaired program committees for both ECSITE's and ASTC's annual conferences. He has also chaired the Finnish Association for Science Editors and Journalists. He received the State Prize for Information for the touring exhibition *Nordic Explorers* in 1997. He holds an MA in history from the University of Helsinki, and has published books and articles about history, museology and science engagement. Myllykoski is an active speaker and convenor at science communication and engagement conferences worldwide.

Sanna-Mari Niemi (MA in Comparative Literature) is adoctoral candidate in the University of Helsinki's Doctoral Programme in Philosophy, Arts and Society, and the Justus Liebig University Giessen. Combining theories of comparative literature and museum studies, her dissertation project is a cross-disciplinary research on contemporary museum exhibition narratives. Niemi has several years of practical experience in the museum field.

Liisa Oikari is a museum professional with a strong focus on museum collection management. She holds an MA in Ethnology from the University of Helsinki and a BA in conservation of cultural historical objects from EVTEK University of Applied Sciences. She has also studied museology and cultural heritage. Her interests include material culture studies, biographical history and microhistory. Oikari has been active in the museum field for over ten years and specialised in collection management and collection care. She has worked as a conservator at the National Audiovisual Institute of Finland, as the collections manager at the Gallen-Kallela Museum and as a researcher and head of collections at the Mannerheim Museum.

Leena Paaskoski is a Development Director in the Finnish Forestry Museum Lusto. She is an Adjunct Professor in European Ethnology and an expert in museology, forest culture and forestry professionalism. As a museum professional she has actively been developing a museum concept, dynamic collections, museums' social impact and ways of networking with the forest sector. Lusto is a national museum responsible for forest culture and the stronghold of Finns' relationship with the forest.

Henna Paunu is Chief Curator at EMMA – the Espoo Museum of Modern Art, and is responsible for their collections and public art projects. Exhibitions she has curated include *Nubben*, featuring the Lars-Gunnar Nordström Collection, *No Ordinary Moments*, a show from the EMMA Collection, curated with Director Pilvi Kalhama and the *Human and Power* section of the Saastamoinen Foundation Collection Exhibition. She also served as curator in the development of the Bryk & Wirkkala Visible Storage concept. Paunu's previous position was at the Rauma Art Museum, where she served as co-curator of the Rauma Biennale Balticum in 2002–2014, while also curating contemporary art exhibitions for children and young people. The concept Henna Paunu created for the Rauma Art Museum earned the museum the Children's Day Prize from the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture in 2014, in recognition of the community's outstanding achievements in the field of children's culture. She also works as a critic and writer, as well as board chair in 2018–2021 of the Frame Contemporary Art Finland, the promotional centre for contemporary art. The core of Paunu's curatorial work is site-specific commissions, the promotion of ecological thinking in art and the integration of curating and pedagogical thinking.

Susanna Pettersson, Director General at Nationalmuseum, Sweden, is an art historian specializing in museum history and collection studies. Before moving to Stockholm she worked as Director of the Ateneum Art Museum (Finnish National Gallery). Her other posts have included Director of the Finnish Institute

in London, Director of the Alvar Aalto Foundation and Museum and Director of Development at the Finnish National Gallery. She is also Adjunct Professor in Museology at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. Her research interests include museum history, collection studies and the history of art history, as well as 19th-century and modern art, and she publishes widely. Her latest exhibition, co-curated with James Putnam, was *Inspiration – Iconic works* (2020), which was shown in Stockholm and Helsinki. She has participated in several national public governance and international working groups, such as the European Union's OMC working group on Collections Mobility (2008-2010). She's Vice-President of the Aalto University Board (Finland), and board member at Prins Eugens Waldemarsudde (Sweden), Konsthistoriska sällsskapet (Sweden) and the American Friends of the Nationalmuseum (USA).

Kristina Ranki has been the director of the Mannerheim Museum in Helsinki since 2013 and also works as Ombudsman for the Niilo Helander Foundation. She holds a PhD in history from the University of Helsinki from 2007. Her doctoral dissertation examined Finnish Francophilia and the patriotic cosmopolites between 1880 and 1914. Ranki has been active as a university teacher, researcher and cultural producer since 2000. Her museum activities go back to being a guide in the Mannerheim Museum in 1994–1998 and a museum lecturer in the Helsinki City Museum in 1998–1999. Her interests include languages, cultural history, biographical history and the history of ideas, as well as protocol and organising study trips for various groups. Ranki graduated from the National Defence Course nr 227 in 2018. Her work at the Mannerheim Museum consists of modernising the former home of Marshal Mannerheim into a professional museum. Since 2013, she has created fifteen historical exhibitions, numerous seminars and other projects. In 2017, she conducted the 150th commemoration year of Gustaf Mannerheim with activities in Helsinki, St Petersburg and Warsaw.

Nina Robbins worked as a University Lecturer at the University of Helsinki where she taught MA-level museology in 2018–2021. She received her doctorate in 2016, her subject being disposals in Finnish art museums. She also holds a higher degree (YAMK) in art conservation. During her career as curator of collections, conservator and university lecturer she has developed a wide perspective in the field of cultural heritage. She is also Adjunct Professor in Museology at the University of Jyväskylä. In her teaching she has placed great importance in passing on to her university students, not only theoretical knowledge, but also its corresponding practical knowledge. She feels that the field of museology offers an enduring bridge between the various fields of heritage management. Beneficially integrating the forces from these different fields will become ever more important in a world where financial resources are increasingly scrutinized.

Erja Salo is the Head of Learning and Public Programmes in The Finnish Museum of Photography. She is responsible for the development and delivery of a wide range of learning, interpretation and audience development programmes. Her interests lie in visual culture, media education, participatory practices and artist-led programmes. She has been managing several learning and audience

engagement projects, most recently *SNAP – The Photography Festival for Children and Young People*, *Vuosaari 21* (cultural and regional work in the Vuosaari suburb of Helsinki), the *Kuva ois kiva* podcast series, *Permission to Wonder – Visual Thinking Strategies* and *Guess Image* (a playful approach to the museum's collections). She is also a founding member of, and the 2011–2013 President of The Finnish Association for Museum Education, Pedaali.

Minna Sarantola-Weiss is Head of Research at Helsinki City Museum and responsible for the museum's collections policy process. Her interests include collections development, value assessment and contemporary collecting. Sarantola-Weiss was the Chair of the national network for collections management and contemporary documentation (Finnish acronym TAKO) in 2009–2013 and board member of the ICOM international committee for collecting COMCOL in 2010–2013, as well as ICOM Finland in 2014–2018. At present, she is a board member of the Finnish Literature Society (SKS) and the Chair of the Finnish working committee of Nordisk Museumsförbund (Nordic Museums Association). Sarantola-Weiss is also Adjunct Professor in Cultural History at the University of Helsinki. Her research interests include the history of material culture, as well as the history of the post-war consumer society.

Kerstin Smeds is a historian from Helsinki, Professor (since 2003, Emerita since 2018) of museology at the Department of Media & Communications Sciences, Umeå University, Sweden. Her PhD was on how national identity is mirrored in World Exhibitions in the 19th century, with Finland as the focus. Her production encompasses World Exhibitions as well as other kinds of national manifestations such as *Statuomania*, design history and industrial history. In 1998–2000 she led the project *Material & Ideal* at the Finnish Academy and in 2001–2003 she was Head of Exhibitions at the Museum of National Antiquities in Stockholm. Her research interests in museology are our relations to things, time and preservation, museums and exhibitions from a phenomenological and existential perspective, amateur museums as a genre in their own right, exhibition history, theory and practice, heritage production and conservation strategies and trash as heritage (Smeds 2000, 2007a, 2007b, 2015, 2018, 2019). Smeds has been a member of the board of the International Committee for Museology (ICOFOM) in 2013–2019.

Suzie Thomas joined the University of Helsinki as University Lecturer in Museology in 2014. Until August 2021 she worked as Associate Professor of Cultural Heritage Studies at the University of Helsinki, and has written on museological themes such as issues of representing difficult themes in museum exhibitions, and on teaching museum studies in a university setting. She completed her PhD in Cultural Heritage Studies at Newcastle University, UK, in 2009 and has worked as a museum professional in several museums in England. Since September 2021 she has worked as Professor of Heritage Studies at the University of Antwerp, Belgium, focusing on participatory methods of heritage management and heritage education.

Leena Tokila is Director of Training and Development for the Finnish Museums Association (FMA) and is responsible for the association's training and development services. FMA provides training for museum professionals nationwide each year through seminars, workshops and courses (face-to-face and online). The Association runs several development projects, and she is a long-term member of the steering or advisory groups for several nationwide projects. Tokila is in charge of association's international development projects and has delivered lectures and workshops, e.g., in Pakistan and Namibia. Tokila has master's degrees in education and ethnology, and holds a vocational teacher's diploma. She was a member of the board of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) Finland in 2009–2014. She has been a member of the ICOM International Committee for the Training of Personnel (ICTOP) since 1991, a member of the ICTOP board since 2013 and chair since 2019.

Minna Tuominen is an art historian and received her PhD from the Helsinki University in 2015. She has specialised in seventeenth-century Dutch art. She has wide curatorial experience in Finnish museums and is working currently in the Tuusula Art Museum as Chief Curator. In her work Tuominen leads an exhibition group, collection management and a public art steering committee in Tuusula. Tuominen has been an active lecturer in the Open University at the University of Helsinki.

Mari Viita-aho is a doctoral candidate in the programme of History and Cultural Heritage, the University of Helsinki. Her research is based on several exhibition case studies from the years 1972–2020 and archival materials, such as museum policy programmes in Finland. The focus is on the ways social issues are exhibited and approached in museums. In her dissertation, she examined the opportunities and limitations for museums as public institutions that aim for societal objectives. Besides research, Viita-aho lead a participatory development project in 2018–2022, *Timemachines and Utopias,* in collaboration with three Finnish artist house museums.

Janne Vilkuna studied archaeology/prehistory, ethnology, Finnish history and art history at Universities of Helsinki and Jyväskylä. After his MA (1979) he worked 1980–1989 at the regional Museum of Central Finland, Jyväskylä, as Senior Curator. When studies of museology began in Finland, first at the University of Jyväskylä in 1983, he was one of the teachers, and when the office of lecturer was established in 1989, he was nominated. He became PhD in ethnology 1992. When the office of lecturer was 1998 changed to (the first Nordic) professorship of museology, Vilkuna was nominated in 1999. In addition to his professorship, Vilkuna was a director of the Jyväskylä University Museum in 1993–2016. He has published about 400 scientific and popular articles on the subjects of museology, prehistory, history and ethnology. His main interest in museological research is the history of Finnish museums. He has, e.g., published (1998, in Finnish) the history of the Finnish Museums Association 1923–1998 and an article on the Finnish museum history (2010, in Finnish) about the organisation of Finnish museums 1945–2009. Vilkuna has been and is a member of several museum

boards and state committees. He became a member of the editorial board (and the Finnish editor) of the journal Nordic Museology in 1993 and has been since 2003 a member of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters.

Anna Wessman has a PhD in Archaeology from the University of Helsinki. Her PhD thesis (2010) dealt with death and burial during the Late Iron Age. She has worked as a museum professional in several museums in Finland and was the acting lecturer in Museum studies at the University of Helsinki between 2015–2017. After that she has been working in different research projects involving avocational metal-detecting, citizen science and digital humanities. Since February 2021 she is Associate Professor in Iron Age Archaeology at the University Museum of Bergen, Norway. She is also Adjunct Professor at the University of Turku and a Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Chester.

ICOM international council of museums