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BY JORDI BALTÀ PORTOLÉS
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ICME Call for Papers: "Re-imagining the Museum in the Global Contemporary"



ICME, the **International**

Committee for Museums and Collections of Ethnography, part of the International Council of Museums (ICOM), will hold **its 2018 annual conference in Tartu, Estonia, on 9-12 October**. The conference, hosted by the Estonian National Museum, is entitled '**Re-imagining the Museum in the Global Contemporary**' and will reflect upon the complex context(s) in which museums exist today, and creatively examine the range of new and future roles that might be productively employed in museums.

Themes

It has now been fifteen years since **Andrea Witcomb** published ***Re-imagining the Museum***, but her text remains relevant today. Museums are situated in a world of **rapidly changing global politics, contested digital technologies, and increasing socio-economic inequalities**. Within this 'global contemporary,' we recognise that various ideologies and ethical

perspectives greatly influence and impact our work, in regard to understanding collections, designing exhibitions, and various other aspects of museum work. Contemporary museum professionals may be asked to perform a range of roles that take them out of their traditional comfort zones, as **they seek collaborative action across boundaries** including: nation, ethnic identity, class, disability, gender and sexual preference. Museums have often **ventured into difficult discussions and the engagement of diverse audiences**. They might prioritise storytelling and sharing curatorial power so that myriad stories can be told in exhibition spaces, programmes and outreach to attract more diverse audiences. At the same time, such work can be seen as **radical change threatening collections care**, research and the place of the object in 'new' museums devoted to opening dialogue. The conference presents the question: **Are these various positions mutually exclusive?** It will offer a space to consider that a 'both and' rather than an 'either/or' perspective may be possible, moving beyond binary positions that put 'progress' and 'tradition' in unhealthy tension.

Call for papers

Organisers are calling for **papers, panels and workshops** (academic, practice-based or any combination of the two) from colleagues who work on collections, exhibitions, and programming that aims to diversify audiences and re-consider interpretive practice, as well as from colleagues who wish to maintain, implement, and respect the legacies of more traditional practices. Together they hope to find new ways to express who museum professionals are to one another and those that visit museums, the actions that might be taken in the future, and the contributions that might be made to the contemporary world of museology. Work that addresses a range of questions that have long concerned ICME is particularly welcome, including, but not limited to, the following issues:

- How does/can the museum problematise and/or diversify knowledge production?
- How do technology and multisensory activities raise/elevate (or curtail) new voices and participatory venues?
- How can knowledge and power be productively shared in museums?
- How have we questioned both 'elite' orthodoxies and new interpretive theories in productive ways?

Proposals should be sent as soon as possible, and **no later than 20 April 2018**. For **additional information** about the conference and the related call for papers, please visit <http://enmconferences.ee/call-of-papers>

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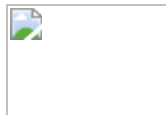
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