

Curating History (Florence, 11–13 Oct 17)

European University Institute, Florence, Oct 11–13, 2017

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What happens when curators and scholars are brought together in museums

Museums display objects constructed in historical complexity which cannot be explained by one single narrative. This complexity constitutes an obstacle for museum actors, who are assigned the task of providing an interpretation that can never embrace the entirety of the narratives contained in one object. Additionally, this difficulty expands when objects have to be placed in the narrative of permanent exhibitions, which present certain specific constraints.

Permanent exhibitions are at the core of the work of most museums. Even if 'permanent' does not mean eternal, these exhibitions are the public expression of the museum's collections and mission. Thus, considering the limitations in both presenting the historical complexity of objects and taking into account the constraint of choosing a narrative for permanent exhibitions, we wish to look out for ways in which the museum can be turned into a place of convergence where curators, researchers and audiences can think historically about objects.

Are there new and old ways of curating history in permanent exhibitions? How is it possible to bring together museums, academia, and the public? In organising this workshop, we would like to offer a place for discussion where curators and scholars from a broad variety of institutions (museums, universities, research institutes etc.) elaborate a joint reflection in both theoretical and practical terms, structured around four sessions: History, Responsibility, Mediation and Communication (between Curators & Scholars).

PROGRAMM

DAY 1 (11th October):

EUI / Badia Fiesolana / Sala del Capitolo

09:00 Welcome

09:15 Opening and practical information

Session 1 - History (Morning)

CHAIR: Bruno A Martinho, Charlotte Bellamy, Déborah Dubald (EUI)

09:30 Anna Toledano (Stanford University): Learning from Landscapes: The Dreamworld of the Diorama.

09:45 Mohamed Elshahed (The British Museum): Collecting and displaying Modern Egypt for the museum.

10:00 History Session organisers

10:15 Discussion

11:00 Coffee Break

11:30 Guest Speaker: Dr. Kim Sloan (The British Museum)

12:15 Discussion

13:00 Lunch

Session 2 - Responsibility (Afternoon)

CHAIR: Josephine Tierney & Holly Winter (Univ. Warwick)

14:30 Lucia Halder (Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum – Cultures of the world, Cologne): Bringing back the pictures. Colonial photography at the collection of the Rautenstrauch – Jöst – Museum – Cultures of the world.

14:45 Marcelo Lages Murta (Lusófona University): Undesirable memories': excluded voices revealed in a community museum in Brazil.

15:00 Responsibility Session organisers

15:15 Discussion

16:00 Coffee Break

16:30 Guest Speaker: Prof. Christopher Whitehead (Newcastle University)

17:15 Discussion

DAY 2 (12th October):

Museo Galileo

Curating History in practice (Morning)

09:45 Meeting at the museum's entrance

10:00 Visit to the library of the museum

10:30 Visit to the museum's permanent exhibition

11:00 Museum exercise with a curator from Museo Galileo: Group A

12:00 Museum exercise with a curator from Museo Galileo: Group B

13:00 Lunch

Session 3 – Mediation (Afternoon)

CHAIR: Carla Alferes Pinto & Sofia Lapa (CHAM)

14:30 Malin Drees (Ruhr-University Bochum); Brenda Spiesbach (Stiftung Stadtmuseum Berlin): How Much Context Does an Object Need? – Decontextualization of Objects in Museums.

14:45 Alison Boyd (Northwestern University/KHI in Florence– Max-Planck-Institut): Title tbc

15:00 Guest Speaker: Dr. Sébastien Soubiran (Jardin des Sciences, Univ. Strasbourg)

15:45 Coffee Break

16:15 Mediation Session organisers

16:30 Discussion

DAY 3 (13th October):

EUI / Villa Salviati / Sala degli Anelli

Session 4 – Communication (Morning)

CHAIR: Matthew Wells (RCA / V&A Museum)

10:00 Marina Scherbakova (Heidelberg University): Museum in a museum: curating Jewish history in the Russian museum of ethnography in St. Petersburg

10:25 Communication Session organiser & Discussion

10:40 Discussion

11:05 Coffee Break

11:30 Guest Speaker: Dr. Marta Lourenço, Museums of the University of Lisbon

More Information and Registration: <https://curatinghistory.wordpress.com/>

The Curating History Workshop is open and free to everyone, but places are limited. If you would like to attend, please follow the link above for registration indicating your affiliation and at least one reason for your interest.

Reference:

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