

Stephanie de Roemer, Conservator Sculpture and Installation Art, Glasgow Museums

ICOM UK/ ICOM-CC

Report of my attendance of the ICOM Prague 21<sup>st</sup> August – 27<sup>th</sup> August 2022



Day 1: Kate Seymour (ICOM Netherlands/ ICOM-CC chair) and me next to Liba the Tomcat

I travelled to Prague from Glasgow via Berlin in time to attend the opening ceremony on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> August in the Conference Centre.

It was wonderful to finally seeing many old and new friends in person after year long planning and preparation for the event via Zoom and Teams. The opening ceremony and a large hall filled with people from all over the World and representing the broad and diverse museum community was a powerful start to the week long event.



Opening ceremony with folk dance and music

After the opening ceremony and welcome I became fully engaged in the activities as a mentor for the mentoring session of the Getty grant recipients attending ICOM Prague.

Alongside two conservation peers from the Czech Republic, we facilitated a Q and A session for 25 young museum professionals interested and focused on conservation and preservation.

This provided a great opportunity to highlight the value of an international network such as ICOM and its National and International Committees.

It also offered an opportunity to encourage individuals to attend various lectures, talks and in particular the workshop co-organised by ICOM-CC and ICCROM in how to use and harness the potential of museum collections and conservation towards museum's sustainable development.

After the mentoring session I chaired ICOM-CC's first session of our programme on the Solidarity Project 'Training the Trainers in conservation risk assessment'.

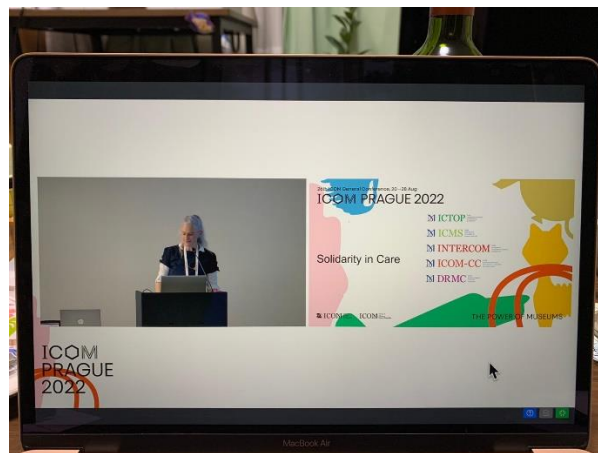
It was a pleasure and an honour to introduce speakers for this part from our Solidarity Project cohort who shared their learning and experience of the Solidarity Project to an international audience from India, Africa and Brazil, in person and via live zoom link.

**INTERCOM, ICOM-CC, DRMC, ICMS, ICTOP – Training the Trainers: Facilitation Skills Workshops for leaders in Conservation Risk Assessment – PART 1**

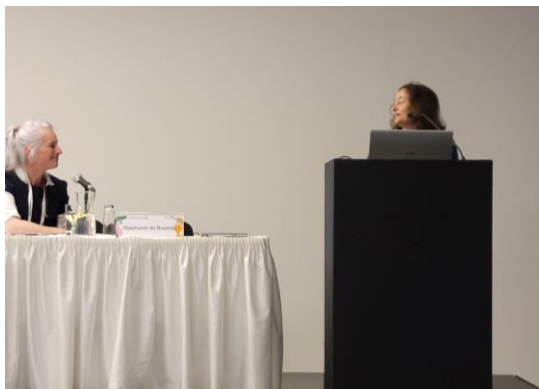
🕒 16:00 – 17:30 📍 South Hall 2a

 Stephanie de Roemer

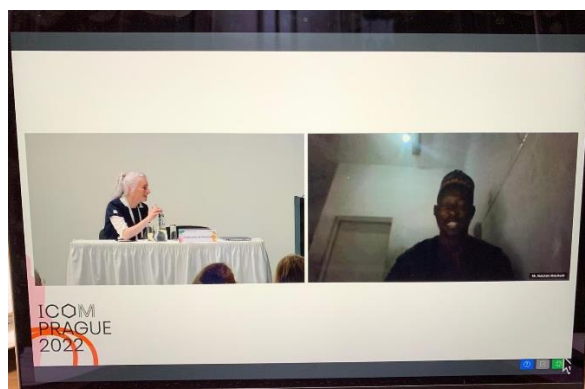
Five ICOM International Committees including ICOM-CC, DRMC, ICTOP, ICMS & INTERCOM collaborated on an ICOM Solidarity Project, responding to the challenges museums face. Participants learnt that a facilitator brings together the focus of a diverse group of individuals with complex needs towards a common shared objective or goal. The aim of this project was to harness existing experience, knowledge and practice in the advocacy, teaching and implementation of Conservation Risk Assessment (CRA) to museum communities as a tool and practice for sustainable recovery and resilience. CRA is an analytical and methodological tool used for identification, evaluation and mitigation of risks posed by the 10 agents of deterioration. These two linked sessions will highlight successful outcomes of this training through presentations and discussions. New security technology is not just useful for preventing and detecting crime but adds real benefits for the whole museum.



After mentoring session, chairing the first ICOM-CC session: view from Directory Board member following online in Japan



Q and A in person





Online view with presenter online

On Tuesday two further sessions as part of the ICOM-CC programme took place.

**ICOM-CC, DRMC, ICMS, ICTOP, DEMHIST, INTERCOM, ICOM JAPAN – Expert Session: Resilience of Historic House Museums and their Collections to Risks posed by Climate Change, Environmental Disasters, and Conflict Zones**

🕒 14:30 – 16:00 📍 Chamber Hall

 Yvonne Ploum


 Katharine Seymour

The expert session will address risks to historic buildings and their collections by focussing on preventive conservation issues and the steps needed before, during and after disaster response. What resources should be allocated to mitigate risks to the built structure? How can museums develop risk management plans with community involvement? How should a museum prioritize collection items to be saved in case of emergency and how should they allocate resources for this purpose?

© 14:30

**ICOM-CC, DRMC, ICTOP, INTERCOM, ICMS – Training the Trainers: Facilitation Skills Workshops for leaders in Conservation Risk Assessment – Part 2**

🕒 16:30 – 18:00 📍 Chamber Hall

 Katharine Seymour

Five ICOM International Committees including ICOM-CC, DRMC, ICTOP, ICMS & INTERCOM collaborated on an ICOM Solidarity Project, responding to the challenges museums face. Participants learnt that a facilitator brings together the focus of a diverse group of individuals with complex needs towards a common shared objective or goal. The aim of this project was to harness existing experience, knowledge and practice in the advocacy, teaching and implementation of Conservation Risk Assessment (CRA) to museum communities as a tool and practice for sustainable recovery and resilience. CRA is an analytical and methodological tool used for identification, evaluation and mitigation of risks posed by the 10 agents of deterioration. These two linked sessions will highlight successful outcomes of this training through presentations and discussions.

© 16:30

A joined session with the International Committees for Historic Houses, Disaster Resilient Museums, Training for Personnel, Museum Management, Museum Security and ICOM JAPAN on Resilience of Historic House Museums and their Collections to Risks posed by Climate Change, Environmental disasters, and Conflict Zones.

This session was inspiring as it facilitated the sharing of diverse experiences in the occurrence of natural disasters and emergencies but also disaster preparedness and risk management.



View from screen from online viewer with key note speaker Takeyuki Okubo (Japan) and the panel Dr Achal Pandya (India), Remko Jansonius (USA), Yuri Kurihara (Japan), Stacy Bowes (USA) and Liz Kirby (USA)



Part 2 of the Solidarity project provided further opportunity for alumni of the project to share their experience and learning in training their colleagues in conservation risk assessment.

Wednesday was a day of catching up with old and new friends, further inspired by the programme and in particular the discussion in the run up to the vote on the new museum definition.

As a Directory Board member of ICOM-CC I was nominated to vote. The new museum definition was fully supported by the International Committee of Conservation. We saw much participation and engagement in the 18month process from our membership.

The International conservation community identifies with this definition, because it places conservation and preservation philosophies and practices resonating with sustainable development at the heart of the museum (social justice and inclusiveness) and it is hoped that this will raise the recognition of the value of conservation and those practicing it to museum management and governmental entities to invest in the training and staffing by museums and heritage institutions in the care profession of and for tangible and cultural heritage. Conservation has been absent from many of the acute table discussions across governments and museum organisations/ management, yet it is a practice of problem solving and resolution.

The clear endorsement of the museum definition and following celebrations, the votes for the new Executive Board and the president all marked a forward looking resolve of and with ICOM.



Waiting to hear the results of all the votes!

On Thursday for the ICOM-CC off site meeting at the convent of St Agnes, National Galleries Prague, we co-hosted a workshop alongside ICCROM on the ICCROM 'Our Collections Matter' tool kit, which

connects museum collections and practices to and with the United Nations sustainable development Agenda 2030.

Henry McGhie, a consultant 'curating tomorrow' and fellow ICOM UK member facilitated the workshop to the 50 participants from all over the World. Many of the mentees from the Monday session attended and the workshop fostered much resolve, ideas, networking and future collaborations.



The workshop participants at the ICOM-CC off site meeting in the convent of St Agnes, NGP

After a wonderful lunch participants attended visits to the conservation workshops of the National Gallery Prague.

I was busy chatting and networking and continued inspired conversation over dinner and some drinks late into the night.

### Reflections

The conference was a wonderful experience, the host and all involved in preparing for this week have done an incredible job, and created a safe and inspiring space that facilitated meeting, networking, chatting and exchanging ideas and knowledge in a way we all have missed over the last 2 years or nearly since the last ICOM conference in Kyoto.

I met and caught up with many ICOM UK members, always wonderful to meet the persona behind the name or anonymous membership word.

Since having returned to the UK, Glasgow, I have already disseminated the new museum definition, which received much positive feedback from my museum friends and colleagues here in Glasgow. In addition the inspirational key not lectures, round table discussions and presentations, chats with people all inspired me to utilise the Our Collections matter tool kit and start putting into practice steps towards sustainable development and the new museum definition.

I like to thank ICOM UK for having me awarded a travel bursary to attend ICOM Prague and thereby having provided me with the opportunity to learn, network, share and be inspired.