



Signature of the framework agreement for ICOM's General Conference at the Brazilian Museum Forum

This month, preparations for the 23rd ICOM General Conference moved forward with the signature of the framework agreement and the launching of a grants programme intended to foster participation in the conference. Meanwhile, ICOM India held a seminar on tribal art while the heritage directors of the French-speaking Sub-Saharan region of Africa met at the ICOM General Secretariat in Paris.

Headline : The 5th Brazilian Museum Forum: on the road to ICOM's General Conference 2013



The 5th Brazilian Museum Forum was held from 19 to 23 November, 2012 in Petropolis, a mountain town about an hour north of Rio de Janeiro. This major event in Brazil gathered some 1,000 participants from all over the country, and Rio de Janeiro's museums introduced special programming for the occasion.

The theme of the forum was: *40th anniversary of Santiago de Chile Round Table: between Idealism and contemporaneity*. The Santiago de Chile round table, which was held in 1972 on UNESCO's initiative, marked a turning point in the museology field in Latin America, defining new paradigms for the role of museums, which have become references for today's Latin American museums.

During the opening ceremony on 19 November, Tereza Scheiner, Vice-President of ICOM, and Maria Ignez Mantovani Franco, Chair of the ICOM Brazilian National Committee, were invited by José do Nascimento Junior, President of IBRAM (Brazilian Institute of

Museums), to present ICOM and its [23rd General Conference](#), which will take place in Rio de Janeiro from 10 to 17 August, 2013. The framework agreement for the organisation of the General Conference was then signed officially in the presence of Julien Anfruns, Director General of ICOM.

The 5th National Forum of Museums provided an opportunity to prepare for the General Conference, with many Chairs and representatives of ICOM International Committees presenting their activities to Brazilian museum professionals. Indeed, for the first time, the General Conference will be open to non-ICOM members, who will be allowed to attend all of the International Committees' sessions depending on their specialisation. The International Committee representatives were also invited to discover the work of Brazilian museums in their respective fields, with a view to enriching the General Conference programme with visits to museums and lectures by their Brazilian colleagues.

The General Conference programme will soon be available online and registration for attending the event will open shortly. [More information on the General Conference](#)

Highlight: ICOM India's National Seminar on Tribal Art



Seminar participants © Partha S. Mukherjee

A two-day national seminar on *Tribal Art: The Mirror of Indian Culture* was organised jointly by ICOM India and the Indian National Museum of Mankind (IGRMS), Bhopal, on 8 and 9 October 2012.

The aim of the event, which was held at the IGRMS, was to consider the various ways of preserving the tribal art tradition, which has been lost in the last century due to the modernisation of communities and the adoption of mainstream culture and religion. This was the first time ICOM

India allowed students and research scholars to participate and present papers. Over 50 museum professionals and scholars from all over India participated in the event.

The seminar was inaugurated by the Joint Director of IGRMS, Mr A. K. Srivastav, and the keynote speech was delivered by Professor A. K. Das, Director of Lal Bahadur Sastri Museum (a museum dedicated to late Indian Prime Minister's memory), New Delhi, and renowned expert on tribal art. Dr Das dealt with the very foundation of intangible cultural property, which has its roots in tribal art – from the art of cavemen to social practices and the resulting art works found in the daily use of objects such as basketry, utensils, clothing, etc., and objects used in various tribal rituals - spanning the entire nation.

Dr A. K. Chatterjee, Chair of ICOM India, spoke about intensive research in tribal art and stressed the urgency of implementing various methods of conservation of tribal art before it is too late. Presentations were given on *Tribal narratives on stone*, which explored the theme of ancestral beliefs and their representation on steles of the Bhil tribes of Rajasthan; *Dimensions of Art in Tribal Society*, presented jointly by anthropologists Dr Nilanjan Khatua and Mr Sanjay Shukla, which dealt with the meaning of tribal art, modernisation and its present state, tribal tourism and preserving tribal art in museums; and *Digital Documentation of Tribal Art – tangible & intangible*, presented by Mr. Partha S Mukherjee.

The seminar ended with a full-day post conference tour to Bhimbetka, the World Heritage Rock Art Site.

[More information on ICOM network's events](#)

Decoding : ICOM received the heritage directors of the French-speaking Sub-Saharan region of Africa



African heritage directors at the ICOM General Secretariat

As part of a week of seminars organised by the French Ministry of Culture and Communication (MCC) in close collaboration with the International Council of Museums (ICOM), the heritage directors of nine African countries were welcomed at ICOM's offices in Paris, on 26 October, 2012.

The event, which was organised by the staff of the ICOM General Secretariat, was attended by Mr Bruno Favel, head of the European and International Affairs Department at the French Directorate-General of Heritage and others MCC staff members; Mr Komlan Agbo, Director of Heritage and Arts of UEMOA (West African Economic and Monetary Union); and the heritage directors of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo,

Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, Mali and Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The meeting's objectives were to introduce ICOM, its international scope, professional standards, programmes and activities; discuss the various solutions to be implemented to better protect heritage in conflict-affected countries while facilitating armed forces training; raise awareness on the objectives of combating illicit traffic in cultural goods and the impact of organisations like the Blue Shield and tools like the ICOM Red List publications; and explore new possibilities of partnerships with the directors of African heritage.

The event was an opportunity for ICOM to present some of its tools intended to protect cultural heritage in emergency situations and ways of preventing and fighting illicit traffic in cultural goods – including the *Red List of West African Cultural Objects at Risk*, which is currently being prepared. Discussions also addressed the ICOM-WIPO Art and Cultural Heritage Mediation programme, which aims to foster dispute resolution through

dialogue. These presentations were followed by fruitful discussions between the participants, and the directors of African heritage had the opportunity to express their concerns regarding the safety of heritage in certain African countries, obtain information and advice from ICOM and make suggestions to strengthen cooperation with ICOM in these fields.

The encounter was also an opportunity to present ICOMMUNITY, the new online collaborative platform for ICOM members, and discuss other subjects like International Museum Day, the protection and promotion of intangible heritage, the benefits of ICOM's international network and the development of regional initiatives in Africa.

Museum News: Art Workshops in Holburne Museum (UK) give homeless people a voice



HaHa's artworks exhibition © Holburne Museum

Every Wednesday afternoon, the Gardener's Lodge, a small building in Sydney Gardens adjacent to the Holburne Museum in Bath (UK), is open to anyone who is homeless or vulnerably housed to drop in for company, food – and art activities. The Holburne Association of Homeless Artists (HaHa), founded in 2008 at the initiative of the Holburne museum and Julian House, a local night shelter, provides free workshops led by professional artists for homeless people in Bath.

This project aims at providing homeless people with a safe environment in which they can explore new art activities, while engaging with each other and with Julian House and

Holburne Museum staff in a more positive, less passive way. They can thus develop new skills, relationships and self-esteem that ultimately encourage them to participate more fully in society. Over the past few years, the Holburne Museum sought funding from individual donors and trusts to secure funds to continue the project. The secured funds made it possible to extend the length of the workshops and enabled the group to broaden out to socially excluded people using local services other than Julian House.

Participants' artwork has been exhibited in the museum, at public venues and arts festivals in the city. Among the works created during these workshops were life-size sculptures of homeless figures that were placed in doorways and on benches during the Bath International Music Festival in order to raise awareness of homelessness. Participants also produced decorated mugs for Julian House and a full-scale mosaic panel for an outside wall.

The HaHa has recently taken part in the Transient Graffiti project, a project led by award-winning digital media company Suited and Booted CIC, by designing and producing animated illustrations which aimed to bring the facades of Bath Abbey and the Holburne Museum to life. The animations exploring the histories of the buildings and depicting their inner workings were displayed during the opening night of the Bath Christmas Market on 22 November, 2012.

Thanks to the Arts Council funding, the repercussions of the project were evaluated, and the part played by the association in building people's self-esteem and self-confidence was demonstrated by the participants' very words: "*Exhibiting work gives me a buzz*"; "*Saying to people that I am part of an Art Group in the Holburne Museum elevates my status*".

Participate in: ICOM General Conference in Rio thanks to ICOM's Travel Grants

In keeping with its inclusive approach, ICOM is committed to supporting the participation of Board members of National and International Committees, young members and other ICOM members, that are most in need. ICOM will therefore award travel grants for its 23rd Conference, which is to be held from 10 to 17 August, 2013 in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil).

The grants will provide assistance with economy-class airfares, accommodation for the duration of the conference, conference fees and visa costs. In addition, ICOM Brazil, the Organising Committee of ICOM Rio 2013 and their partners are offering two-week internships in Brazilian museums within the travel grants programme.

Young members and those residing in countries belonging to categories 4, 3 and 2, as defined in the ICOM membership grid, will be prioritised for receipt of the grants. The grantees will be selected on the basis of written applications in which they must state their reasons for attending the event and the benefits they expect

to derive from it.

The application deadline is 4 February, 2013.

The decision will be communicated from 29 March, 2013 onwards.

The [guidelines related to the travel grants](#) as well as information on the internships in Brazilian museums are available on ICOMMUNITY.

Publication: The Best in Heritage 2012 Best Practices



The Best in
Heritage 2012
Best Practices

The 2012 edition of the Best in Heritage conference, which highlights best practices in the fields of museums, heritage and conservation, took place from 27 to 29 September in Dubrovnik, Croatia, its annual location.

This year's conference publication gathers all the papers presented during the conference, which showcase best practices from all over the world and in various domains of expertise.

Highlights include the web platform MuseoTorino (Italy), the digital policy of the National Archives of Australia, the conservation plan for the Indian monastic complex of Sumda Chun Gompa and the creation of the new Acropolis Museum building in Greece.

The publication is available [online](#) and a [selected number of best practices](#) are presented on ICOMMUNITY.

Obituaries

François Sigaut, President of AIMA (International Association of Agricultural Museums) and founder of AFMA (French Association of Agricultural Museums), passed away last 2 November, 2012. Originally an agronomist, and later a historian and ethnologist, he was bestowed Knight of the National Order of Agricultural Merit by the French government and appointed member of the French Society of Agriculture in 2009 for his contribution on the history of farming techniques. François Sigaut will be sorely missed by all those who had the pleasure of knowing and working with him.

Marc Maure, former President of ICOM Norway and active member of the Board of ICOFOM (International Committee for Museology), passed away on 13 January, 2012. Having dedicated his career to the development of museology, he was one of the founders of the International Movement for a New Museology (MINOM), created in 1983. His work contributed to the creation of participatory museums and the defence of human rights. His dedication and generosity will be deeply missed by all ICOFOM members and those who had the opportunity to work with him.

The latest news on the ICOM website:

ICOM receives the cultural heritage directors of the French-speaking Sub-Saharan area [📄](#), 27 November, 2012

ICOM at the International Conference of Experts on the Return of Cultural Property 2012 [📄](#), 5 November, 2012

The Best in Heritage 2012 conference held in Dubrovnik, Croatia, [📄](#) 10 October, 2012

ICOM-ASPAC 2012 General Assembly in Wuhan, China, [📄](#) 4 October, 2012

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