

Museum International

The challenge of tourism 1

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STOLEN

Eighteenth-century oil painting on panel by Karel Beschey showing a landscape with figures; unsigned. Dimensions 18 x 20.5 cm. Estimated value FF165,000. Stolen on 23 March 1997 from an antique dealer in Brussels. (Reference) IP 11/394/97/N/9574/C.OV-R.68.57.70323, Interpol, Brussels.)

Photo by courtesy of the ICPO–Interpol General Secretariat, Lyons (France)

Editorial

In 1995: 11 per cent of world investments; 10.9 per cent of gross world product; 10.7 per cent of jobs; and 20 per cent of world trade in services (or \$372 billion) were in the international tourism sector, which catered for 565 million tourists.

Also in 1995: 20 million museum visitors saw the Barnes Collection worldwide; 500,000 attended the Cézanne exhibition in Paris; 180,000 viewed the Mondrian exhibition in The Hague; 995,000 flocked to the Monet exhibition in Chicago; and nearly 5 million passed through the doors of the Metropolitan Museum in New York.

Clearly, tourism has become a major fact of late-twentieth-century life, having increased by 25 per cent over the past fifty years. Current projections foresee more than 20 million new tourists each year – and this does not take into account domestic tourists, ten times more numerous than those venturing abroad. ¹ We have come a long way since the days when the nineteenth-century English clergyman and diarist, Robert Francis Kilvert, could say: 'Of all noxious animals, the most noxious is a tourist.' For the tourist today is no longer simply a lone adventurer but is now an economic powerhouse, courted by many and shunned by only a dwindling few.

The repercussions on museums and cultural heritage in general are profound, many-sided and reciprocal: culture attracts tourists and tourists influence culture. The notion of 'cultural tourism' has entered our everyday vocabulary and many in the profession see it as one of the most promising avenues for further growth. This new amalgam of culture and business, museums and markets, heritage and commerce, demands reflection and understanding if the potential of tourism as a force for genuine international, intercultural exchange is to be realized. For this reason we are devoting two numbers of *Museum International* to the subject, the first one setting out the issues for museums and the next to be devoted to broader heritage questions.

In the present issue, we explore the range of problems that the growth of mass tourism has foisted on museums today and the new visions and challenges that this entails. It is clear that we are dealing not only with an institutional evolution but with a major social change in which the museum is simply the most visible tip of the iceberg. It is this aspect of the question that we will explore rather than merely presenting a series of profiles of prominent museums and their responses to the phenomenon of tourism. Our approach was largely inspired by the groundbreaking examination of cultural tourism undertaken by UNESCO with partners such as the International Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism (AIEST) and the social science journal *Annals of Tourism Research*, which have studied in depth the relations between tourism, culture and development.

We are also deeply indebted to the advice and counsel provided by Yani Herreman, former President of the ICOM Regional Organization for Latin America and the Caribbean, whose introduction to this issue describes a number of major implications of the tourism-culture equation, and to Frans Schouten, senior lecturer at the Netherlands Institute for Tourism and Transport Studies, whose article placing museums in the larger heritage tourism context will feature in the next issue.

M.L.

Note

1. Statistical data are taken from the brochure, *Culture, Tourism, Development: Crucial Issues for the XXIst Century*, the report of the round table of experts organized in Paris on 26 and 27 June 1996, UNESCO, 1997. Copies of this document in English and French are available free of charge from UNESCO and readers will find in it a wealth of information as well as a thought-provoking analysis of the challenges that lie ahead.

Museums and tourism: culture and consumption

Yani Herreman

That the growth of tourism has contributed to the radical changes in museums over the past few years is unquestionable; that these changes have been welcomed or even understood by the entire museum community is less certain. Yani Herreman sets out the main issues that must be addressed if we are to have a better understanding of the reciprocal impact that museums and tourism have on each other. The author, an architect, is head of the Promotion and Cultural Action Unit of the Autonomous University of Mexico and former director of the city museums of Mexico and of the National History Museum. She is a member of the ICOM Executive Council and President of the International Committee of Architecture and Museum Techniques.

Constant demographic change and the emergence of an environment without frontiers are transforming the work of museums. Museums will have to become more responsive, in all aspects of the development of their operations, functioning, programming and public, to the diversity resulting therefrom. (From the 'Strategic Agenda' of the American Association of Museums, 1998–2000)

Museums have become focal points in the community, points of physical convergence. Museums have also become points of convergence for thinking, reflection, pleasure and knowledge. (Roland Arpin, Executive Director, Musée de la Civilisation, Quebec, 1992)

I begin this article on museums and tourism with the above quotations because I believe they touch on the fundamental aspects of the topic. In view of the importance of a phenomenon that is characteristic of the end of the millennium, this issue and the next of *Museum International* are dedicated to this thorny subject. We wanted to approach the situation from an interdisciplinary point of view that would, as far as possible, leave readers feeling enriched, by giving them the latitude and freedom to come to their own conclusions, and for this reason, experts in different fields, such as sociology, conservation, museology, education, archaeology and anthropology, have been chosen to contribute. We hope that the subject appeals to them and leads them to reflect – as it does me – on a state of affairs that directly concerns museums and their professional staff.

Contemporary museums, like other social institutions, have evolved with the society that produced them and have undergone changes in the process. Whether we like it or not, museums have found themselves

involved as leading players in such complex sociocultural and economic phenomena as globalization, sustainable development and tourism, among others. Under the influence of economic, social and cultural changes, museums have altered so much and so quickly in recent years that many activities once considered as outside their preserve – even forbidden to them – have become so routine that they go unnoticed.

Many museologists have remained faithful to the more traditional concept of the museum, and regard such changes as an assault upon the profession, its customary practices and its ethics, while others believe that, being institutions, museums are bound to be affected by general social changes. As things stand, there can be no doubt that museums are going through what Tomislav Sola, professor of museology at the University of Zagreb and member of the jury of the European Museum of the Year Award, calls a 'crisis of institutional identity and a crisis of concept'.

Tourism is precisely one of those worldwide phenomena that have shaken museums – and other cultural institutions – to their very core and on which, oddly enough, museum experts as a group have no clear position. Nevertheless, tourism is a reality that we must learn to live with and for which we must be prepared. To ignore or exaggerate it, to underestimate or overstate its advantages as well as the harm that it can undoubtedly do, will only get in the way of good professional practice which is dynamic, ethical and in keeping with the basic aims of modern museum organization.

Tourism in its many different forms has evolved in recent years parallel to, and as part and parcel of, the pattern of consumerism prevalent in today's society. In the

last fifteen years, it has become a major economic, cultural and social phenomenon, characteristic of the end of the millennium.

Recent research into this phenomenon, which has had the same impact in both developed and developing countries, has shown its complex and multifaceted nature. Tourism, as Jafar Jafari, editor-in-chief of *Annals of Tourism Research*, tells us, is a sociocultural phenomenon, the extent of whose influence is unknown and which has many different dimensions, of which the economic dimension is only one. The other facet of tourism which, like the economic one, is very much in vogue today is of direct concern to us here, namely, its cultural dimension. Rooted in the process of globalization, so-called cultural tourism is flourishing and expanding at all levels of society. The 'cultural' version of tourism has been linked with curiosity and a desire to learn about others, to satisfy an urge to explore and enhance one's experiences.

'Tourism would not exist without culture. Culture is one of the principal motivations for the movement of people, and ... any form of tourism will provoke a cultural effect, on the visitor as well as the host', according to Jafari. From an anthropological point of view, tourism is in itself a cultural activity which can be directly connected with museums, the heritage and sites. Tourism, of whatever type, is a phenomenon that directly and decisively affects every single country. Considered by some as a panacea and by others as a disaster from the point of view of museums and, generally speaking, of heritage sites, tourism is, in the words of Hughes de Varine, former Director of ICOM, 'a fact and a latent danger', which is why there is a need for an ongoing and systematic study of those aspects of tourism that

affect culture in general and museums in particular.

Let us now turn to a few topics that seem to us to be of paramount importance in a study of the relationship between museums and tourism.

Museums as art markets, as laboratories, as activities, as places of recreation, as meeting places, as promoters not only of their own culture but also of the prestige of their patrons, and museums as places of research – all these roles are replacing the galleries we knew when we were young, and will increasingly do so. (Patrick O'Byrne and Claude Pecquet, museum programmers)

The 1960s were a time of great change in a world which until then had been tranquil as far as museums were concerned. Rapid technical innovations on the one hand and, on the other, the momentous social changes linked with the economic trends that typify the end of the millennium, will affect the 'natural' evolution of the work of museums. A variety of sociological factors account for the way that, in museums and museum displays, current concerns about cultural diversity and other social themes such as gender, migration, ethnic groups, the economy and the identity of various human groups have come to the fore. Likewise, it is beginning to dawn on science-and-technology museums that their importance and role in society make them the museums of the last decades of the century.

No less important are the changes that access to the advances made in applied science and technology have brought about in the conservation of cultural property, in architecture and in the work of museums. Conservation as we know it, for instance, has been in existence for



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'Tourism is a new form of pilgrimage'.
The Great Wall of China.

less than forty years. Its development has been driven by the speed of scientific progress, and conservation is now considered as a science and an art in its own right, a view that museums firmly support.

What are we to say about the advances that have been made in presentation, whereby the display of new material has to be brought into line with modern concepts of educational psychology in order to maximize its communication potential?

Diversification and specialization in museology, the emergence of 'entrepreneurial' tendencies in museums, the recognition of planning as a basic practice, and many other activities that we now regard as common, seem like a natural response to the changes that have taken place in the work of museums in the last twenty years.

How far removed from this proliferation of activities is the traditional figure of the 'curator'? Not so very long ago, in 1971, Luc Benoist, Honorary Curator of the Museums of France, wrote that the overall harmony in the hanging of the pictures was governed by the ideas and good taste of the curator. His words have the confidence

born of his experience and his intimate responsibility for the structural, programming and planning aspects of the museum service and for giving guidance on the items it has to investigate and classify. Museological knowledge, like decision-making, was the preserve of a few people. Nowadays, the emergence of so many different specialities has made teamwork between the different disciplines essential, and decision-making has become a shared responsibility.

A social approach

As social history and environmental themes have been incorporated into the material shown in museums, and as science and technology museums have become of prime importance, there has been a new trend, not only in the presentation of artefacts but also in the contextualization of displays, that requires new methods and approaches. Collections are being formed along new lines, and a synchronic or diachronic approach is being used more often in exhibitions. However, the most important change of all to have taken place in recent decades is the social approach which most museums today have adopted.

No museum is an island. Museums are part of a 'cultural system'. (Roland Arpin, 1992)

This cultural system, like tourism, has come about as a result of a series of economic, technological and social changes, which give it a common, universal language. Advances in communication systems, widespread use of information technology and globalization are phenomena that have affected the whole world. Communication, by means of new and complex systems, has changed the expectations of men, women and children in all areas, including culture. Within this complex global system, tourism plays a fundamental role, as does culture and its 'consumption'. Museums and cultural heritage sites constitute a major part of what is on offer in cultural tourism programmes.

One obviously outstanding feature of the end of the twentieth century is the close interrelationship between different cultures due, in particular, to the rapid progress made in communication technology. The dissemination of knowledge on a global scale is creating a truly universal and universalizing culture, which has undoubtedly affected the evolution of culture throughout the world.

In recent years, communication technology has earned its rightful place in relation to economic and industrial growth and, after several years of slow progress, is beginning to acquire the importance that it deserves, mainly through its close connection with 'industry without smokestacks'. From this viewpoint, the concept of 'cultural heritage' – and with it, museums – has been given a boost that affects cultural tourism as well.

There are many reasons why cultural tourism is booming, and although they

fall outside the scope of this article, the two main ones should be identified, given the intimate relationship between cultural tourism and the nature of museums. They are: culture as representing an identity (one's own and/or another's); and the cultural (and emotional) value accorded to the natural, movable or immovable heritage.

In his book, *The Great Museum: The Representation of History*,¹ Donald Horne says that some museum objects have become sacred relics and tourism is a new form of pilgrimage. Patterns of tourist ▶



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'Only proper planning ... can balance the demands of tourism against the protection of heritage sites and objects.' Banteay Srei, Angkor, Cambodia.

behaviour having enormous technical, social and economic repercussions have thus been created. How is it that someone can be so deeply moved that he or she will travel hundreds or thousands of kilometres to see, for instance, an object or a historic site? How can looking at an object in a museum cause such overwhelming emotion that it brings on dementia, sometimes temporary and sometimes for much longer, as in what is known as Stendhal's syndrome?

A new look at visitors

A new concept in the field of museum research is that of experimental ethnography, where the visitor is put in the position of asking or learning about his or her own culture, as compared with others. (It is interesting to note how the position of the visitor has altered since this trend first began to change the unilinear cultural evolution of nineteenth-century museums, the implication being that it is the visitor's culture that should be examined, tested, judged and evaluated rather than what is on show.)

To sum up, both the traditional approach of museums as communicators of messages and the new ideas mentioned above lead us to draw the same conclusion, namely, that the real aim, and all that this implies, is to further (i.e. to facilitate) the double mission of understanding the universal culture through the presentation of pertinent examples and, having assimilated them, reassessing one's own culture.

I firmly believe that museums are an ideal means of research and communication that combine knowledge of culture and that of nature, which they interpret and then communicate, through their exhib-

its, to both local people and foreigners. Museums must be innovative in their professional practice without distorting or distancing it from its traditional objectives, so that it complies with the contemporary needs of the community, of the conservation of the heritage, and, in this case, of tourism. In this regard, it is worth remembering that museums can fulfil the following roles: (a) interpreting and communicating other cultures for the benefit of the local community, by drawing up and implementing strategic plans of exhibitions; (b) helping the local community to understand other cultures in a socially healthy way; (c) interpreting and communicating the local culture, past and present, for the benefit of tourists and so that they can understand it; (d) acting as educational centres for the local community in respect of introduced cultures; (e) acting as tourist orientation centres in small communities; and (f) developing their role as centres for research into local handicrafts and other skills.

The trivialization of museums, the impoverishment of their cultural content, [a museum] more or less transformed into a game, a popular recreational facility to satisfy the appetite of the tourist machine and to respond to economic requirements . . . (Le Monde, Paris, 9 February 1992)

By studying museums as social institutions that are part of, as well as dependent upon, changes in society, it becomes much easier to understand how their development has been affected by politics and economics, areas traditionally regarded as having nothing to do with them. Thus, the actions of museums all over the world are largely dictated by global changes in economic policy. Cultural policies change, decentralization is



encouraged, and the economic situation compels the state to give greater freedom – and less money – to its cultural agencies. In the United Kingdom, for example, the funding of public museums and galleries has given rise to a great deal of public debate, since, according to a recent article, 'Museums: An Economic Perspective', 'the lack of funding is so serious that it has adversely affected all public museums, causing posts to be left unfilled. Sadly, the effects are visible in terms of closed galleries, reduced security, shorter opening hours, etc.' In developing countries, the situation is much worse since, in general, they are entirely funded by the state.

Present social and economic conditions thus require museums to play a more active role. The controversy between the

traditional view of museums as remote from and 'impermeable' to the vicissitudes of the 'outside world', and the modern idea of them as being involved in current global trends, continues, or as Bayart and Benghozi put it: 'Museums and business: a relationship beset by problems'.²

On one point – on museums as cultural centres – there is agreement. They fit easily into this role, combining the traditional, unchanging objectives – as social institutions, guardians of the heritage, carrying out research and education – with a series of activities which promote these objectives and which also have a proven economic impact on the local community as well as on their own finances.

Some countries, in particular the most developed ones, regard culture, and

'Famous archaeological sites such as Machu Picchu ... are being carefully guarded and monitored, and visitors must pay to visit them.' Machu Picchu, Peru.

consequently museums, as a major growth industry, inextricably linked to tourism. In France, for example, 'in the last ten years, there has been investment on an unprecedented scale: hundreds of millions of francs, both in the provinces as well as in Paris, have been poured into the 2,000 or so museums administered by the Ministry of Culture'.³ This 'museum mania' can also be attributed to political factors such as decentralization. Every commune wants its own museum. Mention should also be made of the massive support for the economic-cultural macroproject taking place in Paris, in which the network of museums has star billing.

This phenomenon has been particularly marked in the United States, where museums have been turned into institutions that are fiercely competitive and commercially oriented, since their main purpose is to enable the cities to increase their revenue and prestige. In Washington, D.C., the museums, together with the White House,

Capitol Hill and the Lincoln and Jefferson memorials, are part of the civic religion. In the north of Mexico, Monterrey, an industrial town that ranks second in importance to the capital in economic terms, has just completed an aggressive plan for the building of museums, which now rival those of Mexico City.

As a result of the above factors, certain practices have emerged which are geared to making museums commercially viable, that is to say, the era of museums as 'cultural businesses' and of the concomitant 'marketing campaigns' has begun. During the last decade, marketing has become part of a self-financing strategy by museums, and is standard practice today. Unfortunately, the means can easily become the end, as we have seen in numerous cases.

Although the subject is important and potential problems loom ahead, very little interdisciplinary research or planning has

'Museums and cultural heritage sites constitute a major part of what is on offer in cultural tourism programmes.' The Colosseum, Rome.



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been carried out on museums, tourism, sustainable development and conservation. As was said above, museums will have to integrate themselves into a changing world with updated working methods and a more up-to-date outlook to enable them to devise new formulas – perhaps closer to a strategy for sustainable development than the current ones – which will need to generate the resources required for them to pursue their functions, attain their objectives and safeguard their collections.

Conservation – a renewed challenge

How can we reconcile cultural tourism with the requirements of conservation and security in a museum visited by 2.5 million people a year? (ICOM News, Mohamed Saleh, Director of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, Egypt)

There is no doubt that one of the major problems created by tourism, particularly by today's mass tourism, is conservation, and by conservation I refer both to the physical integrity of a space, an environment or a place and to its integrity in a non-material sense. In both cases, only proper planning, leading to structured pro-

grammes, can balance the demands of tourism against the protection of heritage sites and objects.

We know that in recent years there have been enormous scientific and technical advances in the physical conservation of objects and sites. The emergence of conservation programmes like the Delta Plan initiated by the Netherlands Government in 1991 marked the beginning of a major initiative in greater social involvement. C. Périer-D'Ieteren, a professor at the Free University in Brussels and former Chairman of ICOM's Conservation Committee, defines conservation as a cultural problem, which has to be resolved, face to face, by all the parties concerned: tourist agencies, society, conservation specialists and museums. 'As a general rule, for works of art to be respected, the public should be taught to understand them'. 'Similarly, more awareness-raising work needs to be done among tourist operators, for whom the heritage often takes second place to the money to be made from it.

Planners also need to be made aware of the situation, to enable them to devise tourist programmes that contribute to the protection of the physical integrity of

'Religious sites are also being transformed into tourist showplaces.' The Russian Orthodox cathedrals inside Moscow's Kremlin became national museums during the Communist period, but have now been rededicated for worship.

monuments and collections. Recently, measures have been introduced to limit the number of visitors and put an end to certain activities such as concerts and son et lumière performances. Other measures are also being put into effect, like the ones that have been introduced in Cuzco, Peru. Famous archaeological sites such as Machu Picchu and churches are being carefully guarded and monitored, and visitors must pay to visit them.

Nevertheless, as tourism increases, so does its effect on museums. One has only to think of the Louvre, the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City, the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, the Hermitage in St Petersburg and the National Museum of Air and Space in Washington, D.C., and of all the other museums, large or small, whose collections are being harmed by a surfeit of tourists. We are still waiting to find a really effective solution to the problem. It is a job for the experts in all the related fields: conservation, museum science, planning and tourism.

No less important is the conservation of the character of sites, museums and/or collections. Tourism has branched out and become specialized. In this respect, we may note the emergence of a type of tourism based on the aristocracy, involving stately homes or country houses that exemplify the way the aristocracy lived.

Religious sites are also being transformed into tourist showplaces in a way that is not only disrespectful, but is also changing social patterns in the interests of financial gain. As I have already said, museums can and must play a decisive role in research projects on cultural tourism. The results will enable programmes to be devised that will make the best use of these social institutions, which not only conserve and protect the human heritage, but also make it accessible to people for their benefit and delight. It is up to museum professionals, adopting a flexible and up-to-date outlook, to develop new services to meet the changing needs of museums and their users. ■

Notes

1. Donald Horne, *The Great Museum: The Re-presentation of History*, Pluto Press, 1984.
2. Denis Bayart and Jean-Pierre Benghozi, 'Le tournant commercial des musées en France', *Culture Francophone*, Paris, La Documentation Française, 1992.
3. *Ibid.*
4. C. Périer-D'Ieteren, 'Le tourisme culturel – Comment concilier l'accès au patrimoine et sa sauvegarde' (seminar on cultural tourism), 1995.

A quest for identity

Nelson Graburn

The competing demands on museums will increase as the number and diversity of visitors continue to grow. As they vie as never before with a broad panoply of new centres of interest, museums face a host of demands from a clientèle ever more avid for stimulation, entertainment and challenge. The implications of such a transformation of the museum-going public are described by Nelson Graburn, professor of anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley, since 1964, and, from 1972, Curator of North American Ethnology at the Hearst (formerly Lowie) Museum there. Among his books are *Ethnic and Tourist Arts* (1976) and *Catalogue Raisonné of the Alaska Commercial Company Collection* (1996), both published by the University of California Press.

Museums and tourism are among the fastest growing institutions in the modern world. From 1960 to 1995 the number of international tourists grew from 70 million to over 500 million a year. Their expenditures rose from \$6,900 million to \$334,000 million (in 1992 dollars). The World Tourism Organization expects international travel of 750 million people spending \$720,000 million by the year 2000, rising to 1 billion people by 2010.

Twenty years ago the American futurologist Herman Kahn predicted that by the end of this century tourism would be one of the largest industries in the world. When expenditure on world domestic tourism is added to international tourism, we already have an industry with expenditures of over \$2,000 billion a year. As cultural and heritage tourism are among the fastest growing segments of tourism,¹ we expect the numbers of museum visitors to increase well into the next century.

Since the 1960s the number of museums in the United States has grown more than fifteenfold, and the same is probably true in Japan and other industrialized countries. More people in the United States now go to museums every week than to

sporting events such as football and baseball. There has been a frenzy of museum building as well as a continual upgrading and renewal of museums in Europe too, in cities such as Groningen in the Netherlands, Aachen, Bremen, Dresden and Frankfurt in Germany, and Barcelona and Seville in Spain. Perhaps there have been proportionately fewer entirely new museums opened in France and Italy because these countries are already so richly endowed. The numbers of museums in Third World countries has grown even faster, responding to the needs of tourism and for the expression of local and national identities.²

Broadly speaking, both museums and tourism, except for the most hedonistic kinds, appeal to the middle classes all over the world. Although it is difficult to define middle class in a way that applies to all countries, the range of values common to tourism and the middle classes is characteristic of modernity itself. They comprise the following:

- Secular education, to promote the understanding of the cultural, ethnic, historical, natural and moral diversities of the world.

Reconstruction of a Viking Longhouse at the Parks Canada National Museum, L'Anse-aux-Meadows, Newfoundland.



© Nelson Graburn



The Inuit Museum known as 'Saputik', the Weir, in Puvirn ituk, Quebec, Canada. The founder, Tamusi Qumak, imagined that time was like a river carrying old cultural items out to sea to be lost for ever, so he built this 'weir' to save them.

- Conservation of the past for its own sake, and for the maintenance of continuities between the past and the present, often allied with nostalgia engendered by feelings of alienation.
- Status enhancement, both for tourists vis-à-vis their home reference group, and for museum personnel, seeing the museum as a marker of place, status, taste, and enlightenment locally and in the larger world.
- Aesthetic appreciation of the awe-inspiring, that is, the sense of wonderment and discovery, directed particularly to places of historical and national importance.
- Entertainment and a relaxed social atmosphere, where the museum is a place where tourists can enjoy their time, often in the company of family and friends.

The latter two, and perhaps three, values are not exclusive to our twin modernities of museums and tourism, but could well apply to traditional places of religion and to pilgrimage. The connections between religious institutions, museums and tourist attractions and between the social organization of tourism and of pilgrimage are still very strong, especially in Japan, India, the Middle East and parts of Europe. But the same set of modern problems, overcrowd-

ing, physical degradation, the separation of the serious from the superficial are common to both pilgrimage and tourism.

Today's middle-class visitors thrust competing demands upon museum planners and curators. At the most general level a museum must be, in Claude Levi-Strauss's sense,³ a work of art: a museum must tread the line between being too strictly 'scientific or paradigmatic' in expressing basic principles and exactitudes which may be cold and boring to visitors, and too contingent in evoking fleeting mental associations which appeal superficially to the visitor's knowledge, but leave nothing of lasting value.

Museums are very important icons and tourist attractions in themselves. They are often among the main reasons to visit a city, such as the Louvre and the Beaubourg (the Pompidou Centre for contemporary art) in Paris, the National Anthropology Museum in Mexico City, or Catherine the Great's Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg. Richards stresses the crucial role of museums as icons and attractions in tourism circuits as a consequence of the meteoric rise of cultural tourism in Europe.⁴

In addition to their function as tourist attractions, museums may also be essential touristic guides to the history and geography of the cities or nations they represent. This is particularly true of the many smaller historical museums found all over the world, which, like guidebooks, serve as representations or condensations of the geography and history of an area or an era, such as the Santa Monica Heritage Museum in Los Angeles, the Unikkaarvik Interpretive Centre at Iqaluit on Baffin Island, or the Castle Museum in Guildford, United Kingdom. Such museums provide a means for the out-of-town tourist to quickly apprehend what the local authori-

ties consider to be of historical value, worth knowing and visiting, as well as an educational introduction for children. A good example of this close relationship between a museum and associated tourist information is the display of pages from the guidebook *Malaysia: Land of Eternal Summer* on the wall beside the central Islamic exhibit in Malaysia's Muzium Negara (National Museum) in Kuala Lumpur.⁵

Museums and heritage: personal, social and global

It has often been said that museums are the great symbols of civilization, the store-houses of humanity's heritage. Great cities

measure their 'symbolic capital' by the eminence of their museums and the array of the world's heritage that they have amassed. But between one's personal family heritage and world heritage are a variety of identities and heritages at the level of ethnicity, class and nation, which differ and may conflict with each other, complicating the efforts of museum planners and curators.

In the West, the idea of heritage is derived from the concept of personal inheritance or patrimony, that is, the materials, rights and obligations that we, as members of a family, expect to inherit from our forebears. Material property is usually passed down in families at death through wills but, ▶

The garden of Saihoji, also known as the Moss Temple, at Kokedera, Kyoto, Japan, was laid out in its present form in 1339. The temple allows only limited – and expensive – public access.



© Nelson Graburn

as members of a family, we also receive a constant non-material flow of knowledge, stories, status symbols as well as names, relatives and acquaintances. We love to pass on those parts of our inheritance that we are proud of and may suppress others.

In addition, we are all members of larger social groups such as ethnic groups or social classes, and cities or nations. Each of these also passes on the symbols, stories, goods and personnel and even dialects, language and customs, to every generation. Thus, to each social group pertains a shared heritage. Though much of the cultural and spiritual heritage is passed on from person to person, by example or word of mouth, material aspects of heritage may be embodied in regalia, treasures, buildings or land.

One of the primary functions of a museum is to preserve and display the heritage of the specific social groups which form its clientèle. I often tell my university classes that the oldest museum in the world is the Shosoin building in Nara, Japan, which contains the paraphernalia and records from the death of the Emperor Shomu in A.D. 746. These are kept for the Japanese royal family, the ancient capital city of Nara and the nation, and are displayed to the general public for a few weeks every year. But by this measure, we should have also to consider every kind of container of a society's heritage as a museum, including the Pyramids in Egypt, the royal tombs in Osaka, Nara and Miyazaki-ken in Japan, and many of the Roman and Greek buildings of classical Mediterranean civilizations.

The concept of heritage is culturally constructed and historically contingent. Nowadays, in addition to our 'own' heritage – local, ethnic, class and national – all of us are aware of the heritage of other peoples

and nations of the world, especially the symbolically important heritage of the great historical civilizations of East and West. The fact that many world-class museums contain materials from all the great civilizations of the world derives from the frenzy of collecting by the major Western powers in the nineteenth century in the wake of their imperial and commercial expansion. Today, our knowledge of these cultural phenomena gives us a 'feeling of ownership' so that all of us, Asian, African and Western alike, might now feel that, for instance, the great monuments of China, Egypt, France or Italy are part of our own heritage.

Since the aftermath of the Second World War, UNESCO has institutionalized this expansive proprietorship by developing a long list of World Heritage sites, which we now regard as belonging to all humanity. Some of these sites are museums, and the contents of many museums would be included as world heritage. In some sense the local owners of these cultural and natural treasures are dispossessed of them, for their fate is monitored by international institutions. In fact Ames warns us how museums are possible sites for hegemonic class-based world views.⁶

Problems and pressures

The growth of tourism and museum visitorship that we expect to continue well into the next century will not be without serious problems. The problem of numbers will be aggravated as more of the world becomes wealthy and transportation relatively cheaper. There will be increased pressure to visit the world-renowned natural and cultural heritage sites, including museums. We can therefore expect rationing of access to famous institutions when their carrying capacities are reached.



The seventh-century Shosoin treasure house in azekura (log-cabin) style contains relics of the reign of Emperor Shomu, in Nara, Japan.

Two kinds of rationing can occur: rationing imposed on visitors on a first-come, first-served basis, as they arrive or when they try to make reservations, such as for the Goshō in Kyoto, the Imperial Palace that now serves as a museum. In museums, such limitations frequently occur when they house very popular exhibitions, especially travelling 'blockbuster' exhibits. But, if access and expansion are not possible, such limitations may occur more often, as has already happened in many places that preserve humanity's heritage. The other kind of rationing is by price. Again there are parallels between widely popular special exhibits which allow museums to raise their prices, and other desirable targets of tourism, which are now highly priced in order to limit numbers. For instance, in Kyoto, a city that attracts nearly 50 million tourists a year, Saihoji (Kokedera, the famous and fragile Moss Temple) charges a very high entrance fee (or donation) compared with other much cheaper or free temples, shrines and museums.

There is bound to be contention between those who think everything should be regulated by price, and those who think that everyone should have equal rights to visit and see examples of the world's cultural heritage. The world's museums are not only the target of larger numbers of tourists, but they receive more different kinds of people, often from classes, ethnic

groups, regions or nations who used not to visit museums. As explained above, a people's heritage is something that they expect to see represented positively not only in dedicated museums such as the Judah L. Magnes Museum of Jewish history and culture, in Berkeley, California, and the La Raza Museum of Hispanic American culture, in San Francisco, but in general and national museums. Thus, museums are increasingly becoming arenas for contesting views of 'truth' about history and heritage, pitting the local against the metropolitan, one class against another, or different ethnic and nationalist views of value and ownership. Recent research in Israel, for instance, shows how different groups (for example, Jewish 'pioneers', urbanites and Palestinians) are included or excluded according to who controls the narrative of the particular museum.

Under the pressure of an ever greater proportion of the growing world population wanting to travel, not only must there arise new regulations on museum visits, but new attractions must constantly be found or constructed. As tourist attractions, museums overlap and compete with natural, cultural and ethnic interpretive centres and ecomuseums, with zoological and horticultural gardens, and with preserved landscapes such as archaeological sites, architectural monuments, and natural parks and reserves, as well as with places of entertainment such

as wax museums, Disneyland or Universal Studios. Increasingly it is difficult to tell to which category an institution belongs, for instance the wonderful new Ring of Fire Museum and Aquarium (kaiyukan) in the port area of Osaka.

Next to museums and cultural centres, theme parks and other 'artificial' amusements are the most numerous and most profitable of new tourist attractions. Parks such as Disney World contain museum-like representations of exciting and famous places from all over the world. Just as the major international world fairs of the nineteenth century always included both serious exhibitions and amusement parks with rides and freak-shows, so modern museums are studying how to make themselves more fun-like and attractive. Major new museums, such as the National Museum of Civilization in Ottawa, Canada, are less confident of full government subsidy and are therefore consciously having to compete for tourist income to cover their costs.

In competition with the more commercial attractions, museums that are unique may draw visitors, both expanding the number of attractions within major destinations and dispersing tourists by taking them a little off the beaten track. Examples of the former include the Cartoon Art Museum and the Craft and Folk Art Museum, both in San Francisco, and of the latter the Insect Museum at Minoo City near Osaka, the Museum of the History of Japanese Lighting at Omachi near Nagano in Japan, or the French National Automobile Museum in Mulhouse near Strasbourg.

Dean MacCannell claims that modern humanity lives life like a tourist.⁷ Increasingly dependent on representations of reality, we are turning to institutions such as museums to find authentic truths not only about the worlds of the past and the other, but to understand our own predicament. Thus even local museum visitors may be considered attractive to tourists bent on understanding life around them. ■

Notes

1. Greg Richards (ed.), *Cultural Tourism in Europe*, Wallingford, Oxon, CAB International, 1996.
2. Flora Kaplan (ed.), *Museums and the Making of 'Ourselves': The Role of Objects in National Identity*, London/New York, Leicester University Press, 1994.
3. Claude Levi-Strauss, *La pensée sauvage*, Paris, Plon, 1962.
4. Richards, *op. cit.*
5. Laurie B. Kalb, 'Nation Building and Culture Display in Malaysian Museums', *Museum Anthropology*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1997, pp. 69-81.
6. Michael M. Ames, *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums*, Vancouver, University of British Columbia Press, 1992.
7. Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, 2nd ed., New York, Schocken Books, 1989.

Shifting the boundaries of interpretation: old environments, new visions

Patricia Sterry

Based on themes rather than collections, heritage centres provide a new and different approach to exhibiting the past, placing it, in Patricia Sterry's words, 'on display, but not out of reach'. Neither museum nor theme park, they challenge a number of sacrosanct notions attached to the very word 'heritage'. The author is a senior lecturer in design history at the University of Salford, United Kingdom, and course leader of a post-graduate Master's degree in heritage studies: interpretation, presentation and design.

Historically, the agenda for display and interpretation of the past has been set by precedents established by the museum profession. The tremendous growth of cultural tourism in recent years and the consequent need to develop new sites has meant that museums now represent only the tip of the iceberg in historical display. Cultural tourism markets clearly need to offer high-quality new environments if they are to attract a wider audience.

Heritage centres are just one of several new types of development shifting the boundaries of interpretation of the past. Developed initially as a suitable contribution from the United Kingdom to European Architectural Heritage Year 1975, they were to be called 'architectural interpretation centres'. Their aim was to build on the public's interest in conservation and protection of buildings and the environment. The name was changed to 'heritage centre' as it was thought to be more appropriate to catch the public's imagination.

The first heritage centre was situated in a redundant church in Chester, a historic town in north-west England. Its function was clearly defined: to provide infor-

mation for visitors on all aspects of local history, architecture and the urban environment. The idea caught on from the start and other heritage centres were developed in rapid succession, changing and evolving according to the needs of the developers.

By the mid-1980s, heritage centres were seen as a positive attribute to tourist developments. For example, several derelict Victorian warehouses and a polluted canal in Wigan, a small but not particularly attractive town in the north of England, made an ideal location for a major tourist attraction. It was a multi-million-pound restoration and regeneration project which included the creation of a new heritage centre. The centre interprets the town's former industrial history and local culture. The year 1900 was chosen by the planning team (which included a designer, a marketing manager, a planner and a curator) as the focal point to develop a theme for interpretation. The theme was intended to create a stimulating experience for visitors and a positive image for the town. Its title is boldly displayed above the renovated warehouse which now houses the heritage centre, 'The Way We Were'.

Photo by courtesy of the author

The Way We Were Heritage Centre, Wigan Pier, a canal-side restoration of derelict Victorian warehouses transformed into a major tourist development.





Photo by courtesy of the author

The atrium interior using internal walkways was designed to make the best and most interesting use of space.

Visitors to The Way We Were Heritage Centre are presented with innovative displays and a dark, simulated coal-mine; they experience a reconstruction of a Victorian schoolroom with an 'authentic' teacher in charge. A company of actors with their own artistic director are employed to great effect as live interpreters, performing scenes and stories drawn from the past. Within the complex there is a large shop, a pub, restaurant and cafés on site, and other delights for visitors to enjoy, including a magnificent steam engine and working textile machinery.

This heritage centre is typical of many that have been developed over the last decade. The renovated warehouse which houses it is brick built and has a mass of iron beams and bolts, gentries, and lofty internal spaces. Situated alongside the banks of a canal, it is a sympathetic and attractive re-use of a redundant industrial building. Although there is a collection of historical objects on display to support the theme (including industrial machinery), and a museum curator played a significant

role within the planning team, this is not a museum. Neither is it a fun-packed theme park, as there is serious material to absorb. An active and professional educational unit on site encourages positive links with schools, teachers and the national curriculum. This is a development motivated by economic, political and commercial considerations.

Wigan Pier Heritage Centre, like most other heritage centres, occupies a niche between museum and theme park. It provides a visually exciting day out for all the family, an on-site packaged experience carefully marketed as a major tourist attraction – 'Visit Wigan Pier Where History Comes Alive'.

The placing of a heritage centre at the Wigan Pier complex has reversed the negative image of the town of Wigan, turning it into an attractive destination. The civic pride of local people has been restored and revived, as they are encouraged to rediscover their local identity. Companies are attracted to relocate in the Wigan area, bringing new jobs and opportunities.

Exploiting escapism?

Investing in cultural tourism has become an attractive option for towns and cities (as in the Wigan Pier example). A recent UNESCO round-table discussion outlined the value of world tourism and its cultural interaction based on sound and sustainable principles.¹ Concern is voiced on balancing the economic goals of tourism with the consequent pressure on local cultural sites and identity. There is a real fear of exploitation.

Frans Schouten described the core of the tourist industry as 'the commodification of escapism, the commercial answer to the

Photo by: courtesy of the author

longing of mankind for another reality beyond the dull and grey of the everyday experience.’² This is, of course, an important consideration and a subject much in debate. It is clear that a balance must be found.

Not all heritage centres are developed as commercial enterprises, although most are self-funding and in competition with other tourist attractions. Part of their success is the very vagueness of the term. We have garden centres, shopping centres, visitor centres and now heritage centres, places where we buy heritage. Heritage has become a commodity to sell, just like any other product.

The meaning of the term ‘heritage’ is not easily defined. It is a term that has come to reflect the needs of our present-day society. Tradition, the past, identity, history, culture, nostalgia, patrimony, all are used to describe heritage. For some it is the continuation of our past into the future; for others, heritage is Disneyfication, a product of our time.

Heritage centres are distinguished from museums in that they are theme-based rather than collection-based. Although objects from the past enhance and support the heritage theme, they are intended to provide authenticity to the story that unfolds. Heritage centres are not places of hushed silence, awe, academia, hands off, unfamiliar territory, but instead provide a comforting narrative of local culture, of a remembered or shared past, articulated in an innovative and accessible way. In many cases, items on display, or perhaps a live interpreter, become the vehicle that enables ordinary people to recognize, to share memories about a past with which they are familiar. The ordinary past is thus placed on display, but not out of reach.



What is clear is that heritage centres are a catalyst for opportunity that takes many forms. There are no controls over format, theme or design. They can be successfully placed in old buildings or new, though most have given a new lease of life to old buildings no longer needed for their original use. There are heritage centres in churches, in former industrial buildings and in buildings of architectural interest but of no great importance, such as the Coach House Heritage Centre at Littleborough, Lancashire, where attention to detail meant removing the new road surface outside and replacing it with the cobbles of former times.

The Littleborough Coach House Heritage Centre demonstrates scrupulous attention to detail, re-laying an ‘authentic’ cobbled surface on the outside roadway.

Not all heritage centres use old buildings, some are purpose built such as the National Fishing Heritage Centre in Grimsby, where the present-day fishing industry is much in decline. Themed on the period of the 1950s when the Grimsby trawler fleet was at its most successful, the heritage centre has enabled the town to develop and extend a tourist market alongside fierce competition from other seaside towns in the region.

Live interpreters at the National Fishing Heritage Centre are ex-trawler hands who recount their real experiences to the public. They happily demonstrate how to knot fishing lines and invite the visitor to have a go. There are powerful displays with top-of-the-range lifelike models, real boats to explore moored on the tributary alongside the centre, and a major supermarket sharing the same car park. A case of shopping for food and heritage at the

same time! Indeed, the development of heritage sites alongside retail shopping outlets has become a feature of recent years. From the Albert Dock in Liverpool to St Katharine's Dock in London, the restoration and regeneration of such sites has become powerfully symbolic in preserving heritage, yet creating new environments and new visions for present and future consumption.

Some heritage centres are deliberately developed to exploit the potential of tourism. The Scotch Whisky Heritage Centre in Edinburgh, Scotland, is a commercial enterprise that especially attracts foreign visitors, as do The Oxford Story, The Tales of Robin Hood in Nottingham, and the Tower Pageant in London. Each of these includes theme-park technology such as 'time-cars' which ferry people around themed displays taking them 'back in time'. Although more appropriate to a fun-

Photo by courtesy of the author



The National Fishing Heritage Centre in Grimsby is a purpose-built structure in post-modern architectural style. Old trawler boats are moored alongside the building.

fair, the experience is welcomed and enjoyed by visitors. This method of controlling the number of visitors viewing displays was first used very successfully at the Jorvik Viking Centre in York. Its time-car, innovative displays and sounds and smells of a Viking village caught the imagination of the public and instigated the spirit of change for interpretation of the past.

Heritage centres are a response to the current demand for new environments to attract tourists. The demands of cultural tourism have had a great impact, not only on the variety of new attractions which attempt to reassess and interpret local culture, history and tradition, but also on the way we theme and package our past into a visual day-trip experience. In consequence we learn not so much about the way we were, as the way we are today. Such centres are a phenomenon of the 1980s and 1990s. As we approach the new millennium, laser imagery, animatronics, interactive multimedia, and virtual reality increasingly provide visual dynamics for new heritage attractions, which no longer use the name 'centre'. New 'experiences' are being created to attract tourists, with complex innovative displays based on heritage themes. The Whitecliff's Experience in Dover, on the south coast of England, springs to mind as a good example.

The development of new heritage attractions is both evolutionary and revolutionary. There are opportunities for ever-increasing complexity in interpretation and differentiation in cultural themes. Museums themselves have had to adapt to different demands from their audiences. As boundaries between museums, heritage centres and heritage 'experiences' are blurred, the danger is to exploit rather than embrace a wide range of cultural and historical pasts.



Photo by courtesy of the author

There is an assumption that interpretation of the past as heritage is a product for abuse. It need not be. ■

An old fish-and-chip-shop cooking range on display at the National Fishing Heritage Centre attracts much attention from visitors who especially appreciate the state-of-the-art wax dummy.

Notes

1. UNESCO, World Decade for Cultural Development 1988-1997 - Culture, Tourism, Development: Crucial Issues for the XXIst Century, Paris, UNESCO, 1997. (CLT/DEC/SEC.)
2. F. Schouten, 'Tourism and Cultural Change', in *ibid.*

'The traveller with his heavy load is in need of a friend . . .'

Terry Stevens

Museums, according to Terry Stevens, are not merely the passive recipients of tourist visits, they have an active role to play in 'brokering' a mutually beneficial exchange between tourists and the host culture. What's more, they can and should serve as the cornerstone of coherent, culturally sensitive tourism policies. The author is development director (United Kingdom) for Tourism Development International, and director of Stevens Associates, who are involved in projects concerning tourism and leisure planning, management and training.

Museums provide communities with the vessels in which to present and interpret their culture to both tourists and residents. The exponential growth in the number of museums established over the past twenty years is testimony to the need for communities to give expression to their culture and to the demand from tourists to access this culture. This growth phenomenon of museum development shows no signs of slowing down. Indeed, every indication is that there will be continued innovation and investment throughout the world, creating new museums dedicated to all aspects of our cultural inheritance. Significantly, whilst the rate of new museum development is set to slow down in Western Europe and

North America, the expectations are that accelerated growth will take place in other regions of the world, notably in Asia and the Far East.

Tourism is also predicted to continue to grow over the next ten years and there will be similar shifts in the global distribution of tourism activity during this period to mirror those already identified in the museum sector. These parallel trends are not the result of coincidence. There is a direct correlation between tourism development and the demand for museums. Communities respond to emerging demands from tourists in search of cultural experiences by creating new, or refurbishing existing, museums. As such, museums are now an accepted part of the tourism infrastructure and product offer of a tourist destination along with other tangible and intangible representations of culture.

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) recognize tourism as being the world's largest industry. In 1995, it was estimated that there were some 567 million international tourist trips taken compared with just 25 million in 1950. In addition, it is estimated that more than ten times this number of tourist trips take place each year by travellers within their own borders. The WTTC 1995 Progress and Priorities report underscores the global value of tourism, indicating that it creates more than 10 per cent of the world's economic output, accounts for one in nine jobs, and represents 11 per cent of the world's tax revenues. It is predicted that tourism will grow at a real rate of 5.5 per cent per annum through to 2005.

Regional growth forecasts by the WTTC reveal that Europe's market share will continue to diminish and other Western countries will experience a slowing down

Photo by courtesy of the author



'A new genre of visitor attractions that present heritage and culture to tourists ... generally based upon a reconstruction of historical events.' A young visitor attends an English Civil War living display at Ashby-de-la-Zouch castle and learns about history at one of the many special events held at English heritage sites during the summer.

Photo by courtesy of the author



of demand. In comparison, South-East Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and Central and Eastern Europe are set to experience unprecedented increases in tourism demand. Those involved in analysing the characteristics of this demand have identified the main motivations for international leisure tourism as being the search for difference and the experience of alternative cultures and life-styles. As a result, special interest and cultural tourism will represent major components of this increase in demand.

It is estimated that 50 per cent of all tourists today have an interest in culture when they visit a foreign country. The British Tourist Authority calculates that 64 per cent of overseas tourists to the United Kingdom each year cite heritage and culture as a determining factor when making a choice to visit. Similar figures have been recorded in surveys undertaken by Bord Failte (the Irish Tourist Board), the Netherlands Board of Tourism and other national tourist organizations in Europe.

Inevitably, when visiting a new country tourists need to have easy access to key sites and collections. The museum provides tourists with an opportunity to experience what is likely to be a representative and showcase presentation of the host

country's culture. Museums are and will continue to be central to this convenience required by tourists.

Culture: a growth industry

With the end of the World Decade for Cultural Development 1988–1997, UNESCO has taken the lead in addressing the issues associated with culture, tourism and development into the twenty-first century. The round-table discussions that took place in Paris in 1996 have recently (November 1997) been jointly published by UNESCO and the Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism (AIEST) and the *Annals of Tourism Research*. This publication identifies twelve major challenges facing the impact of tourism on culture. In particular, there is a specific call for museums to play a direct and positive role in influencing the exchange between tourists and the host culture.

Museums are charged with collecting, conserving and protecting cultural ephemera thus, helping to prevent the erosion of cultural identities. At the same time, curators are obliged to present and interpret these collections in a manner that illuminates and helps visitors to understand and

'Curators are obliged to present and interpret these collections in a manner which illuminates and helps visitors to understand and appreciate the culture or cultures represented in the museum.' Visitors gaze on the historic meeting of the Spaniard, Hernando Cortés, and the Aztec emperor Montezuma, at the Cadbury World, Birmingham (United Kingdom).

appreciate the culture or cultures represented in the museum. Increasingly, this needs to be done in an imaginative and exciting manner, using a wide range of media and technologies in order to communicate the story and assist the 'stranger in a foreign land'.

Recent research in the United Kingdom, in Alberta, Canada, and in several Mediterranean countries has clearly shown the benefits of tourism development strategies founded upon a strong cultural and museums product. The research has shown that whilst demand for other forms of visitor attractions, such as leisure and wild-life parks, are prone to enormous fluctuations on a regular basis, the demand for cultural products is stable and shows continuous year-by-year growth. This stability makes products of cultural tourism a sound investment from a tourism perspective.

UNESCO has stated that tourism is an 'essential partner' in the culture and development equation. As such its energies need to be channelled; its dynamics and characteristics understood in order to avoid the potential conflicts inherent when tourism manifests itself insensitively, creating irritation and antagonism among host communities. On the basis that total rejection of tourism is unlikely to be a real option for developing countries and regions, it is important to plan and manage tourism activity. The role of the museum is vital in this process.

Museums should be marketed as the principal focus and starting-point for a tourist's exploration of a country or region. The promotion of museums as visitor attractions represents an important strategic objective in any tourism development plan. The potential for museums to provide tourists with an introduction to the culture and to act as the starting point for travel

Tourism can contribute to the survival of traditional skills. These workshops in a restored madrasa in Bukhara (Uzbekistan) are the results of the tourist flow generated with the assistance of a UNESCO programme.



© Frans Schouten

itineraries is particularly significant. In addition, tourists should be encouraged to visit a network of museums, and to integrate these experiences with visits to heritage sites and other cultural events. There needs to be a systematic way of planning this approach and museums are the cornerstones upon which such a strategy depends.

Numerous recent and on-going projects aimed at preparing sustainable tourism development plans around the world are recognizing the centrality of the museum in this integrated approach. For example, the UNDP/WTO initiative to develop a sustainable tourism action plan for Uzbekistan associated with the development of the Silk Route as a cultural itinerary will see an important role for the country's key museums. Similarly strategies for the development of tourism in Malta, Poland, central Finland and elsewhere, sponsored by the major aid agencies, all feature the need to upgrade the presentation and marketing of museums as tourist attractions.

The past ten years have witnessed the introduction of a new genre of visitor attractions that present heritage and culture to tourists. These have become known as visitor experiences. They are generally based upon a reconstruction of historical events, rely heavily upon expensive new technologies and rarely use real objects or artefacts. In many instances these attractions have enjoyed short-lived success in attracting large numbers of visitors. There is, however, evidence of growing market unease about the number and content of these types of cultural presentations.

As a result, tourists are increasingly demanding and expecting authentic presentations of culture based upon inherent themes and actual objects. This is the traditional domain of the museum. The appeal of 'heritage experiences' was based



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on two aspects: their innovative use of presentation and interpretation techniques to capture the imagination; and their willingness to be aggressively marketed. There are lessons here for museum curators and administrators. Tourists are clearly expressing a demand for the authenticity and integrity implicit in the work of museums. At the same time, they expect the style and content of the museum to be imaginatively presented and explained for their benefit.

Museums are central to the successful development of cultural tourism. This is especially the case in developing countries and those regions of the world facing exceptional tourism growth over the next five years. Museums are the arenas for effective and lasting partnerships to be established between tourists and host communities. The museum as the traditional guardian of cultural identity can be the honest broker in the tourist/cultural exchange relationship. The museum's role should be to introduce the stranger to the foreign land or, in the words of a popular British song of the early 1970s, 'The traveller with his heavy load is in need of a friend'.¹ The museum should be the 'friend' of the tourist. ■

The International Institute for Central Asian Studies in Samarkand (Uzbekistan) was created in 1995 as part of UNESCO's Silk Roads Project; it is a multidisciplinary centre concerned with research and the safeguarding of the region's cultural heritage.

Note

1. 'Journey's End', by the Strawbs from the Grave New World album, A&M Records, 1972.

Te Papa: an invitation for redefinition

William Tramosch

'For museums, the challenge is one of future positioning rather than simply coping with current realities.' In a nutshell, William Tramosch sets out what he views as the central issue facing museums as they grapple with the growth in tourism, seen here not as a 'momentary phenomenon' but as an irrevocable international trend. The author served as vice-chair of US/ICOM until assuming the position of director of museum resources at Te Papa, the Museum of New Zealand. During his twenty-two years in the field, he has served as a director at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, executive director of the Oregon Historical Society, and president of the New York State Historical Association. In 1986 and 1988, he was awarded Fulbright Fellowships to teach and write in New Zealand.

The secret to education is in respecting the learner. (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

According to the United Nations Statistical Yearbook, nearly 500 million of the world's citizens were 'tourists' in 1994.¹ Under the pressure of such a crushing statistic, the writer is tempted to focus on various reactive issues, such as preventing wear and tear on our ancient monuments or controlling overcrowding in our galleries, to name but two. Yet, for the sake of the long view, this article will emphasize our need to listen more closely to the significant messages that tourism growth is sending to the international museum community. Such messages offer us an invaluable perspective on the importance of, and potential for, museums worldwide, and they should be considered invitations for redefinition.

Tourism growth is not a momentary phenomenon; it is an international trend. Furthermore, tourism is not simply movement for movement's sake, but can best be regarded as international dialogue. What prompts the increase? Faster and more reliable modes of transportation coupled with increased wealth may provide two quick, albeit superficial, responses to this question, but these realities merely enable motivation. Something far more intrinsic initiates the decision to 'tour'; something more affective like curiosity and the desire to see things one has never seen before; something like the need to answer questions about the way things are.

As tourism increases, so too does the tourist's appreciation of the value of cultural difference and varied perspective. Museums, now located at almost every cultural crossroads that the world contains, recommend themselves highly as the catalysts for the promotion of cross-cultural

sensitivity. Like Thomas Merton's monasteries, museums are beacons that can help shed light on greater empathy and understanding.

Thus, it is on this higher and more proactive level that we should address the issue of museums as they respond to the worldwide increase in mass tourism. For museums, the challenge is one of future positioning rather than of simply coping with current realities. Tourism is both a product and a symbol of a rapidly changing world, and the museum can be the traveller's touchstone; a safe place grounded deeply in legacy; a place filled with the 'real'; a centrepoint in which our sensitivities freely grow and from which we gain a perspective on the whole. The museum, for the traveller, is like the view of earth from the astronaut's window. The increasing numbers of museums that really perceive themselves in such a light soon discover that they are regarding themselves less as museums and more as forums; less as stops and more as journeys; and, consequently, less focused on their own gates and more intent on the gateways they provide to a wider world.

Therefore, the first and most challenging opportunity that increased tourism offers us is that of a vigorous institutional redefinition of our educational intents. In the midst of enormous change, we who lead museums must wonder whether we are asking the right questions of these international trends, or simply reacting to them, and whether we are looking in the right (or only the most convenient) places for the answers. Are we sufficiently engaged in imagining what new entities can emerge from considering the significance of such trends, or are we simply consumed in dealing with the current challenges within the bounds of our traditional self-image?

Programmatic redefinition can commence by asking three disarmingly simple questions: Why?, Why not? and What if? Following an explanation of each, this article concludes with an example of a national museum project that has emanated from a pursuit of the answers to these questions.

Why?

Why do people visit museums? We have continually enhanced our abilities to understand our visitors, and today it is a rare institution that does not undertake some form of visitor evaluation. We have learned that, among other aspects, our customers value: the surroundings we offer; the sense of place we provide; and the 'real' objects we display and interpret. Today we know more about 'why' people come to our museums than we have ever known before.

But 'Why?' is the easy question. The pressures brought about by huge shifts in world tourism are now veritable invitations for us to step back and ask two, more difficult questions about the museum's ultimate place in such a world: 'What about the masses of tourists who don't come to museums?' and 'What if we were to define and re-invent ourselves as the forums, the journeys, and the traveller's touchstones we can become?'

Why not?

If the museum is so central to an understanding of world cultures, why are so many tourists not coming? A small church at Willow Creek, Illinois, in the American midwest, can provide us with a combined case-study and mirror. In the face of dwindling attendance, the worried founders asked themselves 'why people weren't coming'. They discovered that most peo-

ple found church boring, predictable and unchanging. Furthermore, they learned that non-churchgoers believed churches to be disconnected from their own lives, and

Harbour Park, Te Papa, featuring New Zealand native bush and many non-traditional museum activities.



Photo by courtesy of the author



Te Papa, the Museum of New Zealand, Wellington, opened on 14 February 1998 as a bicultural museum that will serve as a 'forum for the nation'.

they found that church was perceived by many as an intimidating and unwelcoming place.

From these sobering responses, the church's founders redefined, rebuilt and repositioned an institution that would become anything but boring, disconnected, unwelcoming and exclusive. Today, programmes at Willow Creek appeal to all levels of spiritual inquiry and, likewise, church services are replete with contemporary song and relevant role-play from the Scriptures. Furthermore, throughout the week the church provides a wealth of special offerings ranging from family counselling services to engaging group seminars in religion and philosophy. Simply by asking 'Why not?' this church has become an indispensable feature in a landscape once devoid of community. In fact, Willow Creek has become so successful that it has generated its own microclimate of mass tourism, as tens of thousands of spiritual 'seekers' now attend weekly.

The Willow Creek descriptors seem familiar. They represent the perceptions that many non-users still have of museums: boring, unchanging, predictable, intimidating, exclusive and irrelevant. Just mention the word 'museum' in some settings and you can scatter crowds faster than a fire hose. Non-users of museums are world tourists, too, and how much richer their travels would be if museums began to address their needs! So, what can museums do to address the needs of mass tourism while still preserving their institutional core values? To begin, they can 'respect their learners', both real and potential; they can become more than museums.

What if?

What if the museum were to fuse the best of 'why' and 'why not'? What would characterize the programmes of such a place? Museum leaders in the 1997 Getty Leadership Institute (held in Berkeley, California)

recently compiled such a list. Such a museum would be: culturally inclusive, outwardly focused upon issues of cultural relationships, fascinated by questions pertaining to issues of national identity and place, highly integrated in its approaches to scholarship, devoted to customer service (as evidenced by a full appreciation of various levels of interest and styles of learning), strongly associated with other like-minded cultural agencies in service to the tourist, inventive in its methods of blending education and entertainment without sacrificing accuracy, agile in its abilities to reach out beyond institutional walls through the innovative use of programmes and technology, and generous in its offering of peripheral services like 'themed' shopping outlets, restaurants, meeting spaces, and – where appropriate – accommodation.

Many successful museums have already begun to redefine themselves in such a way. San Francisco's MOMA is an excellent example, though illustrations abound from Williamsburg, Virginia, to Wellington, New Zealand. Museums that have defined themselves as highly engaging cultural centres have concocted blends of education and entertainment that at first appear more characteristic of competitive environments such as theme parks and 'edutainment centres'. For example, the Jorvik Viking Museum in York, United Kingdom, propels the visitor through a cultural time tunnel and straight into the midst of a thoroughly researched reconstruction of a Viking village based on actual adjacent digs. For the museum professional, the only thing more interesting than the 'dark ride' itself is the remarkable diversity of the audience it attracts.

Understandably, increasing numbers of museums are also approaching Disney for assistance in developing programmes and



Photo by courtesy of the author

exhibits that will not only attract non-users, but will also delight the 'user', all the while preserving the core values of the institution. Those museums that have developed such collaborations are finding that if they keep a tight hold of the educative reins, the ride can be quite a creative and attractive one for both staff and – ultimately – museum visitors alike.

The interior of the waharoa, or entrance. Tourism in New Zealand exceeded 1.5 million in 1997, and 700,000 visitors are expected at Te Papa in its first year of operation.

The three questions answered:
Te Papa, the Museum of New Zealand

In 1967, approximately 30,000 tourists visited New Zealand. Today, annual tourism exceeds 1.53 million visitors! A bicultural nation, New Zealand in the mid-1980s began to consider the notion of the museum as a 'forum for the nation' in which issues of cultural heritage and national identity could be explored and discussed. In addition to being bicultural, this forum would also be 'customer-focused', 'commercially positive' and would 'speak with the authority that comes from scholarship'.

More than NZ\$280 million (US\$180 million) have been invested in the delivery of this cultural concept to reality, with no small amount of Te Papa's funding going into developing an understanding of those tourists who will visit. Te Papa is actively positioning itself as 'more than a museum', a vibrant cultural centre for national and international guests, and a place 'where something is always

happening'. Consequently, traditional galleries will be complemented by much less traditional elements such as 'high energy attractions' and 'dark rides', restaurants, coffee shops, retail outlets and a park. Such activities are deliberate attempts to attract the non-user, delight the user, and – in the process – 'change people's perceptions of museums'.

Te Papa arose from the questions Why?, Why not? and What if? By placing itself in the middle of a national discussion about identity, it will be an essential touchstone in the understanding of place. Te Papa will be at once a forum, journey and gateway, and but one example of how museums can, by redefinition, proactively place themselves at the crossroads of cultural understanding. ■

Note

1. Cited in Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, *Our Creative Diversity*, p. 184, Paris, UNESCO, 1995.

‘The world of the Cistercians’: an ancient monastery becomes a modern museum

Mihail Moldoveanu

The ever-pressing demands of mass tourism can even result in the creation of a museum where none existed before. The Monastery of Santes Creus in Catalonia, Spain, is just such an example, for through an audacious mix of state-of-the-art multimedia design and fourteenth-century vestiges, it has integrated scenographic, lighting and narrative techniques borrowed from the theatre to allow visitors to enter into the everyday life of the Cistercian order, once one of the most widespread in medieval Europe. Mihail Moldoveanu is a freelance photographer and writer based in Paris.

There are many ancient monuments that have had to adapt to the realities of the contemporary world: the occasional connoisseurs who made their way to them in the past have been replaced today by well-packaged groups of visitors conscientiously disgorged from tourist coaches before the doors of culture.

It has often been thought appropriate to design and install museographic facilities that will help to set a monument within its cultural context and highlight certain significant features. These facilities must also cater for the practical functions common to many museums: group reception, optimizing visitor flow, bookshops, wash-rooms, and so on. An extremely successful

example of this kind of ‘transplant’ is provided by the recent architectural and museographic work undertaken at Santes Creus in Spain.

The Monastery of Santes Creus is a masterpiece of Romanesque art built by members of the Order of Citaux, the Cistercians. In Catalonia, near the Pyrenees, there were several very active Cistercian monasteries, the best preserved of which are those of Santes Creus, Vallbona and Poblet. These three sites are today the main attractions of a tourist trail called the Cistercian Tour.

Before the ‘transplant’, the visit to Santes Creus began with the vast cloister, which ▶

Photo by courtesy of the author



The Monastery of Santes Creus is a masterpiece of Romanesque art built by members of the Order of Citaux – the Cistercians.

In the cellar with its large wooden scaffolding, light and sound make visitors aware of the tools, materials and building methods used by the Cistercians.

was the most impressive part of the whole monastery, and then continued through parts of the building which were less and less interesting. The architectural work carried out in 1995 and 1996 changed the course of the visit. It was the work of a firm of architects based in Barcelona made up of Dani Freixes, Vicente Miranda, Pep Angli, Eulalia González and Vicenç Bou. The new functional scheme provides another means of access so that the visitor is led directly towards the newly created museographic facilities. Subsequently, the visit continues through various parts of the monastery with a build-up of interest culminating in the famous fourteenth-century cloister.

Nevertheless, visitors are still free to wander around by themselves and the explanatory presentation provided by the new arrangements is not compulsory. However, every effort is made to suggest that it provides an almost indispensable key to the proper understanding of the monument. In fact, the explanatory presentation – which involves dividing the visitors into groups of pre-determined size – also acts as a filtering device: a function which is by no means unimportant, as capacity for the new visiting arrangements is 4,800 people a day, or 600 visitors an hour. The rooms used for the explanatory presentation, as well as the areas that can be freely visited, are preceded by a reception area within a



Photo by courtesy of the author

patio specially fitted out for that purpose. The former entrance courtyard is linked to the new reception area in a highly original and effective way by means of a tunnel constructed beneath several buildings of secondary importance. The door to the tunnel, which is simple but clearly visible, is just next to the old monumental entrance, a juxtaposition not without a touch of humour.

The passage through the tunnel is planned so as to begin the process of educating the visitor through the provision of basic information panels along its length. The reception courtyard, where the groups of visitors

assemble, is partially covered, providing shade and coolness in the summer and shelter in wet weather, and it is here that the washrooms are located. There is also an enclosed area, under glass, containing the reception desk, ticket office, shop and thoroughway to the exit.

Controlling the number of visitors plays a key role in these new arrangements, but it is only one of the conditions to be met in attempting to ensure a high degree of attention on the part of the visitor, as individual visiting is easier if the negative effects of overcrowding can be avoided. Furthermore, the explanatory presentation – the most spectacular part

A beam of light slowly picks out the various features of an immense scene showing the daily life of the Cistercians and their many activities.

Photo by courtesy of the author





Photo by courtesy of the author

A tunnel constructed beneath several buildings links the former entrance courtyard to the new reception area in a highly original fashion, providing panels of basic information along its length to prepare the visitor for what lies ahead.

of the new arrangements – can only be seen by a limited number of people at a time.

The explanatory presentation is, in fact, a non-stop multimedia display, which incorporates certain real objects or features of the Monastery of Santes Creus. It is designed for a highly diverse audience consisting of people differing widely in their origins, level of culture, age and degree of familiarity with the subject.

The multimedia display draws on typical features of Cistercian architecture (which are prominent in the rooms used for the presentation), on audiovisual and scenographic techniques and the use of lighting. It provides an introduction to

the world of the Cistercians conceived in audiovisual terms.

An interplay of fiction and reality

The two rooms housing the display, which were not part of the route that could be visited before the new arrangements were introduced, are of great architectural interest. They consist of a cellar with a very beautiful structure of diaphragm arches and a scriptorium (manuscript room) with ribbed vaults, one of the most sophisticated expressions of Cistercian architecture. The cellar is used for the first part of the introductory presentation: following the projection of a short film which sets the Monastery of Santes Creus in its

context in medieval Catalonia, the screens are withdrawn and in the darkness the visitor can make out the outlines of a large, wooden scaffolding. Through the use of light and sound the visitor is gradually made aware of the tools, materials and building methods used by the Cistercians. Another large curtain moves aside and a beam of light slowly picks out the various features of an immense scene showing the daily life of the Cistercians and their many activities involved in working the land. The gradual shifting of the focus of interest – which is admirably handled – is accompanied by a commentary. At the end of this part of the display, the whole room is plunged into darkness and then the light picks out a large door which opens, inviting the audience to go through.

The second part of the presentation – devoted to the cultural heritage of the Cistercians – takes place in the scriptorium. Here, a completely different approach is used: in the subdued lighting the entire space can be seen at a glance and the only visible addition is a reflecting glass paral-lelepiped. The visitor has time to admire the elegance of the architecture, but after a moment the ordinary lighting is dimmed and a 'magical' scene appears inside the cube: the workbench of a master in the art of manuscript is reproduced *ad infinitum* through a mirror effect (obtained by the subtle use of the properties of curving 'one-way' glass). The soft light that falls on the marvellous pages of the manuscript is reminiscent of candlelight. This highly evocative image disappears in turn and the visitor's attention is then directed towards the blind Gothic windows at the entrance to the scriptorium, on to which images of stained-glass windows from various Cistercian monasteries are projected. These rigorously selected images – which match the exist-

ing shapes exactly – create the impression of a multitude of different possibilities specially designed for this place. The remarkable inventiveness in the choice of compositions presented in the projections, and the way they flow on from one another, must also be stressed. The end of the presentation – when the room is once again revealed in its original lighting – stresses the richness and profusion of what has been seen, and induces the visitors to look with greater awareness at their immediate surroundings: at the scriptorium as it is and, subsequently, at all the other riches to be seen in the course of the visit.

An essential factor in the success of this operation was the choice of project designers since Dani Freixes and his colleagues had already demonstrated on several occasions that they were able to transform an empty space into a 'theatrical experience' without losing sight of the functional aspect of the whole. In fact, their great interest in scenographic and lighting techniques is a very rare quality among contemporary architects. In their work at Santes Creus, real objects – of great expressiveness – are combined with a considerable number of imaginary elements so as to create a powerful evocation of the world of the Cistercians that is entirely scholarly in its approach and yet, at the same time, capable of producing an imaginative response from the audience.

The use of scenographic and lighting techniques allows the actual space to be expanded so as to create several scenes within one space. The narrative nature of the presentation is largely dependent on the control and subtle mixing of the lighting and sound effects. Sometimes these effects help to portray scenes illustrating the physical reality of the Middle



Photo by courtesy of the author

In the scriptorium, a mysterious reflecting glass parallelepiped which, once the lighting is reduced, reveals a 'magical scene'.

Ages, while at other times the same techniques are used to link parts of the narrative with certain features of the architecture visible in the rooms in which the presentation takes place. This interplay between fiction and reality helps to hold the audience's attention and to keep it involved in the audiovisual display as it unfolds.

Undoubtedly a major factor in the popularity of this multimedia approach – a combination of exhibition, film, museum and pageant rolled into one – lies in the poetic qualities of the language used, since in the final analysis it is through poetry that the visitor responds to the evocative message and humanist values that are the legacy of the Cistercians. ■

Photo by courtesy of the author



Inside the glass parallelepiped the workbench of a master in the art of manuscript is infinitely reproduced through a mirror effect.

Recounting an ongoing adventure: the Cité de l'Espace in Toulouse

Roger Lesgards

A newcomer to the field of air and space museums has already made its mark in France, on the site of Western Europe's largest complex of space-related activities. Telling the story of space to youngsters and experts alike, it boasts state-of-the-art technology and is backed by strong local teamwork and support. Roger Lesgards is project director for the Cité de l'Espace and former president of the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie at La Villette in Paris. He also served as Secretary-General of France's National Centre for Space Research.

The Cité de l'Espace – 'Space City' – which opened its doors to the public in Toulouse (south-west France) on 27 June 1997 is a 3.5-hectare urban theme park combining gardens, an exhibition building, a planetarium and various services; but what are its main features and, firstly, on what concept is it based?

The word 'space' is to be understood as meaning the space beyond the Earth's atmosphere (thus excluding aeronautics), which humans, projecting out into it their insatiable quest for meaning and power, have tried to explore either by venturing there themselves or by sending radio signals and unmanned craft in order to extend their knowledge of the universe and tap its resources. The word 'city' has been preferred to that of 'museum', the reference being to its original meaning, the Greek city, a town centre, a number of different neighbourhoods where people can stroll, look around, hear the news, meet, talk and eat. Space City is a lively, up-to-date place

whose purpose is not to present exhibits from a historical angle.

Thus the name 'Cité de l'Espace', by bringing together two terms which might be thought contradictory (one reaching out towards infinity and the other suggesting an enclosed human community), reflects its aim perfectly, which is to ensure that as many people as possible, both young and old, come here to learn more about one of the great adventures of our time, one that is helping to transform their daily life, the way they see the world, and their place in the cosmos. In other words, the aim is to provide a clear explanation of space science and technology, of the purpose of observation and communications satellites, launchers, unmanned probes and manned orbiting stations and of how they work. The idea of 'space in relation to humanity' has been deliberately taken as the overall theme, which is developed by highlighting the usefulness of spacecraft and how they work. The approach is intentionally

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General view showing exhibition building and full-scale model of Ariane -5 launcher.



Control room with satellite-launching simulation.

educational, albeit also imaginative and interactive. It is not space history – all too short – but an ongoing adventure that is to be recounted, through a thematic presentation that is as clear and comprehensive as possible. With this in mind, six principal subjects have been chosen: telecommunications; meteorology and climatology; earth observation; space sciences; humans in space; launchers and launches.

The various subjects are dealt with in separate well-defined areas; these are preceded by rooms near the entrance, introducing visitors to concepts useful for an understanding of displays: a cultural introduction relates the history of ideas, myths and knowledge about space through the ages; 'Anatomy of a satellite' shows a satellite's component parts and gives an idea of its structure and operation; 'Orbits and trajectories' explains some basic concepts of physics, such as the laws of gravity, different types of orbit, a vacuum and weightlessness.

This, then, is the concept. In order fully to merit its title, the 'city' has been designed to attract visitors from a variety of backgrounds, with different levels of knowledge and different interests, and of various ages. This expected range of visitors – from 7-year-olds to experts – requires types of presentation permitting several levels of interpretation. To this end, a wide variety

of methods have been used, as seemed most appropriate in each case. In all, 160 exhibits are on show, either in the gardens or in the exhibition building. Some were deliberately chosen for spectacular effect, while others allow closer-range inspection and a more detailed exploration of the technology involved. The main categories are as follows:

- Star attractions: these include, in particular, the full-scale model of Ariane-5 standing in the park as if ready for lift-off; they are important symbols which impact on imagination and structure the visit.
- Real objects in situ: these include boosters, parts of launchers and satellites used in tests, antennae and beacons, most of which have not travelled into space but have been used for project preparation; as well as illustrating the subject, they are effective teaching tools.
- Simulations: one of the most spectacular of these is the reconstruction of the control room for an Ariane launch, enabling visitors to witness the count-down, flight and putting into orbit of a satellite, with step-by-step explanation; other simulations are to be found in the meteorology and Earth observations sections, where images are created and interpreted in the same way.

- Experiments and hands-on experience: these are widely used throughout the exhibition enabling visitors, by means of computers and mechanical devices, to plot their own orbits and trajectories, create images, measure a vacuum and weightlessness, be aware of speeds, orientate antennae, establish communication links, locate bodies in motion, and so on.
- Real-time observations and measurements: these are used in the presentation of astronomy and meteorology in particular, creating situations close to those encountered in laboratories.
- Scale models and dioramas: these traditional museum aids are used to relate the history of launching vehicles and to present climatic models and complex telecommunications and Earth-observation systems.
- Shows: these take place mainly in the state-of-the-art (Digistar) planetarium, which makes it possible to put on original productions combining various types of images and effects and consisting of both educational programmes and shows for the general public.
- Illustrated panels: these are short, clear, concise, fully illustrated, and written in an easily understood style; they are used only if there is no other way to explain a subject, or else, more often, they are combined with other methods of presentation.
- Resource points: the purpose of these is to provide more information and a more detailed explanation and understanding of the technology, economics and history of space.
- Guide service: the Cité de l'Espace is made even more lively by the presence at all times of guides and facilitators in each of the exhibition areas, who help visitors to understand what they are seeing, guide them round, answer their questions, and conduct experiments other than the open-access ones.

All ten of these presentation methods are used in virtually all the displays, whether in the park or the exhibition building. They have been integrated into a decor that gives them both coherence and identity. Design features and graphics have been used in such a way as to provide a smooth transition between the various areas, reinforce the message and give the whole complex a distinctive tone, atmosphere and aesthetic character.

Partners and participation

There were many compelling reasons for building Space City in Toulouse, this being Western Europe's biggest centre of space-related scientific, technological and industrial activities. The city of Toulouse had for some decades been feeling the need to do more to publicize one of its most prestigious activities, and this naturally led to a large number of partners becoming involved in the project: local authorities, government departments, public institutions and space-related public and private enterprises. The city of Toulouse was at the centre of the arrangements from the very start. It very quickly took the decision to make available the land needed for the project while at the same time deciding to make the largest investment contribution and approving a future net loss compensation subsidy for the running of the centre. Thanks to its sustained and unreserved commitment, some forty partners were mobilized, contributing a total of some 70 million francs (\$11.2 million), that is, slightly over half the overall cost of



Spacecraft to Earth: one of the interactive displays in the 'Orbits and Trajectories' room.

132 million francs (\$21.12 million). Their aid took the form of money, exhibits and provision of various services. Their names are not shown on any of the exhibits but they appear on publicity material and are listed on a panel in the centre's entrance hall.

All the partners were brought into the process of implementing the project through a partners' group which met every two months. This allowed a large number of very different 'players' to be involved without the project team's initiative and freedom to carry out its work being affected. This concerted action is now continuing within the operating company, a joint venture in which the city of Toulouse holds a 51 per cent stake. The operating company has a leasing contract with the city.

It has been assumed that the number of paying visitors to the Cité de l'Espace over a full year (as from 1998) will be between 200,000 and 250,000. This estimate is based on preliminary studies taking the following factors into consideration: the local and regional population able to pay a half-day or full-day visit – this represents a pool of 2 million potential visitors (excluding school parties), which could generate between

60,000 and 70,000 visitors a year (applying very conservative criteria based on visitor numbers for other less attractive science-and-technology centres); tourists from other regions of France and from abroad – the estimate is similar to the above; school visits – allowing only for primary and secondary schools in the Midi-Pyrénées region would result in between 40,000 and 50,000 school-party visitors. The first months of operation of the Cité de l'Espace have shown that these objectives will be met, and even exceeded, from the start: in the first half-year alone (July to December 1997), attendance was foreseen as being in the order of 130,000 visitors.

Taking into account the admission charges (50 francs for individual adults, 30 francs for adults in groups, and 25 francs for children) and the expected profits from various activities (restaurant, shop, conference and function bookings, partnership agreements, etc.), the centre's actual revenue will probably be between 9 and 12 million francs (approximately \$1.45–1.9 million) for a full year, covering approximately 45 per cent of annual costs. The city of Toulouse will provide the extra finance needed to balance the books.



© M. Boyer

The complementary nature of these various methods of funding faithfully mirrors the three main roles assigned from the outset to the Cité de l'Espace: as a science-and-technology centre with an educational function and a public-service role, justifying part funding by the state; as a cultural and recreational establishment in a very busy city and region visited by many French and foreign tourists, justifying a substantial contribution by local authorities; as a showcase for space activities, especially those

in the Toulouse region, justifying financial participation by firms operating in that sector.

So the Cité de l'Espace is now in orbit. Its continuing success will depend on its maintaining the quality of the displays and their content, and being able to bring itself constantly up-to-date in order to keep pace with developments in science and technology and thus exciting the curiosity of future generations. A second phase is already under consideration. ■

'Living in space', re-creation of a module from the Mir space station.

For an island museology in the Caribbean

Jean-Philippe Maréchal

The museums of the Caribbean face a unique set of problems, due in large measure to their isolation and their extraordinarily rich and varied heritage, both of which pose a particular challenge to co-operative efforts. Yet, positive steps have been taken to link them more closely and to focus on their role in preserving the region's natural environment. The author holds a Master's degree in oceanography from the Université de Paris VI and a DEA (preliminary Ph.D. degree) in museology from the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle de Paris. He is a museologist in a private company, the Chalutier Victor Pleven (Victor Pleven's Trawler), which has been converted into the Musée de la Grande Pêche, in Lorient, France.

Science museums of the Caribbean region have to face constraints and inadequacies which hamper their development and the growth of island museology. In addition to the major natural hazards (cyclones, earthquakes, storms, etc.), the constraints can be summed up under four headings: (a) the geographical isolation which is reflected by political and cultural isolation; (b) the political and economic policies of the Caribbean states; (c) scientific research; and (d) multilingualism. The inadequacies are both human (in respect of scientific knowledge) and administrative (legislation, financing, training) in character. Consequently, the island museums often have to contend *inter alia* with unqualified staff and problems relating to the conservation and management of collections, as well as to status. Notwithstanding such problems, there are institutions that 'survive' in a rich cultural and natural environment. Awareness of their difficulties and the provision of international assistance are of vital importance if they are to continue to exist.

Over the past five years, the Museums Association of the Caribbean (MAC) has been working to co-ordinate the efforts being made to improve the conditions in which these museums operate. The museums all contain testimonies to past and present cultural and natural heritage and constitute the memory of the way in which humanity evolved locally. They store artefacts and naturalized objects for use in providing knowledge and combating the neglect of the cultural, natural and historical past. They are places 'of the appropriation of knowledge' and testimonies to the successive periods of cultural change, industrialization, progress and modernity, reflecting the impact they have on the natural landscape. The efforts of MAC in the Lesser Antilles notwithstanding, the lack of structured and organized institutions for providing knowledge of and con-

serving heritage is contributing to the deterioration of places of exhibition and the neglect of culture and nature experienced by the local inhabitants.

The Caribbean region, stretching from the Bahamas to Guyana, has 131 museums and buildings with exhibits on particular themes which have registered with MAC. Forty-one of them are 'science' museums, or museums with collections dealing with a scientific discipline, twenty-eight have archaeological and ethnological collections covering the pre-Columbian period to the historic period of colonization, nineteen have collections dealing with natural marine and land history concerning geology, fauna and flora, and, lastly, eight have collections of natural history and archaeology or ethnology. The specialized museums exist in the Greater Antilles, whilst the Lesser Antilles have mostly generalist museums primarily concerned with pre-Columbian archaeology and which sometimes merge human history with natural history.

The oldest of these institutions, the Natural History Division of the Institute of Jamaica, is thought to date from 1879, and the most recent ones – the Ecomusée de la Martinique, Grenada Hall Forest and Signal Station in Barbados, Pigeon Island Museum in Saint Lucia – from 1993. A number of projects are under way, including the renovation of the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle in Martinique and the establishment of a national museum in Saint Lucia.

The archaeological museums usually portray the prehistoric culture of the island considered, but often duplicate each other. Locally assembled collections form the basis of their messages. There are also site museums (such as the Centro Ceremonial Indígena of Tibes in Puerto Rico) and genuine archaeological museums (such as

the Musée d'Archéologie de Fort de France). Some islands, such as Puerto Rico, Cuba, Aruba and Martinique, have conducted research work in this area by having more frequent contacts with the scientists of the major European and American universities. Significant work has been carried out over a large part of the Caribbean, thus enabling the holding of, for example, the International Congress for the Study of the Pre-Columbian Cultures in the Lesser Antilles. A study of the exhibits housed in all the museums from Trinidad to Cuba affords a concrete vision of the migrations of these populations.

History museums occupy an important position in the collective memory and concern the evolution of each particular island. Their messages are based on collections of photographs, works of art (engravings, paintings), maps, military objects (weapons), everyday objects, etc., and are

aimed at the affirmation of identity on the basis of the specific character of the exhibition themes (e.g. the maritime past of Bermuda at the Bermuda Maritime Museum; slavery at the Pompey Museum of Slavery and Emancipation at Vendue House, the Bahamas).

With the exception of a few islands of the Greater Antilles (Cuba, Jamaica) in which university scientists are able to provide exhibits and design exhibitions, natural science museums are rare. Some institutions in the Lesser Antilles that exhibit naturalist collections do not term themselves museums (Saint Lucia). There are still very few natural science collections, and rare exhibitions of shells, corals, sponges and other marine animals. These incomplete collections have little or no accompanying documentation, and thus lack any scientific value. The assembled objects are mostly gathered specimens



Photo by courtesy of the author

The Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle in Fort de France, Martinique.



Photo by courtesy of the author

A hut at the Ecomusée de la Martinique shows local fishing techniques.

which are not representative of the different milieux. For example, the shells in the Père Pinchon collection (Martinique) come from the beaches and shallow areas of the coastline. ¹ Unfortunately, his collections are still inaccessible for the moment, though a plan exists to establish a museum called the Musée du Père Pinchon, which will concern his life and work. The entire collection would not be used, however; only a number of birds, butterfly display cases etc. will be used in staging the exhibition. The other objects will remain in their cases, perhaps for use by scientists. His library and works contain abundant data on West Indian fauna and flora. In the case of Martinique, natural history collections are limited to a herbarium, a photographic library of plant species, geological collections, and a superb scientific collection of molluscs unique in the Caribbean.

Few of the museums in the Lesser Antilles are devoted to specific disciplines. They all house exhibits that mix history, prehistory, art and, at times, natural science, but without a common theme running through them. The collections are placed side by side to form heterogeneous groupings, each of which represents a specific characteristic of the island under consideration.

The key word: variety

A very wide range of situations exists with regard to museums, staff and numbers of visitors. Some institutions such as the Natural History Division of the Institute of Jamaica enjoy the services of specialists in specific research fields (e.g. botany, entomology and archaeology). Their staff comprises scores of employees (including the director, curators, researchers and other workers). Other museums are run by a single individual, with no particular training in museum work, who is completely responsible for the museum's management (e.g. the Museum of St Martin). As a result, great differences exist with respect to activities, promotional work and visiting hours. The Bermuda Maritime Museum employs ten full-time staff and in summer this number can rise to between forty and fifty with the addition of volunteer workers. Such human resources make it possible to carry out activities and educational objectives. The annual number of visitors to a given museum can thus vary from 50,000 (the Bermuda Maritime Museum) to 6,000 (the Museo Arqueológico of Aruba).

The region's museums primarily cater to two types of visitors, namely holiday-makers and local inhabitants. Exhibition contents have to appeal to both types, and this raises the question of whether it is possible

simultaneously to cater to tourist tastes and local expectations. How is an exhibition's overall message to be defined if the expectations of an occasional public of tourists who visit the museum once only can be shown to be different from those of the island's local inhabitants?

The French Caribbean departments are situated in a multicultural and multilingual region, a linguistic aspect which is of crucial importance for these museums, which are predominantly aimed at tourism. The four languages used are French, Creole, English and Spanish.

However, all four languages cannot be used in the natural science museums, in which texts are indispensable, to avoid overburdening the information panels. Most establishments use bilingual panels (English/Spanish or English/French). The solution probably lies in the system of booklets made available to visitors at the entrance or placed near the different themes in the galleries. In Martinique, Creole is a means of putting the scientific message more



© Pompey Museum

within the reach of the local public. With the integration into Creole of *inter alia* the names of species, the names of different ecosystems and names used in fishing, West Indian visitors can understand certain familiar concepts thanks to the use of a known vernacular language. It also constitutes an exotic approach to the

The Pompey Museum of Slavery and Emancipation, Nassau, Bahamas.



© Pompey Museum

A model of an early Bahamian kitchen with a display of straw baskets, in the Pompey Museum.

natural sciences for tourists from other regions. Language, and its use in naming species and the environment, forms part of the cultural heritage that is linked to nature. It is by using and juggling with local wealth that the museums can discover the original road which will lead them to the best possible integration into the Caribbean cultural landscape.

The Museums Association of the Caribbean, founded in November 1989, is an international association that was established to try to solve the problems of the isolation of the Caribbean museums. Its Executive Secretariat is based in Barbados. The aim of the association is to co-ordinate programmes involving all its members so that the museums can evolve in a way that is suited to the requirements, resources, and economic and cultural development of the Caribbean region. The following projects, which are co-financed by UNESCO, CARICOM, UNDP, the OAS and the Regional Council of Martinique, have been put into effect: (a) the publication of a MAC Newsletter; (b) the CARICOM project to assist museums 'at risk'; (c) the training of museum staff; (d) the publication of a directory and a guide to the museums of the Caribbean; and (e) the establishment of a contingency plan for natural disasters.

Marked differences exist between museums. A museum managed by a municipality of the Greater Antilles does not have the same problems as a small private museum in an independent island of the Lesser Antilles. None the less, the tasks of both are identical, aimed as they are at the conservation of a given heritage. The first example has the administrative, financial, political and other structures that can take the required measures to preserve the heritage. By contrast, the second often falls victim to heritage loss through deterioration, sales and theft.

The need for norms and standards

Some museums in the Lesser Antilles have serious financial problems, which lead to the involuntary abandonment of collections. Most of these associations and private bodies manage on donations, sales and bank loans. State subsidies are a French characteristic and do not exist in the English-speaking islands. These museums are at risk, having to face pillage in addition to their financial problems. The lack of legislation in the Caribbean to safeguard heritage favours unwarranted and destructive sampling, for example, in the Maya sites of Belize.

MAC is trying to take action against such abusive practices. However, it has to proceed carefully. The political situation in certain countries means that they have no texts or laws to protect their cultural and natural property.

There is no existing supranational legal framework which deals with the collective heritage concerns of the countries of the Caribbean region. In respect of national laws, the legal protection of the cultural heritage is based on different principles stemming from the legal traditions of states (handed down from the institutions of the colonial states).²

None the less, a number of conventions do exist, and the constitutions of some states contain provisions relating to the protection of the cultural heritage and the environment.³

In addition to cultural considerations which can be used to legitimize political choices, the constitutional provisions relating to the cultural heritage demonstrate the desire of the young states to base their legitimacy on a sense of national identity

which is strengthened by a shared sense of cultural identity, and to employ the latter to further the aims and development of society.⁴

In this context of common development, collective programmes will strengthen the shared cultural and natural Caribbean identity.

It is understandable that certain islands should have other priorities than the preservation of a cultural heritage that has long suffered from deterioration. The museums financed by private investments are the ones most affected by this lack of organization, legislation and even interest.

The conservation of heritage, of whatever kind, is not enough. It has to be exhibited in a suitable place. For want of funds, collections are often either displayed in pre-existing structures (for example, the nineteenth-century Royal Navy arsenal in Bermuda, an old distillery for Martinique's ecomuseum, disused barracks, and historical buildings of all types), or kept in storage until a suitable place can be found (for example the Père Pinchon collection in Martinique, locked away in cases). Such places are not always adapted to housing exhibitions, and often the minimum requirements for conservation are not respected. The lack of communication that underlies ignorance of the real problems involved should be one of the first issues to be resolved. The production of the directory of Caribbean museums by MAC constitutes a first step, but museums that 'survive' without the required resources for development experience great difficulty in participating in exchanges.

The individual characteristics of each museum mean that each case should be treated separately, despite the fact that collective solutions could be success-

© Bermuda Maritime Museum



The Bermuda Maritime Museum in Mangrove Bay.

fully applied to many common problems. Moreover, the lack of training of local directors makes them unaware of the issues at stake with respect to island museums. Of all the science museums contacted by letter and fax in the context of this study, 20 per cent replied by letter. This amounted to ten replies, of which only three gave information relevant to the questions asked.

A museum is not exceptionally profitable in financial terms. It is not perceived as an important tool for economic development. These two considerations are perhaps responsible for preventing the taking of political decisions which would be more concerned with socio-economic problems. Furthermore, little consideration is given to the museums' educational mission.

Other constraints, such as travel difficulties, handicap the work of museum curators in the Caribbean. Postal problems contribute to the poor circulation of information, and multilingualism is also a source of problems.

Notwithstanding the efforts made by MAC since it was created, the situation of the Caribbean museums shows little improvement. Although a number of projects have been successfully completed, they do not imply concrete benefits for the museums that are genuinely in need. Given the degree of participation by the 'science museums' contacted in the context of this study, one wonders whether the isolation of these establishments does not cause them to withdraw from the outside world. It would seem that MAC is



An exhibit of local history at the Bermuda Maritime Museum.

perceived by many as more of a potential source of financial assistance than a genuine tool for the future development of Caribbean museums.

The associations are the only engines which more or less ensure the defence of the natural heritage. The problems raised represent a set of factors which prevent the development and improvement of natural history museums. The political and economic policies of certain islands are superimposed on the environmental debate, and economic growth takes precedence over cultural and natural preservation. What will the 'ecological' future of these island microstates be if nothing is done to sensitize their populations to the protection of their natural environment, inter alia, through the work done by museums? ■

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Notes

1. Personal communication from Lesley Sully.
2. V. Negri, 'La protection juridique du patrimoine culturel dans la région Caraïbe: 94-101', Les musées des départements français d'Amérique (proceedings of the Congress, 14-18 November 1994), Fort de France, Martinique. ICOM, 1996, 144 pp.
3. Constitutions of Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Venezuela; Protocol on the specially protected zones and wildlife to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, adopted on 18 January 1990 in Kingston; Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, UNESCO, 14 November 1990, ratified by fourteen states of Central America and the Caribbean; Declaration of Santo Domingo creating the special status of the Caribbean Sea, 9 June 1970; Lome IV Convention, a chapter of which is devoted to cultural and social co-operation and which is aimed at supporting the policies adopted and measures taken by the ACP states to promote their cultural identity.
4. Negri, op. cit.

Museums: a door to the future

Raili Huopainen

In the Museum of the Future was the title of an ambitious project to set out the various possible paths that lay ahead for museums in Finland. As Raili Huopainen describes it, the goal was not to imagine a 'museum of tomorrow', but to use the highly developed methods and techniques of futurology in museum planning. She played a significant role in the project and is director of the Provincial Museum of Lapland, which received the Council of Europe Museum Award in 1994. In 1995-97 she worked on museum activities for the National Board of Antiquities and is now developing a project on cultural investments as a part of the structure of economic life in the town of Rovaniemi.

There are more than 900 museums in Finland, all of which are, as ICOM defines it, professionally managed. Internationally, Finland has the densest network of museums relative to population, that is, one museum per 5,000 inhabitants. All told, the collections of these museums contain more than 35.5 million objects, works, samples and images. The collections form the foundation of museum work and have consequently come to dominate the museums' activities. In the curation of their collections, the museums display a high level of professional competence. However, the inadequacy and poor condition of collection-storage facilities and the dearth of funds for conservation and personnel are a constant source of ambiguity.

This ambiguity has been increased by the fact that the museums' public activities have lately been stepped up. The lack of concomitant increases in funding has led to the down-sizing of curatorial and research activities or attempts to carry out both old and new duties with existing resources. There are notable differences in the funding of individual museums. Some museums are doing well, while others barely manage to scrape by. The number of Finnish museums has grown so large that it has become impossible for all to operate successfully in the face of growing pressure from internal and external demands. Inequality between museums is on the rise, but they all still try to fulfil all their assigned tasks. They find it difficult to prioritize their duties even when resources are insufficient for addressing all sectors of museum work with equal thoroughness. Museums generally have a poorly developed capacity for self-evaluation, and are consequently unable to identify their own strong points.

At the same time, our society is changing rapidly, driven by political, economic, tech-

nological and social forces. These same forces also affect museums. In the turbulent wake of societal metamorphosis, the position of museums is no longer self-evident. Museums must understand the importance of the forces of change and be prepared to meet new challenges. The responsibility for developing our museums to meet the demands of the future lies with the museums themselves.

Identifying the options that museums will eventually be faced with has been the central theme of *In the Museum of the Future*, a joint project of the National Board of Antiquities and the Finland Futures Research Centre of the Turku School of Economics and Business Administration. The goal of the project has not been to design a 'museum of tomorrow' but rather to find possible paths to the future. *In the Museum of the Future* is an attempt to bring the viewpoint of futurology into museum planning and decision-making, and to introduce methods that facilitate the future-oriented development of museums.

For its futurological approach, the project team employed Peter Checkland's 'Soft Systems Methodology' as refined by Mika Mannermaa. The goal was to use structural models of the present and the future, and to compare the two as a basis for constructing possible desirable and undesirable courses of future museum development.

The first step was to create a picture of the current state of the museum field. The systemic description of the present situation was effected through a root definition, which for the purpose of this project was: 'The museum institution maintains and augments popular knowledge of culture, history, and the environment, and carries out and supports research, education, and the dissemination of information connected therewith. Museums acquire, store, and ▶

display objects and other material from their own collections and from collections on loan, and perform the functions of museum institutions according to their own choice and resources. In the areas of mutual co-operation and sharpening their own profiles, museums possess untapped reserves and possibilities.'

The next step was to create scenarios, that is to say, chronological sequences of images of the future that are fairly extensive descriptions of the options that lie ahead for museums under various social, cultural, economic, and political conditions. Such scenarios are possible, but not necessarily probable, futures. They are not even expected to come about exactly as projected; instead, they serve as aids in the methodical development of a future model. Scenarios contain visions of possible future states and their properties, and clear, logical paths of decision-making and action leading to these states. Different scenarios may also materialize simultaneously in different fields, but all contain both positive and negative features. In the evaluation of museum scenarios for the future, the emphasis has been on identifying the possible, the probable, the desirable and the undesirable. The museums themselves can participate in creating the future by selecting the options that they consider appropriate and practicable.

The study looks at museums as parts of society and the environment as a whole, drawing upon existing situations in Finland. Four museum scenarios emerged. The first was one of unchanged growth; it describes museums operating in a Finland where everyday life carries on into the future following the present course, without appreciable qualitative differences. The second, or 'catastrophe' scenario, describes the situation of museums in Finland after a massive disruption and concurrent col-

lapse of the basis of national affluence. The third is a 'return to the past' scenario where the future materializes as the mythical good old days. The fourth is a change scenario that describes museums in a Finland that has actively sought to answer the challenge of the information society.

Looking inwards and outwards

Two complementary root visions describing what the museum activities of the future might look like serve as bases and instruments for scenario work and future modelling, and are as follows:

Root vision 1. The museum is a system that maintains, develops, and analyses cultural and environmental databases and collections, and presents them in various ways. A responsible member of society, it acts in the interest of maintaining and furthering knowledge, sustaining the nation's memory, and enhancing general knowledge of the environment. Its strengths are authenticity, originality and a sense of the time perspective.

Root vision 2. The museum is a system that facilitates survival in a rapidly changing world through the use of its organized, historically comprehensive databases and collections. Through its activities, the museum helps people cope with a multicultural world by learning to tolerate differences and to respect life. The museum's importance lies in what it contributes to life management, serving as an instrument for structuring reality and constructing a cultural and spiritual identity.

The first root vision looks at museums through their activities and represents an inside view. The second root vision emphasizes the museum's position as a part of society, as an outward-focused,

individual-oriented system. The preferred goal, the desired and practicable future state, is selected on the basis of the scenarios and the future model and may be described thus: 'The museum of the future is open and easily accessible to the public and is no longer a bastion of the past.' The primary focus of activities has shifted from the collections and researchers to the patrons. The collections are at the patrons' disposal, and access is facilitated by new technology. The data pertaining to the collections lie ready for use in organized files. Thanks to global data networks, geographical obstacles have disappeared. Virtual museums augment, and form part of, real museums.

The acquisition, storage, and exhibition of collections are no longer unprofiled, self-serving duties. Museums have identified their own strengths and have specialized, each museum cultivating its own distinct capabilities in order to improve the way it serves its patrons. This specialization also forms the basis of inter-museum co-operation networks, created by museums that have identified their core speciality to enhance their activities, vary their services, and improve quality. Self-evaluation is not haphazard but continuous, and studies of efficiency are based on future-oriented methods of evaluation. Individual duties have given way to teamwork to improve results. Educational activities in museums evolve and increase, but museums also offer the public many kinds of recreational experiences. Museums are marketed actively, all the more so as public funding can no longer be relied on to finance operational costs, and museums must seek to cover their own expenditure through versatile and efficient sales activities. Business and museum work have discovered each other. The authoritarian directorial methods of the past have given way to a new culture of leadership. Museums are

piloted into the future by a new type of leader, who is inspiring and capable of working in a network-type organization. Hierarchical command structures have been dismantled.

Museums have their old clientèle, the domestic public and foreign tourists. The museum of the future works with new ethnic groups and customers. The community in which it operates is no longer homogeneous; instead, the museum deals with several different social groups and does not wish to exist only for a small élite. Consequently, it also considers the needs of the unemployed, the poor and the marginalized in its activities and in the pricing of its services. The museum functions interactively, with its forms of activity constantly evolving. It is a place to search for values of life and spiritual security, continuity through time, and materials for constructing our identity.

The museum does not wish to remain a passive spectator on the sideline of its community; it reacts and participates in the public debate. It dares to be a thorn in the flesh of the powers that be. It gains self-confidence for this role through its understanding of chronological continuity, of the larger whole. It also finds its own spiritual reserves through analysing the history of the survival of the human race and the natural world in the past, present and future. It wants to share this with others in a crisis-ridden world, where lack of vision and confusion are on the rise. It reveals our own story in true proportion to the story of humanity and of the Earth. The techniques of survival stored in its files are available for use in times of crisis. Responsibility, respect for life, and tolerance are its central values.

The management of museums will develop towards consensus, discussion and

participation, and away from supervision and norms. Museums themselves will be responsible for the content of their activities and their goal will be to make it easier for people to control their own lives, to structure reality, to enhance their mental security, and to construct their identity as Finns.

Next steps

Once the changes in structure, procedure and attitude have been identified through the comparison of the future model with present reality, the next step will be the compilation of a development strategy that provides the guidelines for the realization of the desired future model. That is why the Finnish museum directors gathered together to discuss the future and accepted the future model. None the less, museums will not be able to reach the desired future state in a single leap, but must advance towards it in stages. The museum directors agreed that the first step is self-diagnosis to chart their own special strengths and answer the question 'What is my museum's meaning and role as a part of a whole?' The Finnish Museums Association will have its own role with regard to education and information and

will maintain a museum network and action exchange on the Internet. The National Board of Antiquities will make sure that the process continues. There will be a future seminar every year. The first steps are small, but even this requires that museum decision-makers and personnel commit themselves to carrying through the changes. The museums themselves need to be proactive, for in the end real changes can only be achieved through the efforts of the museums themselves.

This future study has been made in Finland, traditionally an exceptionally homogeneous country in the ethnic, religious, linguistic, cultural and political sense. But this situation is changing now. People live in the same world while at the same time existing in different realities. To respond to these differences we need a special cultural competence and museums the world over must evaluate their own strategic missions in a time of global change. It is obvious that we need new kinds of networks and co-operation, as well as future-oriented research. It is perhaps time to set up an international future committee to meet the new challenges lying ahead for museums and I for one would be pleased to hear from readers of *Museum International* on this question. ■

The Pavia Document: towards a European profile of the conservator-restorer

Gaël de Guichen

Forty-five experts in the field of conservation and restoration from sixteen European countries met in Pavia (Italy) from 18 to 22 October 1997 at a European summit entitled 'Preservation of Cultural Heritage: Towards a European Profile of the Conservator-Restorer'. The purpose was to identify common guidelines to propose to the various institutions of the European Union so as to encourage the adoption of concrete measures which would clearly define the role of the conservator-restorer. Their deliberations resulted in the unanimous adoption of the Pavia Document. Gaël de Guichen, Assistant Director-General of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) in Rome, was there and explains why this was a watershed in the affirmation and recognition of the profession of conservator-restorer.

Compared with previous statements on the same subject, the Pavia Document is truly different and goes much further. It is different because it is the result of a group effort in which all types of specialists were represented, from the conservator to the scientist, from the theoretician to the practitioner, from the director of heritage to the director of the school of conservation-restoration. What is more, the group – deliberately limited to forty-five participants – reflected a balanced spectrum of the various currents of thought in the fifteen countries of the European Union.

As will be seen, the text goes further than its predecessors in several ways. However, I would like to single out three points which were the result of long and passionate discussions and which obtained an overall consensus: any intervention on the physical heritage, either direct or indirect, is called 'conservation-restoration'; this is a discipline that should be taught at university level and lead to a doctorate; the person responsible for the conservation-restoration intervention is called a 'conservator-restorer'.

These three steps are essential to ensure the recognition of a profession that guarantees that interventions of conservation-restoration not only preserve the historic integrity of the heritage but its maintenance and promotion to the public as well.

The Pavia Document

Considering that the cultural heritage, both movable and immovable, is a cornerstone of European cultural identity, an identity which respects both national and regional diversities,

Considering the special nature of this heritage, its finite nature, the moral obligation to guarantee access to it for present and future generations and to raise awareness of its origins, history, vulnerability and preservation amongst professionals, the public and decision-makers,

Considering that it is necessary to ensure the highest level of conservation-restoration for cultural heritage, i.e. that which is capable of guaranteeing its integrity and prolonging its existence,

Considering that this high level of conservation-restoration depends on the professional status of the conservator-restorer being given urgent recognition at a European level,

Considering that the conservator-restorer must be part of the decision-making process from the outset of a conservation-restoration project and that he/she must assume, in collaboration with the other partners involved, the responsibilities which relate to his/her own competence (in particular, diagnosis, prescription, implementation and documentation of treatment).

The experts concerned with the conservation-restoration of cultural heritage, meeting in Pavia from 18 to 22 October 1997, recommend that, on the basis of the document prepared by the professional bodies ('ECCO Professional Guidelines', 11 June 1993, Annex 1¹) the European Union, in collaboration with all the specialists in the field, should encourage the following actions:

1. The recognition and promotion of conservation-restoration as a discipline covering all categories of cultural property and taught at university level or recognized equivalent, with the possibility of a doctorate.

2. The development of interdisciplinary exchange between conservator-restorers and exponents of the humanities and the natural sciences both in teaching and in research.
 3. The development of the profile of the conservator-restorer based on the ECCO professional guidelines (1993/94), of his/her role in decision-making from the outset of a project and of his/her responsibility for communicating with other professionals, the public and decision-makers.
 4. The development of a definition at European level of the full range of professional competences of the conservator-restorer.
 5. The avoidance of the proliferation of training programmes which do not meet the standards of the profession.
 6. The assurance of an appropriate balance of integrated theoretical and practical teaching, as well as the teaching of strategies for communication in the education and training of the conservator-restorer.
 7. The setting up, as a matter of urgency, of a programme of co-operation and exchange within a European network of training and research institutions.
 8. The setting up of a comparative study by the profession of the different educational systems (objectives, contents and levels).
 9. The promotion of improved dissemination of information by means of publication of conservation-restoration projects.
 10. The promotion of research in conservation-restoration.
 11. The establishment of a regulatory framework to guarantee the quality of intervention on cultural heritage or its environment in order to avoid the negative impacts of market forces. This regulatory framework will include, in particular, provisions concerning:
 - the competence of enterprises or teams of professionals in charge of conservation-restoration projects;
 - the drafting of specifications for conservation-restoration projects.
 12. The publication of a multilingual glossary prepared on the basis of the conceptual definitions to be found in the professional literature.
 13. The provision of appropriate resources to ensure improved communication between professionals, the public and the decision-makers.
- The experts gathered in Pavia urge the Institutions of the European Union to demonstrate their commitment to the preservation of the cultural heritage by translating these recommendations into tangible, coordinated actions.
- Unanimously adopted.
Pavia, 21 October 1997. ■
- Note
1. ECCO = European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organizations. – Ed.

Forum

Museum International continues its forum for current thinking on important museum questions in a slightly modified format. Readers are invited to reply to the questions at the end of the article so that we may publish their views on the most significant and perhaps controversial topics of the day. Kenneth Hudson, director of the European Museum Forum, which includes the European Museum of the Year Award, and author of fifty-three books on museums, social and industrial history and social linguistics, including the well-known *Museums of Influence*, will continue to act as our agent provocateur. He will set out the issues as he sees them, so as to elicit discussion and comment, which we hope will provide a rich source of new ideas for the international museum community. Do join in the debate!

Should permanent exhibitions be killed off as soon as possible?

It will not have escaped attention that the museums with the best attendance figures are those that regularly have something new to show their visitors. The new exhibits and the special exhibitions seem to be the museum features that appeal the strongest to visitors and, even more important, those that turn single visits into repeat visits. There is abundant evidence to show that the most satisfactory customer numbers are the result of people coming to a museum two or three times a year, rather than once in a lifetime.

There is nothing particularly surprising about this. With so many other attractions competing for leisure time and money, museums are increasingly compelled to do what their rivals do, aim at freshness and novelty. Some of them enjoy this, others do not. Preparing new exhibitions is hard work

and costs money. There are bound to be doubts as to whether so much effort is really worth while. Does the dividend justify the investment? Energetic people will say yes, lazy people are likely to say no. Those who work for museums contain both kinds, though a professional organization has to represent all its members as paragons. Museums are not peculiar in this respect.

But the argument has two sides to it. One concentrates on the question, 'Should there be more temporary exhibitions?', while the focus of the other is 'Can the idea of a permanent exhibition be shown to be misguided?' At the present time there is more likely to be heated discussion of the second than the first. To be asked to abandon the concept of permanent exhibitions is a revolutionary request. For some people, it is hardly to be considered seriously. For several generations, the central point of their faith has been that the museum is the permanent exhibition. It is installed and then left alone for a long time – ideally for ever. Yet a moment's open-minded reflection will surely show that such an attitude makes little sense. Any exhibition has three essential components: the objects that are shown, the opinions of the people who chose and arranged them, and the attitude of the public who looks at them. The objects alone are not the exhibition. They are displayed and interpreted in a human context, which changes year by year as society itself changes. The public of, say, 1990 is not the same as the public of 1980 or 1970. Its social mix is different, its educational background is different, the political and economic factors in its life are different. Its prejudices and its beliefs are different.

Any successful exhibition or commercial campaign has to take note of these factors. It has to be fully conscious of its

audience and in a position to attract people as they are today, not as they used to be. If it does not take pains to research its audience so that the appeal is to real, not imaginary, people, it will fail. This is as true of attempts to represent and interpret Palaeolithic axes or Rembrandt paintings as it is of the advertisements designed to sell clothes or furniture. The language of communication is being modified all the time, because the tastes and mental equipment of the customers are changing. Perhaps the most salutary exercise for museum directors and curators is to acknowledge that they have customers, not visitors, that they are in the selling business, and that every museum is essentially a market, in which products have to be sold. The emphasis has been on conservation for much too long.

For this reason, I would say that every exhibition has a maximum effective life of five years. Beyond that it is beginning to show its age to a disastrous extent and its social effectiveness becomes steadily less each year. We could put this in a different way, by saying that the cost of a museum exhibition should be written off within five years, after which a new beginning is necessary and a further investment has to be made. If this truth is rejected or if a museum feels that it is not in a position to apply it, the result will inevitably be a falling off in public support for the museum, defining public support as the number of non-expert, non-specialist adults who come to the museum voluntarily, as distinct from the number of children who attend as conscripts in organized school groups.

The true situation is concealed by the frequent use of dishonest attendance figures, which bring together the number who attend permanent and temporary exhibitions. If the two totals are printed separately, a very different

picture is likely to emerge, showing that the temporary exhibitions are the bait that catches the fish, the jam on the bread.

What I am therefore advocating is that the use of the expression 'permanent exhibition' should be abandoned, together with the philosophy behind it, and that all exhibitions should be regarded as temporary, though some, of course, can be allowed to remain longer than others. I think the traditional distinction between 'permanent' and 'temporary' is obsolete and gets in the way of progress.

Kenneth Hudson

Questions for readers

1. Do you consider the core of your museum to be composed of its 'permanent' exhibitions?
2. If the answer to (1) is 'Yes', how do you define 'permanent'?
3. How long has the longest-lived of your 'permanent' exhibitions been in place?
4. How many temporary exhibitions have you organized during the past two years?
5. Do you and your colleagues find the organization of temporary exhibitions a great burden?
6. If you had more money, would you change the balance between permanent and temporary exhibitions in your museum?

Please send your replies bearing the reference 'Permanent exhibitions' to The Editor, Museum International, UNESCO, 7 place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP (France).

Technology update

The aim of media such as CD-ROMs, CD-Portfolios and Websites is to make it easier to use the information they convey. Interactivity is central to this idea, which is why those who possess and put out information are paying increasing attention to it. And what is interactivity if not interchange? The reason why there is such enthusiasm for establishing contacts and for networking is that these things create intelligence. The Intranet enables interchange through direct and targeted networking, thus optimizing the work done on the heritage. The various people involved in an exchange of views on a cultural concept, object or event are often scattered around as well as being diverse in nature. The Intranet brings them together in a virtual meeting-place and provides them with the specific tools which they need to carry out their tasks and work together.

The Intranet is basically an internal communications network which is constructed around, and aims to facilitate exchanges between, people working in a given sector or a given enterprise or, in short, having common interests. Technically speaking, it is a communications system which uses the technology and tools of the Internet but its distinctive feature is that access is strictly controlled and restricted to the employees or partners of a given organization or institution.

The Intranet did not stem from the discovery that access to the Web could be restricted but from consideration of how to improve the formulation of the information being disseminated. The best way of doing so is by 'brainstorming', that is, putting several heads together. For cultural institutions, this can often mean presenting different works of art, different documents or different videos from a new angle. Using an Intranet, they can construct virtual workspaces around their databases, and thus enable groups of people to set up a project without being in the same office at the same time.

The Direction des Musées de France has installed an Intranet, as has the Guggenheim Museum in New York. A growing number of enterprises are thus making their 'heritage' available to their employees and partners in order to consolidate the in-house culture and thus improve their image and the messages they send to the outside.

What are the main applications of cultural Intranets?

Institutions use their Intranets to improve exchanges of all types of information, to limit communication costs and to broaden the field covered in their everyday work.

The Intranet stimulates creativity

Nothing is more important for improving the effectiveness of a message and the impact of an exhibition than group work. The most tedious parts of any project are setting out its objectives, defining its target audience and assembling its constituent elements. The ease with which an Intranet can be used means that all those involved in a project can have ready access to databases. With the Intranet architecture, anyone with a microcomputer and a modem can access an Intranet data system. An institution's employees or partners can consult its databases from wherever they may be at very low cost, while any new participant can plug into the Intranet and thus become permanently or temporarily associated with a project or the life of the group via the Internet: project designers, outside experts, service providers, outside bodies, publishers, etc.

Ease of access to data makes decision-makers quicker to react and accelerates the spread of know-how, while the ideas generated by a group can be more easily assessed and where appropriate put into effect, thus speeding up the decision-making process.



The Intranet limits the institution's expenditure

The use of masses of paper as a means of keeping the various participants in a project informed is limited, over-centralized, quickly out of date, too slow and, on the whole, too expensive. With the Intranet, the concept of the actual physical location of a document becomes meaningless as each person involved is using the same data. The Intranet thus allows the production of documents to be standardized.

Computer and communication costs are reduced (hardware, software, data media, formatting, printing and data transfer are all less expensive). Moreover, by setting up an Intranet it is possible to make full use of, and get full value from, human resources, the existing network infrastructures, and cultural institutions' own holdings. Enterprises that are already equipped with computers can install internal Web servers which can easily be used by their teams for data sharing. The marginal cost is practically nil. In fact, the Intranet is a layer that can be superimposed upon the existing data system and fully integrates into it.

The ease with which an Intranet's contents can be installed makes it possible for institutions to improve their reaction times and competitiveness: the applications can be set up in less time, and the process is therefore less expensive than in the case of conventional data-transfer applications.

The Intranet opens internal data production outwards

An Intranet designed to disseminate information in a given museum can easily be linked with distant computers, using the worldwide Internet. One can thus imagine the museums of a given

region being interconnected by means of an Intranet. These networks would enable joint promotional activities such as the establishment of cultural itineraries to be carried out. A project of this type requires human and logistic resources which are well within the Intranet's capacity. The risk of closure that certain institutions run because of their isolation can thus be reduced.

A hierarchy can be established for the data exchanged, that is to say they can be grouped together by levels of access. Generally speaking, all the data contained in an Intranet – illustrating, for example, the activity of the works council, activities carried out in schools, administrative documents, charts, etc. – are accessible from any given site. More and more often, one of the sections of each Intranet, such as the planning of particular events, can be accessed by other bodies, for example all the museums in a given town. Thanks to the Intranet, institutions are now becoming accustomed to carrying out joint activities. Using the telephone network, they access the headquarters server via the Internet; the term 'Extranet' is then used.

What are the stages in setting up an Intranet?

The institution concerned should first determine what the Intranet is to be used for, listing those cases where the assignment or sharing of tasks and duties needs to be optimized. It should also clearly determine its target groups in order to improve, rather than merely change, their ways of working. The image and ethic of the institution should also be re-examined so as to provide a framework for the exchanges taking place on the Intranet. The institution can then decide whether to develop the application internally or with a service

provider. In either case, the participation of the users in the preparation of the project will be crucial to its success.

People are the ultimate actors and the pillars of an organization, and it is thanks to them that objects are recognized and ideas are accepted and circulated. The pooling of mental resources will ensure that messages are formulated in a manner

suited to their target audience and, hopefully, will thus ensure the safeguarding of the cultural heritage.

Report by Marine Olsson, chief of multimedia projects for a Paris company specializing in business communication, and former technician at the National Centre for Study and Research in Advanced Technologies, Dijon, France.

Professional news

Museum management courses

'Managing Museums More Effectively' will be the theme of the 1998 Museum Management Program at the University of Colorado, Boulder (United States), from 28 June to 2 July 1998. Fourteen presentations by seven leading museum figures will highlight the twelfth annual five-day mid-career short course for museum directors and other senior administrators. Among the topics to be covered are strategic and long-range planning, managing expansion, human-resources management, building and using the museum board, financial management, educational innovations, technological applications, museum learning measurement, understanding the competition and promising management ideas.

For further information:
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Director, Museum Management Program
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Tel: (1-303) 473-9150
Fax: (1-303) 443-8486

For the ninth year, the Deutsches Museum is offering a one-week course on the principles and methods of museum management, taught by the museum's senior staff. The 1998 course will be offered in English from

27 September to 2 October and in German from 19 to 24 July and 6 to 11 December. Subjects covered include finance, museum architecture, exhibit design and production, collections management, conservation, project management, writing and editing labels, publications and security.

For further information:
Hauptabteilung, Programme
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e-mail: H.A.Programme@extern.Lrz-muenchen.de

A new Certificate in Museum Studies is being offered by the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver (Canada), for mid-career museum professionals. The first year of the programme in 1997 drew participants from a broad range of institutions from across North America, who responded favourably to the combination of distance learning and a two-week summer residency at the museum. The organizers are now actively seeking the participation of museum professionals from outside North America. The certificate builds on the Museum of Anthropology's long history of offering courses and on-site training in arts administration, exhibit

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interpretation, ethnology and conservation, and its position as Canada's largest teaching museum.

For further information:

Kersti Krug, Program Director
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6393 NW Marine Drive
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2 (Canada)
Tel: (604) 822-9859
Fax: (604) 822-2974
e-mail: krug@unixg.ubc.ca

Meetings and exhibitions

Restoration 98, the international exhibition of techniques for the restoration and conservation of cultural heritage, will now include 'Art Collecting and Protecting', a trade fair that was previously held in Maastricht. It will take place in Amsterdam from 10 to 12 December 1998. The merger of these two professional gatherings means that the scope of the event has been significantly widened for exhibitors and visitors alike, particularly for the museum and gallery world. The integration does not mean that 'Art Collecting and Protecting' will disappear, since it will be a theme of the exhibition and will retain its own distinct identity. The programme of Restoration 98 will include providers of services and methods for restoration and conservation and suppliers of materials. It will also feature specialized service providers such as contractors and laboratories, together with foundations, government bodies and educational institutions.

For further information:

Restoration 98
Europaplein, NL-1078 GZ Amsterdam
(The Netherlands)
Tel: (31-0-20) 549.12.12
Fax: (31-0-20) 644.50.59
e-mail: press@rai.nl
website: <http://www.raai.nl>

The first in a series of three
Rencontres Francophones Nouvelles
Technologies et Institutions Muséales

(Francophone Meetings on New Technologies and Museum Institutions) was held in Dijon, France, on 18/19 March 1998, and will be followed in Montreal in 1999 and Brussels in 2000. The meetings are the result of the close collaboration of three organizations: the Office de Coopération et d'Information Muséographiques (OCIM), Dijon; the Société des Musées Québécois (SMQ), Montreal; and the Ministère de la Communauté Française de Belgique-Wallonie, Brussels. Their aim is to show how the various museum functions may benefit from new information and communication technologies, and to present an array of experiences and approaches adopted by different types of museum-related institutions in French-speaking countries: art, ethnology, history, scientific and technical museums, and heritage sites. The meetings are composed of several elements: thirty-two workshops dealing with exhibits, the spread of knowledge, collections and research, and cultural and educational action; a Cybermuseum, which shows the best available products such as CD-ROMs and Internet sites; and a Technology Space, where enterprises and consultants demonstrate products and services.

For further information:

OCIM
Université de Bourgogne
36, rue Chabot Charny
21000-Dijon (France)

Société des Musées Québécois
Case postale 8888
Montreal, Québec H3C 3P8 (Canada)

Ministère de la Communauté Française
de Belgique-Wallonie
Service général du Patrimoine culturel et
des Arts plastiques
Boulevard Léopold II, 44
B-1080 Bruxelles (Belgium)

website: www.unites.uqam.ca/Rencontres

New museums

The cornerstone has been laid for the new Yitzhak Rabin Memorial Archive and Museum to be built on a prominent site in Tel Aviv. The complex is programmed similarly to the United States presidential libraries and will include a museum focusing on Rabin's life and times, an auditorium, a research institute devoted to the study of the history of the era, a library and archive, and a great hall for multipurpose use. The complex will be located in northern Tel Aviv on an escarpment atop an abandoned wartime emergency power station with a dramatic view of the skyline and seashore. The glazed great hall is provided with a dynamic shading system, including a 23-m triangular roof, pivoting with counterweights, from an enclosed to fully opened position, depending on the season and time of day. Indoor activities will extend to a roof garden overlooking the city. Construction will commence in the summer of 1998 and is expected to be completed by the year 2000. The architect is Moshie Safdie and Associates who also designed Yitzhak Rabin's tomb located on Mount Herzl in the National Cemetery, Jerusalem.

New publications

Preventing the Illicit Traffic in Cultural Property – A Resource Handbook on the Implementation of the 1970 UNESCO Convention, written and compiled by Pernille Askerud and Etienne Clément. Published by UNESCO, Division of Cultural Heritage, 1, rue Miollis, 75732 Paris Cedex 15, France, 1997, 178 pp.

This handbook primarily addresses the national authorities of countries that have ratified the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. It is meant to provide assistance in the development of national institutional capacity to protect cultural heritage from illicit trafficking,

and to facilitate international co-operation in this regard. Intended as a tool for the planning and execution of comprehensive national training programmes to protect and preserve cultural heritage, it presents, first of all, the issue of illicit traffic and the UNESCO Convention and details the steps that must be taken so that it may truly come into force. To simplify understanding of the issues, it contains a series of training materials which focus on key concepts and skills, and on the training of particular groups of people working on a day-to-day basis with the problem, such as police and customs officers. Finally, the handbook contains a collection of the most important reference documents mentioned in the text. Together, the three sections provide a framework for discussion and a basis for training activities.

World Cultural Heritage – A Global Challenge. Documentation on the International Symposium in Hildesheim, Germany, 23 February to 1 March 1997, edited by Annamaria Geiger and Arne Eggebrecht. Published by Stadt Hildesheim, Markt 1, D-31134 Hildesheim, Germany, 1997, 275 pp.

The publication contains all the presentations and resolutions of the Hildesheim symposium, which gathered together some 150 experts from the fields of archaeology, museums, restoration, monument preservation, documentation and management from more than thirty countries. The latest techniques, procedures and methods are presented so as to show what may be done to counteract the dangers facing the cultural and natural heritage. Seven projects provide detailed case-study information on how specific sites under threat are being preserved: Islamic Cairo with its more than 1,000 architectural monuments, the pyramid field of Sipan in northern Peru, the tomb of the first emperor of China, Aboriginal rock paintings from Australia's Kakadu National Park, the sacred works of art in the war-torn city of Dubrovnik, the frescoes by Piero della Francesca at

Arezzo, Italy, and the Jewish cemeteries in Hanover and Berlin.

Protecting Cultural Objects in the Global Information Society: The Making of Object ID by Robin Thornes. Published by the Getty Information Institute, 1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 300, Los Angeles, California 90049-1681 (United States), 1997, 81 pp. (ISBN 0-89236-495-5).

In a four-year process a consortium of concerned international bodies (UNESCO, ICOM, the Council of Europe, the European Union, INTERPOL, the European Organization for Co-operation and Security and the Getty Information Institute) have developed a 'core data standard' for the registration of movable cultural objects with the aim of listing the minimum descriptive information to ensure their identification after theft or loss. Called Object ID, it is based on existing inventory systems and is particularly useful in emergency situations where previously undocumented cultural objects must be rapidly listed (for example, in a situation of threatening conflict, post-disaster or post-conflict where looting may be a problem, or when urgent removal to safety is necessary). Eventually, Object ID may be the basis for achieving compatibility, enabling development of exchange formats among many databases. This publication explains the project in detail, describing how Object ID functions and how it may be integrated into existing museum practices. The one-page Object ID form already exists in English, French,

Spanish, Dutch and German, and UNESCO is preparing texts in Arabic, Chinese and Russian; the Central European University in Budapest will prepare texts in all the Central and Eastern European languages. The publication (in English only) and the Object ID forms in English, French and Spanish are available from UNESCO, Division of Cultural Heritage.

Emergency Response and Salvage Wheel. Published by the Getty Conservation Institute, Los Angeles, California.

A circular chart providing immediate guidance on how to treat collections within the first forty-eight hours of a natural disaster (storm, flood, fire or earthquake), the Emergency Response and Salvage Wheel provides staff of cultural institutions with quick access to essential information. It is the result of the teamwork of the National Task Force on Emergency Response in the United States, a co-operative public-private effort made up of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Getty Conservation Institute and the National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property. The wheel is being distributed to some 45,000 libraries, museums, archives and historical organizations and sites throughout the United States. Free samples of the wheel are available from Public Affairs at the J. Paul Getty Trust, 1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 400, Los Angeles, California 90049-1681 (United States).

museum *international*

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