

### Working Internationally 2016

The International Council of Museums UK (ICOM UK), the National Museum Directors' Council (NMDC) and Manchester Museums & Galleries Partnership invite you to join them at The Whitworth, for the **2016 Working Internationally Conference**.

**Date:** Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2016

**Venue:** The Whitworth, 2015 Art Fund Museum of the Year.

**Place:** Manchester

**Time:** 10:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.

#### Programme

10:30 a.m.	Registration- The Whitworth
11:00 a.m.	Welcome and introductions Comper: Carol Scott, Chair ICOM UK
11:10 a.m.	Keynote: the impact of international work on profile and positioning Maria Balshaw- Director, The Whitworth
11:40 a.m.	Knowledge and innovation Paul Smith- Director of Oxford University Museum of Natural History
12:00 p.m.	Health and well-being Michelle Kindleysides- Health and Well Being Co-ordinator, Beamish: The Living Museum of the North and Dr Bruce Davenport, Research Assistant, Newcastle University
12:15 p.m.	International events- Year of India 2017: 70 years of independence, Matthew Plant, Arts Manager, British Council South Asia.
12:25 p.m.	Supporting international work: sources and resources Dana Andrew- Working Internationally Regional Project Co-ordinator (WIRP)
12:35 p.m.	Questions
12:45 p.m.	Lunch
1:45 p.m.	International initiatives with local outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sally MacDonald- Director, Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester</li> <li>• Kirstie Hamilton- Head of Exhibitions and Display, Museums Sheffield</li> </ul>
2:15 p.m.	Breakout sessions
2: 35 p.m.	Panel - Cultural relationships Katie Childs (NMDC) talks with Alexandra Smirnova from the Science Museum Group and Nick Merriman from Manchester Museum about their recent experiences working with international partners.
3:15 p.m.	Questions and discussion
3:30 p.m.	Summary and conclusion- Nick Merriman, Director Manchester Museum
3:45 p.m.	Close of conference and tour of The Whitworth

## **Presentation abstracts**

### **Keynote: the impact of international work on profile and positioning**

Maria Balshaw, Director of the Whitworth, part of The University of Manchester, and the Manchester City Galleries

Over the past 5 years, the Whitworth and Manchester Art Gallery have developed a number of strands of international working. These include the relatively conventional (but high impact) touring of desirable works (the Whitworth mounted a major tour of its watercolours to 4 Japanese cities, with the support of the exhibition touring division of Asahi Shimbun) to much more ambitious programmes of work to develop artist and curatorial partnerships supporting major exhibitions and acquisitions from parts of the world that would otherwise have no links with the UK. Most notably in 2012, this resulted in a city-wide programme of contemporary art and music from West Africa. In 2009, and again in 2013, the gallery staged major commissions by Indian artist Nikhil Chopra; the seeds sown here will see fruition in a city-wide exploration of the art and culture of South Asia that will run from 2016-2019.

Maria's presentation will examine the opportunities and some of the (highly unusual) challenges this way of working entails. She will also discuss the importance of such work being strategic and related to the complex histories and relationships (not all of them easy) that exist between countries and continents.

### **Knowledge and innovation**

Paul Smith- Director of Oxford University Museum of Natural History

Oxford University Museums Partnership is a consortium of four museums that operate as a Major Partner Museum funded by Arts Council England – the Ashmolean Museum, the Museum of the History of Science, the Museum of Natural History and the Pitt Rivers Museum. Together, their collections amount to 8.5 million objects that span all aspects of human culture and the natural environment. Collectively, the museums welcome over 2 million visitors per year and provide education sessions for over 100,000 school students. Since the foundation of the collections in the 1600s, the museums have been rooted in an international approach to collecting, but the focus has shifted to bilateral partnerships and relationships in the last decade. Although some of this activity is centred on touring, (particularly for the Ashmolean), most is based around research, the development of links with communities and mutual skill development. The strategic aim is to build deep, enduring relationships with partners. A number of case studies will be examined, including work to develop new audiences in China; work with Haida First Nations communities in British Columbia; partnership development around research and public engagement in São Paulo, Brazil; and the development of Oxford Cultural Leaders, an international leadership programme.

### **Health and well-being**

Michelle Kindleysides- Health and Well Being Co-ordinator, Beamish: The Living Museum of the North and Bruce Davenport, Research Assistant at Newcastle University

Beamish Museum is currently involved in an Erasmus+ funded project with four other European Open Air Museums and three Universities: 'Active Ageing and Heritage in Adult Learning (AHA). This project builds upon the collaborative working, knowledge sharing and learning gained from a previous Erasmus Funded Project 2012-2014. The presentation will outline the previous and current projects, identifying the aims & methodologies, knowledge gained and the evaluation methods used. It will discuss the current projects' aims in contributing to innovations in public health and the validation of the role of museums in supporting health and wellbeing. Although focusing upon the experiences of Beamish Museum and its partnership with Newcastle University in the Erasmus project, the presentation will also reflect upon the different relationships and social climates between Museums and public health bodies in other European countries and how this has impacted upon the methodologies used and the aims of the collaborative work.

### **International events- Year of India 2017: 70 years of independence**

Matthew Plant, British Council Regional Arts Manager, South Asia

The purpose of UK-India 2017 is to increase the visibility and appreciation of the UK and India as contemporary societies and to give greater focus, depth and relevance to the long-standing relationship between our two countries. UK-India 2017 will challenge outdated perceptions of the UK with a highly differentiated, inspiring and, sometimes, challenging programme which demonstrates the quality of contemporary British arts and culture.

### **Supporting international work: sources and resources**

Dana Andrew- Working Internationally Regional Project Co-ordinator (WIRP)

Although there are limited dedicated funds available for international work, there are more sources and resources available than many realise. This short presentation distils research from the *Working Internationally Regional Project (WIRP)* and highlights the list of resources and links available on the ICOM UK website, which aims to be a one-stop-shop for information on working internationally.

## **International initiatives with local outcomes**

Sally MacDonald- Director, Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester  
Manchester: European City Of Science

A presentation about the background to the designation of Manchester as European City of Science 2016 and how the city is responding to the opportunity to showcase science in a way that creates a legacy for science engagement.

Kirstie Hamilton- Head of Exhibitions and Display, Museums Sheffield  
Going Public: International Art Collectors in Sheffield, 16th September – 12th December 2015

Against a backdrop of continuing cuts to public funding for the arts, cultural organisations are increasingly being encouraged to look beyond the state for income making the private philanthropy significant. *Going Public* shifted the debate outside of London and into the north. Working with four international art collectors and philanthropists, it presented exhibitions across Sheffield and staged a summit stimulating debate about the future relationship between private philanthropy and the public art sector. Four major European art collectors and philanthropists – Nicolas Cattelain, Dominique & Sylvain Levy, Egidio & Daniel Marzona and Patrizia & Eugenio Sandretto Re Rebaudengo - loaned internationally significant works from their private collections to five cultural organisations across Sheffield – Sheffield Cathedral, Graves Gallery, Sheffield Hallam University, Site Gallery and Millennium Gallery. The exhibitions acted as a backdrop to the summit which explored questions such as 'What is the role of the private collection in the public collection? How can museums and galleries unlock the potential of philanthropy in these tough economic times? Are there international models we can learn from?'

## **Panel- Cultural relationships**

Katie Childs (NMDC) talks with Alexandra Smirnova from the Science Museum Group and Nick Merriman from Manchester Museum about their recent experiences working with international partners.

## **Biographies of speakers**

### **Maria Balshaw**

Maria Balshaw is Director of the Whitworth and the Manchester City Galleries. As Director of these two major institutions, holding internationally important collections of fine and decorative art of more than 80,000 objects, she is responsible for the artistic and strategic vision for each gallery. An academic by training she has worked as a Director within the cultural sector for the past 10 years. Alongside her role as Director of Manchester City Galleries and the Whitworth Maria has recently taken on the role of Director of Culture for Manchester City Council. In April 2014 the Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport appointed Maria as a board member of Arts Council England. The appointment is for a term of 4 years, from April 2014 to March 2018. Maria was awarded a CBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours for services to the arts in June 2015.

### **Paul Smith**

Paul Smith is Director of Oxford University Museum of Natural History and has worked in university museums throughout his career. Paul was curator and then director of the Lapworth Museum of Geology at the University of Birmingham before becoming head of the multidisciplinary School of Geography, Earth & Environmental Sciences there. He is currently Co-Chair of the University Museums Group UK and Chair of the Oxford University Museums Partnership, which is funded as a Major Partner Museum by Arts Council England. He is president-elect of the Palaeontological Association.

### **Michelle Kindleysides**

Michelle is Health & Wellbeing Coordinator at Beamish Museum, The North of England Open Air Museum, in County Durham. Her role is to develop and facilitate a unique programme of meaningful activities and events at the Museum to help support health and wellbeing of people living in the community, with a current focus upon people living with dementia. She is also involved in projects with Newcastle University & other European Museums to explore methods of evaluation for this type of work.

### **Bruce Davenport**

Bruce works as a Research Associate in Media, Culture, Heritage at Newcastle University. He also works in and around museums in the north-east of England as a freelance educator and researcher. Bruce's interests are in objects, touch and health & wellbeing. Bruce is working with Michelle Kindleysides on two projects evaluating health & wellbeing outcomes from activities at Beamish Museum.

### **Matthew Plant**

Matt Plant was appointed Arts Manager, South Asia in July 2015 having previously worked in the Creative Economy Team at the British Council. Matt's career started in Saudi Arabia where he worked as a Drama Facilitator on the first professionally commissioned production in the country's history. He trained as an actor with the National Youth Theatre and holds a degree in English Literature from the University of Sheffield.

### **Dana Andrew- Working Internationally Regional Project Co-ordinator (WIRP)**

Dana is a freelance museum and gallery consultant specialising in international projects and international touring exhibitions. Before going freelance, she managed projects and toured exhibitions for the British Council Visual Arts Department, the Hayward Gallery, and the Victoria & Albert Museum, London. Dana is the Project Co-ordinator for the *Working Internationally Regional Project (WIRP)*. Funded by the Arts Council England Museum Resilience Fund, the WIRP supports non-national museums to develop the skills and confidence to work internationally and is led by ICOM UK in partnership with the National Museum Directors' Council, the British Council, and Heritage Without Borders. She also delivers training for TEG (Touring Exhibitions Group) and independently, and provides consultancy services to museums and galleries in the UK and internationally.

### **Sally MacDonald**

Sally MacDonald joined the Museum of Science & Industry as Director in September 2014, from UCL where she led the university's museums and public engagement programmes. Prior to that she held curatorial and leadership roles in several London museums, including at Croydon where she set up a multi-award winning service from scratch. She has joined the Museum of Science & Industry at an exciting time, overseeing an ambitious Masterplan for the site, including a new gallery for contemporary science exhibitions. Sally grew up in Manchester and is passionate about the museum's role both as a symbol of Manchester's industrial heritage and as an inspiration for the next generation of inventors. The Museum of Science and Industry is part of the Science Museum Group - the most significant group of museums of science and innovation worldwide.

### **Kirstie Hamilton**

Kirstie Hamilton is Head of Exhibitions & Displays at Museums Sheffield with over 15 years experience in the sector. Kirstie programmes and oversees exhibitions across the Graves Gallery, Millennium Gallery and Weston Park Museum and is also project managing the HLF funded *Weston Park Museum: A Bright Future Project* which will improve sustainability at the museum and display more of the city's collections. Kirstie's specialism is visual art and she has been responsible for the development and delivery of Going Public and numerous other exhibitions and projects.

**Alexandra Smirnova**

In her current role as the International coordinator for the Science Museum Group, Alexandra Smirnova is responsible for driving forward the delivery of the international strategy for the museums which make up the Group: the Science Museum, London; the Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester; the National Railway Museum, York and Shildon; the National Media Museum, Bradford. She joined the Science Museum as Curator of *Cosmonauts: Birth of the Space Age* - the biggest exhibition of Russian spacecraft and artifacts ever shown in the UK. Previously, Alexandra was working for the British Council in Moscow managing the delivery of a portfolio of large scale arts projects, including 2014 UK-Russia Year of Culture.

**Nick Merriman**

Nick Merriman was appointed Director of the Manchester Museum in March 2006. Since then he has focused its mission on promoting understanding between cultures and working towards a sustainable world. He has overseen the refurbishment of most of the Museum's permanent galleries. This, together with a major programme of public engagement, has led to a doubling of the Museum's visitor numbers to 450,000 a year.

Prior to moving to Manchester, Nick Merriman was Director of Museums & Collections, and Reader in Museum Studies, at University College London. During this time, he developed new courses in museum and heritage studies, and created a new university-wide museum service. From 2004-6 he was a part time Fellow on the Clore Leadership Programme, undertaking a bespoke scheme of training and development in cultural leadership. Nick began his career at the Museum of London in 1986, as Curator of Prehistory and subsequently Head of the Department of Early London History and Collections. While there, he led a pioneering project called 'The Peopling of London' which told the story of the capital's cultural diversity from ancient times to the present. He studied archaeology at Cambridge University, and his PhD, on widening participation in museums, was published as 'Beyond The Glass Case'. He has published widely on museum studies topics, was Chair of the International Council of Museums (UK) from 2001-2004, President of the Council for British Archaeology from 2005-2008, Chair of the University Museums Group from 2009-2013, Convenor of the Museums Association's Ethics Committee 2008-2014 and is currently Chair of the Collections Trust.