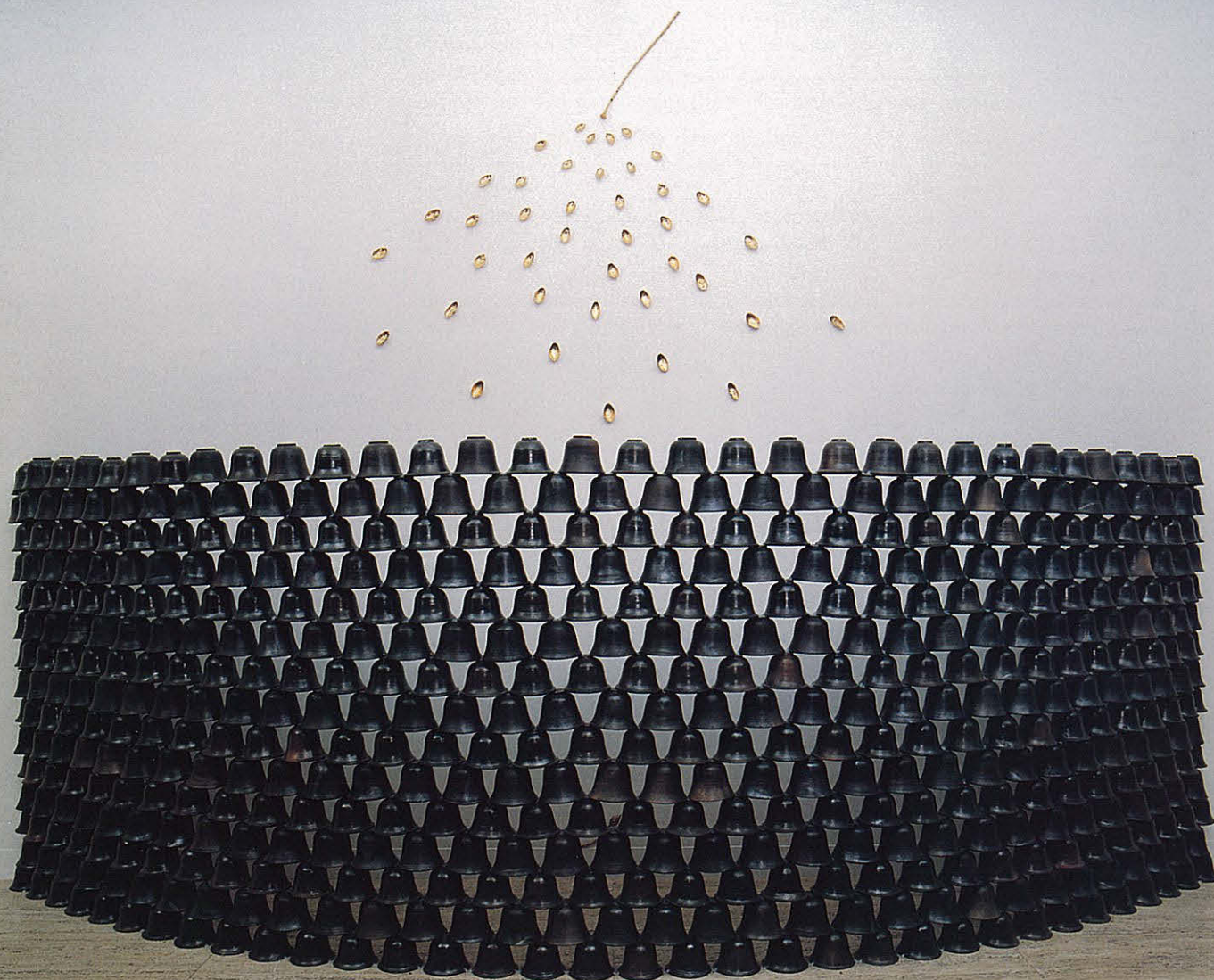


THE MAGAZINE OF MUSEUMS AUSTRALIA INC.

MUSEUM NATIONAL

VOL 7 • NO 2 • NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1998



ICOM 98

MUSEUMS AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY —
ANCIENT CULTURES, NEW WORLDS

It's barely a month since we welcomed some 1,600 delegates to Melbourne for the ICOM conference. The conference seems to have been a resounding success: successful in the contacts made, successful in some stimulating plenary sessions and successful financially, I believe. ICOM 98, an incorporated company, was managed by a board of directors, drawing in part on the joint resources of Museums Australia Inc, and the Australian National Committee of ICOM. I thank all members of Museums Australia especially for their sustained contribution to ICOM 98. A few of our members opted to join ICOM this year, rather than renew membership with Museums Australia. We'll be working hard to bring them back to MA!

Such events place considerable stress on the host city and it was our colleagues in Melbourne who undertook the detailed last minute finishing touches to an event that was won for Australia in 1993. That bid was led by Bernice Murphy, then president of ICOM ANC, and Dr Don McMichael. Both continued to contribute to the organisation of ICOM 98 and their sustained commitment is acknowledged. I'm sure I speak for all members in thanking those who worked so hard to ensure that Melbourne's ICOM ran smoothly and was professionally stimulating. Our thanks are due especially to the Chairman of ICOM, the Hon. John Button, and Executive Officer Noelene Galloway, and also to the state and national branches of Museums Australia, particularly the Directors of those offices, Jessica Frean and Simeon Kronenberg, and many, many individual members of Museums Australia.

Australia's bid to host the ICOM conference was based on a proposal to exploit the then-planned cultural infrastructure in Melbourne. While the buildings now under construction are not entirely those mooted five years ago, the outstanding developments in institutional infrastructure were apparent to all delegates.

For many participants, myself included, this was their first attendance at an ICOM meeting, and the first occasion to witness ICOM procedures, voting structures and international committee meetings. From the perspective of Museums Australia and the format of our much smaller conferences, aspects of the ICOM format appeal, especially the autonomy given to committee meetings to address particular issues — we could benefit by adopting a similar format allowing special interest groups to develop focused sessions at MA conferences (some already do, of course!)

Attending one ICOM conference will undoubtedly lead a number of Australians to look favourably towards Barcelona and the next ICOM conference. A number of Australians will continue to have immediate high-level involvement in ICOM. Our congratulations to Bernice Murphy, elected vice-president of ICOM, Dr Amar Galla, elected president of the Asia-Pacific regional chapter and Andrew Reeves, who will attend some meetings in Paris as president of ICOM ANC.

In concluding, I draw attention to the moments when Indigenous concerns were spoken about, often to the surprise and ignorance of our international colleagues. Speakers were right in choosing the moment to put forward the issues that Australians are — or should be — debating. From comments received, it appears that the protocols Museums Australia has been developing to acknowledge the Indigenous land and peoples of each region where we meet had a profound impact on delegates' understanding of issues of reconciliation. I particularly want to thank Joy Murphy and Annette Xiberras of Melbourne's Wurundjeri nation, and Cec Grant of the Wiradjuri nation of Albury-Wodonga, for their important messages during the ceremony of passing the message stick for the Museums Australia's conference in Albury-Wodonga, and Trevor Pearce for his assistance in coordinating the process.

Dr Sue-Anne Wallace

President

Museums Australia's Executive Committee:

President — Dr Sue-Anne Wallace, Director, Education and Curatorial Programs, Museum of Contemporary Art, PO Box 223, Pyrmont NSW 2009. Tel (02) 9252 4033, Fax (02) 9252 4361. wallace@warrawee.starway.net.au

Vice-President — Dr Christopher Anderson, Director, South Australian Museum, North Terrace, Adelaide, SA 5000. Tel (08) 8207 7396, Fax (08) 8207 7444. canderso@enternet.com.au

Secretary — Genevieve Fahey, Manager, Public Programs, Scienceworks, 2 Booker Street, Spotswood Vic 3015. Tel (03) 9329 4814, Fax (03) 9391 0100. gfahey@mov.vic.gov.au

Treasurer — Peter O'Neill, Director, Wollongong City Gallery, PO Box 696, Wollongong NSW 2500. Tel (02) 4228 7500, Fax (02) 4226 5530. wcg@leath.net

MUSEUM NATIONAL is the quarterly publication of Museums Australia Inc. This project has been assisted by the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council, its art funding and advisory body, and the Department of Communications and the Arts. Print Post Publication No.: 332582/00001 ISSN 1038-1694

CONTRIBUTIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Museum National welcomes unsolicited letters, articles and photographs for consideration. Articles should be submitted on disk, Mac Microsoft Word and include brief biographical information about the author. Photographs should be clearly captioned and credited. Museum National reserves the right to edit, abridge, alter or reject any material.

The support of all advertisers is welcomed. Publication of an advertisement does not imply endorsement by Museums Australia Inc, its affiliates or employees.

CORRESPONDENCE TO:

The Editor, Museums Australia
Fitzroy Town Hall, 201 Napier Street,
Fitzroy 3065

Postal: PO Box 2926, Fitzroy BC Vic 3065

Telephone: (03) 9419 2422

Facsimile: (03) 9419 0100

email: museums@vicnet.net.au

COPY DEADLINES 1999:

15 December February issue

22 March May issue

21 June August issue

13 September November issue

ADVERTISING DEADLINES 1999:

February booking: 15 December

copy: 11 January

May booking: 15 March

copy: 5 April

August booking: 14 June

copy: 5 July

November booking: 13 September

copy: 4 October

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Margaret Birtley (Chair), Deakin University;
Rachel Kent, The Ian Potter Museum of Art,
The University of Melbourne; Andrea Horvath,
Museum Victoria; Kenneth Park, Wesley College;
Robyn Sloggett, Conservation, The Ian Potter
Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne;
Ian Watts, Museum Consultant; Linda
Richardson, Museums Australia; Linda Young
(Reviews Editor), University of Canberra.

EDITOR

Linda Richardson

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscription to Museum National is a membership service of Museums Australia Inc. Single issues are also available.

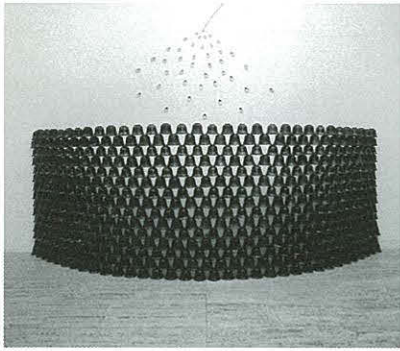
Designer: Norma van Rees Graphic Design

Printer: A. E. Keating Printing

Published edition copyright Museums Australia Inc. No part of this magazine may be reproduced in any form without written permission from the article's author. Authors can be contacted through Museums Australia Inc. Signed articles represent the views of the author. Museums Australia Inc. disclaims responsibility for statements of fact or opinions expressed in signed contributions.

MUSEUM NATIONAL

VOL 7 • NO 2 • NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1998



Cover image

Montien Boonma (Thailand)
Lotus Sound, 1992, terracotta, gilded wood.
The Kenneth and Yasuko Myer Collection of Contemporary Asian Art. Purchased 1993 with funds from The Myer Foundation, Michael Myer and Ann Gamble Myer through the Queensland Art Gallery Foundation. Queensland Art Gallery

Museum National is published quarterly by Museums Australia Inc., and provides a major link between the association and its membership. *Museum National* aims to present news and opinions and to encourage debate on issues of museum practice, including the business of the association as appropriate. It seeks to represent the diverse functions and interests of the many institutions and individuals who comprise Australia's museum community. The content of the magazine reflects the policies of Museums Australia Inc., and is guided by an Editorial Committee. Contributions from those involved or interested in museums and galleries are welcome.



DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND THE ARTS

-
- 4 ICOM 98:
Museums and Cultural Diversity — Ancient Cultures, New Worlds
in the Pacific Region: The Tjibaou Cultural Centre
EMMANUEL KASAHÉROU
-
- 7 ICOM 98:
Creating the National Museum of the American Indian:
A Museum for the 21st Century
W. RICHARD WEST
-
- 10 ICOM 98:
Museums and Cultural Diversity — Ancient Cultures, New Worlds
-
- 15 Professional Initiatives in Asia
RHANA DEVENPORT AND RON RAMSEY
-
- 17 The 5th Annual Museums Australia Publication Design Awards
-
- 21 Cultural Reverberations Between Australia and Japan
NATALIE KING AND PROFESSOR KAZUKO KOIKE
-
- 23 Shorts
From Whence to Whither: A Special Interest Group in Museums Australia — Peter Stanbury
First Impressions — Kenneth Park
Conference Roundup — Kay Palmer and Rachel Faggetter
-
- 29 Reviews

Noticeboard

- i Conferences/Events; Professional development; News
- ii ICOM 98 — overview
- iii ICOM 98 conference resolutions
- iv Association news

Museums and Cultural Diversity — Ancient Cultures, New Worlds in the Pacific Region: The Tjibaou Cultural Centre

EMMANUEL KASAHÉROU

Oceanic Diversity

In the vast blue expanse surrounded by continents, Oceania appears first as a sea world where man has no place. At this scale, the islands of Oceania are so small that they are often barely represented. Oceania is, however, a rich world with great human and cultural diversity.

Large high islands or small atolls emerging only a few metres above sea level, civilisations of sailors or mountain farmers, countries with native populations or foreign populations, independent countries or countries under tutelage, young countries with a well grounded national identity or future countries, countries with high GNP or others on the United Nations list of least developed countries — Micronesia, Polynesia and Melanesia have a great diversity of geopolitical and cultural circumstances.

Oceania's linguistic diversity is one of the highest in the world per number of inhabitants. New Caledonia alone has 28 native tongues for 75,000 Kanaks. The phenomenon is not rare in Melanesia where, for example, Vanuatu has over 80 native languages and Papua New Guinea over 700. The disparity of museums in the region reflects this diversity of regional circumstance. Often inherited from colonial times, long considered as the dusty showcases of the past and, as such, neglected by Oceanian populations, museums in some of our countries have seen a recent increase in interest. Today there is an attempt to adapt them to the needs of the population and to turn them into cultural development tools.

These new museums are trying to answer questions such as:

- How do we preserve cultural diversity and, at the same time, develop the roots of a national identity?
- How do we conserve and develop our secular oral civilisations and co-exist with other imported populations and cultures?
- How do we escape our insularity?

The diversity of regional circumstance must not be diminished through a global approach. In the case of New Caledonia, the Tjibaou Cultural Centre, which was inaugurated on 4 May 1998 in Noumea, constitutes a new answer to the cultural needs of an Oceanian country.

The Tjibaou Cultural Centre — A Shared Political Will

To explain the Tjibaou Cultural Centre is to understand the historical framework in which it exists.

New Caledonia is part of the Melanesian Archipelago, east of Australia, with an area of 18,000 sq km and a population of some 200,000 inhabitants. The Kanaks, the Indigenous people of New Caledonia, comprise almost 44 per cent of the total population. The Europeans arrived in 1774 during James Cook's third voyage. In 1853 New Caledonia became a French colony, firstly as a convict settlement and then as a colony. Since the end of the Second World War, it has become an overseas territory of the Republic of France. Initially, the Kanak were assailed and then became a minority group with the arrival of different peoples, and through exclusion in their reservations. In the seventies, the Kanak began to make their voices heard.

The Kanak political claim was based on cultural claims and the Melanesia Festival 2000, the first national Kanak gathering organised by Jean-Marie Tjibaou in 1975. It signalled the pre-eminence of the Kanak cultural identity and announced a change from an identity claim to a political one. The eighties saw increased clashes between the independence followers and those who wanted to remain a part of France. The Matignon Agreements, signed in 1988 by the French Government and the two main Caledonian opposing parties, ended the cycle of violence.

These Agreements provided for the end of the conflicts and a ten-year freeze on the

question of independence. The decade was used to restore political, social, economic and cultural balance to the advantage of the Kanaks. The signing in April 1998 of new political agreements, the Noumea Agreements, provides for a gradual transfer of power from France to New Caledonia over a fifteen year period. This Agreement, which will soon be subjected to a ratification referendum, places the question of Kanak identity at the centre of the new legislation. Thus, the cultural issue is at the core of New Caledonia's political debate after almost 30 years.

The Context of Decolonisation

The idea for the Cultural Centre flowed from the Matignon Agreements, at the request of Jean-Marie Tjibaou (1936–1989), whose name it bears. It was initially conceived as an acknowledgment of Kanak culture and a restoration of cultural balance — a gesture of decolonisation from the French to the Kanaks. To underscore this gesture and to give it the appropriate status, the President of France, François Mitterrand, decided in 1990 to include the project in the great public works of the Republic. It was granted a budget of 320 million French francs (approximately \$US60 million). In 1991 an international architectural competition was won by Renzo Piano's group project and the Centre was begun in 1995. It opened its doors to the public on 15 June 1998.

An Original Cultural Project

The concept of a Kanak cultural centre went through difficult stages before reaching its final form. It represents the Kanaks' political and cultural thinking over recent years, led mainly by Jean-Marie Tjibaou.

'The return to tradition is a myth...No people have ever experienced it. The search for an identity, the model, for me,

we have it before us, never behind us... And I would say that our current struggle is to be able to place as many objects from our past, from our culture, in building a human and society model that we want for the building of the city... Our identity lies ahead of us.¹

With this phrase Jean-Marie Tjibaou outlined a new program which was not only a cultural project but also a community project. He affirmed the search for recognition and the renewal of Indigenous culture while also proposing a challenge: the culture must strengthen itself but also open itself to others. Therein lies one of the most beautiful paradoxes of the Cultural Centre. It must become a space of experimentation for the future Caledonian identity, based on the Kanak culture — a cultural reference but one which is open to other cultural and human components of the country. The Cultural Centre must also be a space for dialogue between politics, religion and customs. In order to achieve these ambitions, the Centre operates according to three main principles. It must be a place for the recognition of Kanak culture and contemporary expression, it must be a place for the encounter of Kanak culture and other New Caledonian cultures and, finally, it must become a point from which culture can be disseminated throughout the Pacific region.

From Museum to Cultural Centre

Once these principles were in place, the tool had to be adapted to the needs, rather than the other way around. The Centre is a connection point between heritage and creation, the here and there, the past and the future. Long represented only in ethnographic museums, the Kanak culture now has access to a new form of representation that considers its past as well as its present. The new tool was not designed on the basis of the word *museum* because the term seemed to convey a vision uniquely centred on heritage. Rather, the new tool spontaneously took the name of *cultural centre* as if to express its will to be different and to encompass the non-materialistic forms of cultural expression which dominate our oral societies. And, in fact, it provides a focus for cultural roles which we usually separate. It is, at the same time, a museum and an arts centre dedicated to Kanak and Oceanian contemporary art, a media centre dedicated to Indigenous Oceanian cultures, and a space for live performances.



Renzo Piano's Architecture

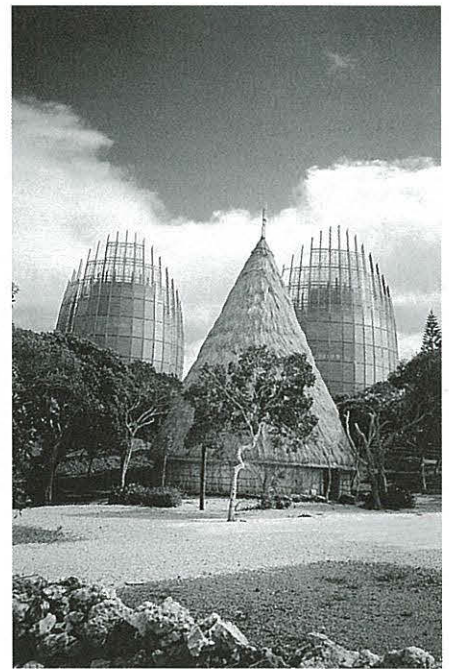
In a project such as this, architecture plays a major role. It must shape the general cultural project without deforming or hiding it; it must strengthen and magnify it, while still respecting it.

The Tjibaou Cultural Centre covers 7,000 sq m on eight hectares of parkland, surrounded by the Pacific Ocean. To quote Renzo Piano,

'The Cultural Centre must be immediately visible and without ambiguity. The modest surroundings must not let us forget the ambition of the project... to be the symbol of the Kanak culture. There could not be a monumental building, but rather a presence of buildings belonging in the site, in the middle of plants, trees and column pines... The Tjibaou Cultural Centre must be, above all else, a project synonymous with peace...'²

'Since this was an architecture where the construction was as important as the architectural result, I noticed that one of the main aspects of Kanak architecture was the building site: "the making" is as important as "the finished product".'

The land is almost like an elongated island, and it encouraged me to organise this project around the shape of the spine... The buildings are distributed without a special symmetry in three



'The Cultural Centre is designed as a group of villages and tree spaces, of functions and alleyways, of voids and fullness. Halfway between construction and nature, it was designed to be completely immersed in the vegetation.' Renzo Piano. Photo Kenneth Park.

groups. Thus, a succession of three villages is composed. Each village is a functional island... The memory of Kanak culture is expressed by the structure of the huts: they are a visual metaphor of Kanak housing... The material, the way timber is

curved, are a reference to ancient huts and the know-how of old artisans... This idea was related to local culture. But it was not a question of copying it... They are not strictly huts that interconnect into glass and metal, but rather memories of huts open on to a dream of the future.'
Renzo Piano

An Original Museography

The contents of the Centre must also communicate the great scope of the cultural project. Several devices have been used to appeal, in the first place, to the visitor's emotions and sensitivity.

Kanak culture, like most Oceanic cultures, is a peasant society. In Oceanian gardens, single crop farming is rare and diversity rules. The relationship with nature, its cycles and its models, has made a deep impression on our cultures, which often base their models of interpretation of the world on those they see in nature.

The Centre's Kanak road is a promenade through five different gardens which creates a link between space and time. Each garden takes you back to a sequence in the myth. They are organised around a main plant theme. It is not a botanic walk, but a cultural walk, since plants have been chosen and grouped not for botanical or ecological reasons but for their cultural meaning. The myth is an allegory of the story of Téa Kanake, the Kanak cultural hero, from creation to death to rebirth. Objects are plants and the discourse is the composition of the vegetation. It also serves to unite the Kanak cultural constellation with the emerging Caledonian identity, around common symbols.

The sensitivity of the rapport between man and plants is so universal that this

walk has been very successful with the Kanak people, as well as with others for whom it represents the best introduction to the Kanak Oceanian world.

One of the Centre's missions is to show the creative strength of Pacific cultures, taking into account their cultural heritage. We have developed many spaces around the concept of the Kanak and Oceanian contemporary art collection at the Centre.

For example, the *Bwenaado* hut, which means 'customary assembly', displays a selection of Kanak heritage objects which represent an ideal collection. Far from reproducing the rich collections of the New Caledonian Territorial Museum on a smaller scale, the uniqueness of these objects is that they come from those museums around the world that own Kanak collections. This offers a possible alternative to the difficulty of repatriating ancient works of art through a temporary and cyclic return of objects to their country of origin. We receive objects of our heritage from Germany, France or Switzerland for three to five years. This strategy requires much inventory work and a close trust between museums; it also opens a new way for international cooperation.

In the *Jinu* space, which means 'the spirit', twelve ceremonial poles, ordered especially for the Tjibaou Centre, represent the Pacific Ocean spirit and express the presence of ancestors. The poles were ordered in the traditional way, according to our culture. They were also made according to appropriate rituals and, to receive them, usually one year after the order was placed, a representative of the Kanak Council of Chiefs accompanied us to receive them according to appropriate Kanak rituals.

These few examples illustrate the role of permanent or semi-permanent museography at the Tjibaou Centre in establishing a Kanak and Oceanian identity reference. The Centre's event calendar is designed to open it to other cultures, firstly those present in New Caledonia and then the cultures of Oceania and beyond to fulfil its role as a regional cultural centrepiece.

The Tjibaou Cultural Centre is unique in many respects and is not accountable for all of Oceania. Nevertheless, it shows the vitality of regional experiments in designing cultural instruments which are adapted to the inherent problems or particular countries.


The Vanuatu Cultural Centre, for example, with its original network of cultural correspondents (field workers) has paved the way for a new dimension adapted to our oral societies. New projects, such as Te Papa Tongarewa in New Zealand, also illustrate the dynamics at play in our region and its wealth of innovation. They are, together with others, the links of a cultural network to be woven at an Oceanian scale.

Emmanuel Kasahérou is cultural director of the Tjibaou Cultural Centre, Noumea.

References


- 1 March 1985, 'Pour l'indépendance', interview with Jean-Marie Tjibaou, *Les temps Modernes*, No. 464, reproduced in *Jean-Marie Tjibaou, La présence kanak*, Odile Jacob editions, 1996, p. 176-207.
- 2 1997, *Carnets de travail de Renzo Piano*, Editions du Seuil.

(This is an abridged version of Emmanuel Kasahérou's paper. Contact the editor for details of the full length paper.)



A SYDNEY STORY 1788-1998


Flesh + Blood




28 November 1998-14 February 1999

MUSEUM OF SYDNEY

on the site of first Government House



Corner Phillip + Bridge Streets Sydney
 Exhibition open daily 10am-5pm (closed Christmas Day)
 \$6 Adult / \$3 Child + Concession / \$15 Family
 Telephone (02) 9251 5988 www.mos.nsw.gov.au

 Museum of Sydney is a property of the
 Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales

Creating the National Museum of the American Indian: A Museum for the 21st Century

W. RICHARD WEST

I recall a statement made several years ago by Robert McCormick Adams, a distinguished anthropologist and secretary of the Smithsonian Institution when the United States Congress established the National Museum of the American Indian almost a decade ago,

'...[W]e move decisively from the older image of the museum as a temple with its superior, self-governing priesthood to... a forum... committed not to the promulgation of received wisdom but to the encouragement of a multicultural dialogue.

This is a national museum... [that] takes the permanence... the authenticity... the vitality and the self-determination of Native American voices... as the fundamental reality... it must... represent.'

In the first decade of this century, George Gustav Heye began collecting Native objects from throughout the Western Hemisphere. He collected diligently, indeed, some would say almost obsessively. By the mid-twentieth century, Heye had created a collection of approximately one million objects that is still considered to be the most comprehensive assemblage of Native objects in the world. By the 1970s, however, the Heye Foundation was in serious financial straits and a more financially secure home was needed for the collection.

Years of complex negotiations resulted ultimately in the collection's transfer to the Smithsonian Institution in exchange for the latter's agreement to build three new facilities to house and exhibit it in New York City and Washington D.C. The United States Congress ratified that negotiated arrangement in November 1989 by enacting federal legislation authorising the creation of the National Museum of the American Indian.

This legislation envisioned the creation of new physical facilities to protect the collection and to make its exhibition to wider audiences possible. It also made clear that

the National Museum of the American Indian should reflect an unprecedented approach to involving, interpreting and representing Native peoples. The Smithsonian Institution engaged the spirit of these congressional intentions by hiring, as the Museum's founding director, a Native person, and one who came from outside the museum community.

Moreover, this institution was not merely to be 'about' its subjects, the Native peoples and cultures of the Western Hemisphere, but, in a critical sense, was to be 'of' them by involving them systematically in the institution's planning, development and operation.

The stage had been set for a groundbreaking undertaking at the Smithsonian Institution. The United States Congress had authorised probably the last great Smithsonian museum for this century — and perhaps the next — to occupy the final vacant piece of land on America's National Mall in Washington D.C. Moreover, this institution was not merely to be 'about' its subjects, the Native peoples and cultures of the Western Hemisphere, but, in a critical sense, was to be 'of' them by involving them systematically in the institution's planning, development and operation.

When I arrived at the Smithsonian in 1990, the first person to request an appointment with me was the director of the Smithsonian's Office of Design and Construction. He informed me that

matters were moving along briskly for the new museum buildings and, basically, that I needed to board the moving train as rapidly as possible in order to avoid holding up progress. I asked, 'Do we know what is to go on inside these spaces and, therefore, how they should be designed?' The answer was a blank stare, since we, in reality, knew answers to neither question.

Thus, my first major decision, with the full support of the Smithsonian Secretariat, was to push the construction schedules for our three facilities in New York and Washington D.C. back a full two years, so that we could consult adequately with all major stakeholders in the institution, particularly the contemporary Native communities throughout the Americas. From 1991-93, the Museum hosted consultations throughout the United States and Canada, and with representatives from Central and South America. The hundreds of people who attended were predominantly, but not exclusively, Native people, representing a great diversity of backgrounds and interests.

We had retained a distinguished American architectural firm to develop the Museum's architectural program for our buildings in Washington D.C. — the Cultural Resources Centre, the home of our collection, due to open soon, and our centrepiece public exhibition and programming building, to open in 2002. We requested that a senior representative of the architectural programming firm participate directly in all consultations so that she could hear observations first-hand.

The point of these consultations went to the Museum's programs and the architectural design of its buildings. We asked those attending the consultations how they wished to be presented and represented to the millions of non-Native visitors we would host in the Museum. We asked how the buildings and spaces that would be home to these presentations and programs

should be designed, what they should look like, what messages, as pieces of art and architecture, they should convey. The answers subsequently became an integral part of the Museum's public program and architectural design planning.

The messages that emerged from these consultations took on a remarkable consistency. With respect to public presentations, programs and exhibitions, Native peoples wanted to be seen as contemporary cultural phenomena rather than as cultural relics. They wanted to speak directly to our audiences through our public programs, presentations and exhibitions, and to articulate in their own voices and through their own eyes the meaning of the objects in our collection and their import in Native art, culture and history.

With respect to the buildings and spaces in Washington D.C., those attending the consultations, again with great consistency, described a number of core design principles. For example, the exterior membrane of the buildings should be as visually transparent as possible — in recognition of the Native proclivity for seeing all of the environment, built and non-built, and nature as interconnected, interdependent and whole. Second, elements of nature, including water, natural light, and other natural materials of the earth should be integral parts of the design, both inside and outside the built environment. Third, the architecture of the building should reflect and honour, in form, the organic and the natural in light of the close association between Native people and nature in life and cosmology. The often more softly stated but deeply felt bottom line was that the building's architecture, while respecting its architectural context on the National Mall, should not be bashful about departing from the right angles and straight lines of the classical architecture on those hallowed grounds.

This information had further impact upon the planning process for the Museum. In exhibitions, for example, the Museum's board of trustees adopted a policy that required close collaboration with any Native community whose culture or objects in our collections were to be the subject of our exhibits. The Museum, in fact, has gone beyond collaboration and has enlisted Native communities directly in all phases of exhibits. Furthermore, the Museum oversees an expressive cultural program which demonstrates, through

live performance art, that Native peoples are very much alive and their cultures still vibrant.

Second, when we moved to the design phase of our buildings in Washington D.C. we ensured the participation of the Native design community in that process. The design team of the Museum's Cultural Resources Centre involved the Native American Design Collaborative, a consortium of some 30 Native American design professionals.

What is the purpose of using a planning process that is so thoroughly 'bottom up' and 'outside in'? Whence the justification for permitting Native peoples themselves to define their representation and interpretation to the Museum's audiences?

I believe, based upon my own academic training and my upbringing as a Cheyenne in the western United States, that Native views of the world, of reality, of cosmology are profoundly different from those that have grown out of the Euro-American cultural experience. These differences have real impact on the meaning and interpretation of the millions of objects in the collections of the National Museum of the American Indian.

I remember visiting a museum in the south-western part of the United States. I was standing before an exhibit case looking down at a ceramic pot sculpted by the renowned Native artist, Popovi Da. His ceramic piece was exquisite, and I was completely content to stand there, in reverential silence, for a very long time, simply basking in its uncommon beauty.

My eye finally moved to a piece of text placed next to the piece, and it was a statement by Popovi Da himself. The words spoke volumes about his world and how what I saw related to that world,

'We do what comes from thinking, and sometimes hours and even days are spent to create an aesthetic scroll in design. Our symbols and our representations are all expressed as an endless cadence, and beautifully organised in our art as well as in our dance.

There is design in living things; their shapes, forms, the ability to live, all have meaning... Our values are indwelling and dependent upon time and space unmeasured. This in itself is beauty.'

I distil the following two points from what Popovi Da said about his own work. First, the object, if anything, was a secondary consideration to the primacy of

the ceremonial or ritual process that led to its creation. In other words, despite the remarkable aesthetic qualities of much of the cultural material we created, our purpose, in the end, was not the creation of an 'art object'.

A former colleague of mine at the National Museum of the American Indian spoke directly to this point when she wrote,

'[T]he Native artist... [values] the creation [of art]...over the final product. Process speaks to historical or cultural significance because it is testimony to cultural continuity and change. It is the evidence of lost traditions, innovations, preserved cultural knowledge, historic perspective and vision of the future... It takes into account a sort of "spiritual evidence" that is integral to the creative process. The integrity of the creative process is foremost. The object is meaningless without it.'

I also take a second important cultural precept from Popovi Da's eloquent observation. Native objects, in their most profound and ultimate dimension, really were statements and reflections — and were intended to be so — of collective and communal values as much or more than they were to be considered individual acts of creativity with a universal meaning.

Claude Levi-Strauss once wrote,

'A vase, a box, a wall are not independent, pre-existing objects which are subsequently decorated. They acquire their definitive existence only through the integration of the decoration with the utilitarian function. Thus, the chests of the North-West Coast are not merely containers embellished with a painted or carved animal. They are the animal itself keeping an active watch over the ceremonial ornaments which have been entrusted to its care. Structure modifies decoration, but decoration is the final cause of the structure, which must adapt itself to the former. The final product is a whole: utensil-ornament, object-animal, box that speaks.'

This fusion of the profoundly spiritual with the otherwise purely physical, this primacy of the process of creating an object over the beautiful object itself, this utter inseparability of the object from the conduct of daily life — all are Native ways of viewing objects that arguably are significantly different from the paradigms of Western art and art history.

I also believe they represent the very reasons why the National Museum of the American Indian needs the interpretive voices of Native peoples themselves in our exhibits. I remember a poignant statement made in the catalogue for an exhibit of ours by Tom Hill, a colleague and friend who is director of the Woodland Cultural Centre in Ontario, Canada. A Canadian Seneca Indian, he tells of how, as a boy, he learned about Iroquois ceremonial masks from his relative Ezekiel Hill, an elder in his community.

'Ezekiel told me about the masks, but only when I asked. "Why is the nose crooked?" I would ask. Or, "What do you feed them?" And Ezekiel would explain. He told me how the masks were carved from living trees that consented to sacrificing a part of themselves. He reaffirmed my confidence in what I had seen and experienced: that, in the ceremonies, the masks had the power to focus the attention of all who saw them on natural forces that we experience but cannot understand. Through the masks, I learned about good and evil, the Creation, healing, and

respect. They gave me a sense of history, too, a feeling of being part of a long chain of life.

I realised later that Ezekiel was not the only one who had masks: museums found them irresistible public favourites, amusing displays. But these exhibitions never captured the masks' spirit. Whenever I see a mask in a museum, I think how different it is from those that hung by Ezekiel's stove. Behind glass, they become [only] objects.'

I want the audiences of the National Museum of the American Indian to know and to understand, through Tom, the meanings the masks held for Ezekiel Hill. That knowledge is authentic, it is worthy, and it will add substantial value to the experience of every visitor who walks through the doors of the Museum.

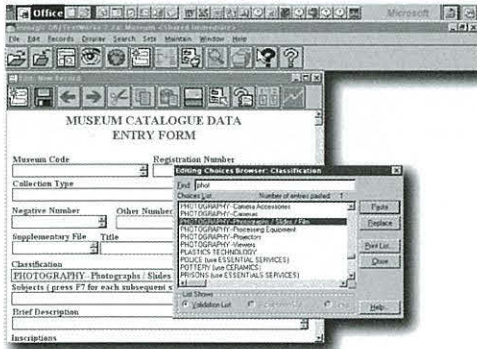
In a reflective mood, Robert McCormick Adams had the following to say about the National Museum of the American Indian as a part of his own Smithsonian legacy,

'Looking forward as well as backward, I have no doubt that the launching of the


National Museum of the American Indian represents a fundamental turning point for the Smithsonian. It begins to correct a vast wrong, and all the myths and stereotypes with which we surrounded it in order to hide it — or at least not to have to confront it ourselves. It envisions a partnership of a new and unprecedented kind — with those whose history and culture, once torn away from them, will now be represented only with their full complicity. It creates a model of a dialogue with wider relevance than any in which we have participated, ending the separation between specialists as embodiments of authority and a passive audience... It saves for posterity a magnificent collection that will lead the world to look at the cultural and artistic achievements of Native Americans with new and admiring eyes.'

Dr W. Richard West is director of the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.

(This is an abridged version of Dr Richard West's paper. Contact the editor for details of the full length paper.)



Data entry is quick and easy.



View an *image* of an item from its Inmagic record.

INMAGIC® DB/TextWorks™


The Cataloguing Software for Museums, Galleries and Historical Societies.

- Find any item in your collection in seconds
- Display images of colour or black & white photographs, paintings or original documents
- Use data entry screens which match standard cataloguing worksheets

Use the DB/Textworks Museum Package to manage your collection.

Recommended by Museums Australia (Vic) and used by Museums and Historical Societies around Australia.

Call Jennifer Csorba at Triad for free demonstration software or further information, or visit our Website.



TRIAD
DATA MAGIC PTY LTD

PO Box 727 South Melbourne 3205
Tel: (03) 9696 4866 Fax: (03) 9696 4869
Email: triad@tdm.com.au
Home Page: <http://www.tdm.com.au>

3264A TRD 1/10/98

Museums and Cultural Diversity — Ancient Cultures, New Worlds

A feature of ICOM 98 was the four-day program of international specialist committee meetings and site visits which followed the opening day's plenary and keynote papers. These sessions provided the case studies, presentations of research papers and more detailed discussions on the theme of 'Museums and Cultural Diversity'. A number of committees held joint sessions enabling delegates to enjoy papers across a range of disciplines; others held small, informal sessions concentrated on specific issues. It was not possible for one person to visit each and every session so coordinators of a number of the international committee meetings have generously prepared brief summaries of highlights and points of discussion for *Museum National*. Many committees will be publishing papers on their websites in due course. Readers interested in hearing more about particular issues and discussions should contact convenors listed.

ICTOP (International Committee for the Training of Personnel) took as its keynote theme Museum Training and Cultural Diversity. Training for Management of Museums attracted lively discussion — the tendency of directors to think that training is only for their staff was widely noted, but the commitment to continuing professional development and life-long learning which characterises the 'new breed' of directors was also stressed.

Resolutions were passed concerning:

- encouragement of training in the use of broad-based communication techniques to provide information about collections, exhibitions and other museological information to celebrate and nurture the cultural heritage of all peoples;
- revision of *Curriculum Guidelines for Professional Development in Museums* and the introduction of *Standards and Ethics for Museum Training*;
- new ways of raising awareness of legal issues considered important to professional museum workers;
- support for a 'Training for Trainers' initiative within the PIMA community;
- production of a position paper examining student membership of ICOM;
- promotion of conservation restoration as a discipline covering all categories of cultural property, taught at university or recognised equivalent, as a course of

study leading to an appropriate degree or diploma;

- reinforcement and supplementation of training initiatives in ICOM member nations and international committees and regional organisations.

ICTOP also urged ICOM to publicly dedicate itself and its professional and institutional membership to the cause of world peace, and to encourage and facilitate tolerance, reconciliation and the pursuit of peace. ICTOP papers, published as pre-prints, are available for \$10 (post free). Margaret Birtley, ICTOP board member — (03) 9251 7057.

AVICOM (Audiovisual and Image and Sound and New Technologies) discussed issues concerning Australia's experiences of CD-ROM — what we have learnt from projects such as *Australia on CD* and the *Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia*. New methodologies and technologies as opportunities and obstacles in the new millennium were discussed, as were applied technologies for museums, such as virtual reality techniques in the recreation of cultural heritage sites. Matthew Nickson — (03) 9651 6787.

CECA (Education and Cultural Action) sessions were well attended with over 120 registered. Under the theme *Interpreting Natural and Cultural Diversity* the program included presentations, visits and

networking opportunities. The Market of Ideas provided over 30 short, sharp and interesting snapshots of approaches and case studies around the world. Presentations of research papers were also particularly successful in terms of the Australian projects, which were significant and related directly to museums. Presentations offering a regional survey of Europe, Africa and America perhaps attempted to cover too broad an area, but still provided a useful flavour. Visits to ten different sites engaged delegates in useful and lively discussions about key aspects of each site. Networking between sessions and at the conference breakfast and gala dinner proved particularly successful. CECA and ICOM are facilitators of the international networks and do not exist to replace the local organisations. Papers will be published in due course. David Demant, CECA Asia-Pacific Coordinator — (03) 9291 2120.

CIDOC (Documentation) — Documenting and Communicating Cultural and Natural Diversity discussions focused on the potential of documenting and communicating knowledge carried in heritage collections to help people understand and respect cultural diversity. The sessions *Appreciating Diversity*, *Knowledge Models*, *Bridging Standards and Beyond Data* established a framework for papers and debates. Speakers explored the potential of databases to record multiple and diverse facts, and different interpretations; the power of connectivity offered by today's technologies in preserving stories; and the important roles played by museums in collecting and opening access to a variety of resources from objects to interpretations. The role of content standards, data models and vocabularies for documenting and communicating texts, images, films and sounds in the context of the known and the unknown were hot topics. 'Towards a Museology of Museum Multimedia' provoked lively discussion on the impact of the new technology on museum practice and ethics, concluding

that despite challenges posed by the new opportunities, many of our existing values and practices are still relevant. The program included excursions to Scienceworks and the NGV, and a reception at the Ian Potter Museum of Art to launch the new Australian Museums On Line website and the conservation training package. Lawrie Conole — (03) 9669 9732.

CIMCIM (Musical Instrument Collections) — Twenty-one delegates from Australia and abroad heard papers concerned with the cultural diversity in music collections in Europe, Japan, Azerbaijan, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Australia. These addressed issues concerning classification of musical instruments from particular cultures through to the ways cultures are represented in museums through their instrument collections. Some papers relating to Asia may be published in the March issue of *The Asian Arts Society of Australia*. Otherwise, copies of abstracts are available. Michael Lea — (02) 9217 0572.

CIMUSET (Science and Technology) — Morning sessions were spent on tours of the Melbourne Docklands, from the water, or visits to the Scienceworks Pumping Station, exhibitions or collection stores — or enjoying other sessions. When the business end of the conference began, Patrick Green, director of the Museum of Science & Industry in Manchester blasted off with an overview of how a whole swag of museums have dealt with cultural diversity — intentionally or unintentionally. An outstanding paper by Taja Cepic centred on the role dedicated enthusiasts have played for many years in establishing numerous 'factory museums' in Slovenia as repositories for technology and work practices, but also as havens for a diversity of culture and heritage. Taja challenged museum professionals to consider the perilous future of this type of material in her country, which is in industrial transition, and compare that situation to our own. We learnt about massive science and technology museums being developed in China and Thailand and, generally, there was an up-beat feeling about looking towards a more sustainable future. The committee hopes to have most of the papers available on the CIMUSET website soon. Euan McGillivray — (03) 9291 2130.

ICAA (Applied Art and Glass) — The committees organised joint sessions for the presentation of papers and site visits. Formal papers on the first two days

ranged widely in subject and approach from those focused on archaeological matters (e.g. An analysis of the chemical composition of ancient Korean glass in relation to a related group of ancient Thai glasses), to those dealing with specialist museum collections (e.g. decorative arts at Harewood House and the museums of Yorkshire and Humberside), to programs (e.g. a background to collecting Chinese art at the NGV), and specific areas of study (e.g. English glass sent to glaze Australian churches in the early twentieth century). Delegates also enjoyed the equivalent of two full days of site visits in and around Melbourne, including an extended tour of the NGV to see 'The Art of Glass' exhibition and the permanent collection of ceramics and metalwork. Visits to distinguished private collections were a considerable success. These and other such occasions offered delegates ample opportunity for the networking that is an essential and highly beneficial feature of conferences of this scale and nature. Geoffrey Edwards — glass (03) 9208 0228; Margaret Legge — applied art (03) 9208 0225.

Costume — It was exciting after two years planning to finally bring together over 40 people who specialise in costume or textiles. The first day's papers provided an introduction to our sub-theme of trans-cultural traditions. Judith Ryan (senior curator of Aboriginal art and the Torres Strait, NGV) discussed Aboriginal batik, then followed Maria Wronska-Friend (lecturer in the School of Anthropology and Archaeology, James Cook University) who examined the influence of Javanese batik on Western art. Perhaps the most unusual paper concerned how to describe and identify the odours of museum objects, such as gloves, lace and stockings. Katia Johansen (conservator of the royal collections at Rosenburg Castle, Copenhagen) treated the audience to a range of scents to smell, created from the original seventeenth and eighteenth century recipes. Successful excursions included the Grainger Museum at Melbourne University where we looked at Percy Grainger's alternative clothing, especially the garments made from Australian towels. We also visited several city studios, walking through Melbourne's inner alleys, introducing delegates to our vibrant fashion scene.

There was animated discussion about changing the committee's focus to include textiles in a broader sense, and a change of



ICOM 98 delegates at the gala opening event, Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne. Courtesy Museum Victoria

committee name to 'Textiles and Costume'. The matter will be discussed at future meetings. Robyn Healy — (03) 9208 0276.

ICEE (International Committee of Exhibition Exchange) — Australian experiences in exhibition exchange provided a fascinating basis for presentations and discussions. International experts also shared their knowledge and experiences. A joint meeting with five other committees on exhibition development processes set out new directions for future joint sessions at ICOM triennial meetings. Site visits gave delegates a chance to understand more about their host country. Sessions were diverse. Exhibition agreements were explored from several perspectives in anticipation of the second book in ICEE's 'Tools' series. (Book 1 on *Exhibition Budgeting* was popular with conference delegates.) Cultural diversity was explored in an opening session featuring Djon Mundine and Doreen Mellor, who talked about Aboriginal artists' experiences in Australia. At the Marketplace session, the vigour of Australia's exhibition exchange

solicited a lot of interest for potential exchange outside the continent. Exploration of the Andres Serrano exhibition at the NGV reminded the audience of the challenges and dangers of international exhibition exchange and how the unexpected can have long-lasting effects. Thanks to Ingrid Kellenbach, Judy Cooke and Penny Morrison for pulling ICEE sessions together. Sandra Lorimer — lorimer@sympatico.ca

ICFA (Fine Arts) — An informal session was organised around the permanent collections of old master paintings in Australia. Alison Inglis (course co-ordinator, Postgraduate Diploma in Art Curatorship, University of Melbourne) spoke on the history of old master collecting in Australia. She emphasised the strong holdings of nineteenth century European painting in Australian public collections, and outlined the traditional

Passing the message stick for Museums Australia's 1999 conference in Albury-Wodonga. Cec Grant and Sue-Anne Wallace at the closing plenary session, ICOM 98. Photo David Israel. © ICOM



models of acquisition: advisers in Europe, international exhibitions touring Australia or, more rarely, local private collections. Roger Leong (curator, National Gallery of Australia) provided a succinct overview of the history of the old master collection in Canberra, and its relationship to the institution's other collections and programs. Ron Radford (director, Art Gallery of South Australia) presented a detailed history of his institution's European painting collection. Particularly interesting was the Gallery's active collecting in this area during the last fifteen years. The collection focuses on themes relevant to the history of Australian art, such as the European landscape tradition and British portraiture. Sonia Dean (senior curator, NGV) provided a chronological overview of her institution's major collection of European paintings and later led a tour of the Gallery's European painting collection with conservators John Payne and Carl Villis, who have recently undertaken conservation treatment on some of the works. Karen Quinlan, (curator, Bendigo Art Gallery) presented the history of the collection of European paintings in this major regional gallery. Alison Inglis — (03) 9344 7448.

ICMAH (Archaeology and History) — The program offered stimulating papers and exciting, behind-the-scenes glimpses of Melbourne museums. Keynote speaker Professor Greg Denning (Centre for Cross-Cultural Research, ANU) began with his provocative paper 'If You Dig Down Under, Do you Come Up Over'. He took delegates on a fascinating journey through the Pacific region, examining the relationship between history and archaeology. A joint sessions with ICOMON looked at responding to change, and a session with ICME looked at museology and diversity. Visits to two Melbourne museums were a highlight. International and local delegates were impressed by their preview of the new Immigration Museum and its innovative approaches, where Moya McFadzean gave an interesting paper on the use of oral histories in the Museum. At the Jewish Museum of Australia, the Museum's director Dr Helen Light's introduction was followed by papers on the theme of representation and ownership. This included discussion of such issues in relation to the German Historical Museum, by Rosemary Beier-de-Haan, and papers by Viv Szekeres (Migration

Museum, Adelaide) and Zeljka Kolveshi (Muzej Grada Zagreba). Kate Darian-Smith — (03) 9344 7232.

ICME (Ethnography) — Discussions of cultural diversity included a joint session with ICMAH. Discussions included choice of methodologies for exploring diversity, for example ethnographic versus historical approaches; practices in dealing with cultures in their countries of origin and immigrants of those cultures in other countries; involvement of cultural representatives in planning exhibitions relating to those cultures; and the need for international cooperation and exchange of information. A special session on repatriation highlighted the differences between moral approaches (as in Sweden) and legal approaches (as in the USA). The issue of returning material to other museums as opposed to cultural custodians in the community was discussed, and the need to share information and develop inventories of cultural material to be sent to representatives of the cultural groups represented in collections. Experiences of the National Museum of Ethnography in Sweden emphasised that the important thing about repatriation is not the objects but the relationship with the group requesting the return — each return gives back more than is given. Museum Victoria hosted a lunch for representatives of Pacific Island museums, which included useful discussions about sharing information and the need for genuine dialogue and exchange. ICME will focus on two issues over the next three years: repatriation and prevention of illicit traffic in cultural property; and cross-cultural approaches and exchange of information about collections. Gaye Sculthorpe — (03) 9651 6799.

ICMS (Museum Security) — Discussions concerned 'Cultural Protection: Developing Best Practices for the New Millennium'. Presentations were drawn from a variety of people, nationally and internationally. Subjects covered risk management, security planning for new museums, training, crime prevention and outsourcing. Presentations were supplemented by site visits to the NGV, the new Museum Victoria, and the State Library of Victoria, which showcased the old, the new and the latest use of security technology. Discussions focused on people and strategic issues in security and asset protection, and the importance of linking security

management and planning with the planning of other professional disciplines within the institutions. ICMS presentations will be placed on the ICMS home page. David Budeja — (03) 9669 9851.

ICAMT (Architecture and Museum Techniques) — The program focused on designers working with Indigenous and culturally diverse communities. It was based around visits to museums and cultural centres, where informal presentations and discussions were held with designers and museum staff. Visits included Galeena Beek Living Cultural Centre, Healesville Sanctuary, the new Immigration Museum, the Jewish Museum, the NGV and the new Melbourne Museum site. Discussions focused on community consultation, graphic communication for diverse audiences, and the relationship between architectural and exhibition design. Papers were given by Marja-Liisa Pohjanvirta (Hameenlinna Art Museum, Finland) on converting a nineteenth century warehouse into a new contemporary art gallery; Barbara Charles (Staples and Charles, USA) on the First Peoples' Hall at the Canadian Museum of Civilisation; Richard Dobert, (Dobert, Colsky, Craig & Associates, USA) on campus, community and culture; and Michael Preston (Michael Preston Chartered Designer, Sydney) about signage for diverse audiences. Ronnie Fookes — (03) 9651 6702.

ICOM-CC (Conservation) — Joint sessions were held with ICTOP, ICOM-FA and ICEE. The conservation training session with ICTOP and ICOM-FA included a tour of the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the Ian Potter Conservation Centre and the Department of Fine Art at the University of Melbourne which highlighted the working relationship between the three departments. Gael De Guichen (ICOM-CC working group on training in conservation and restoration, Italy) overviewed last year's meeting in Italy on the conservation-restoration of cultural heritage in the European Union, which has been pivotal in the development of the profession in Europe — 'conservator-restorer' now reflects the professional status in Europe but in Australia there has been enormous effort to recognise the conservation profession as distinct from restoration. Robyn Sloggett (president, AICCM) outlined Australian initiatives in conservation training, including advocacy

for tertiary conservation training, and the *National Conservation and Preservation Policy for Movable Cultural Heritage* (1995) and *National Conservation Strategy* (1996).

The cultural tourism session discussed conservation as a cultural problem; cultural tourism and the development of preventative conservation measures and the control of visitation; respect for the authenticity of cultural heritage in towns and sites; and tourism as a source of revenue and as an economic factor. David Grattan (ICOM-CC) advised that solutions to the problems of preservation must balance economic needs and the needs of tourists; Roberto Nardi's paper outlined a new management culture for cultural heritage which sees the conservator pro-active in interpreting to the public a site's fragility and efforts required for preservation. He noted the implications for work practices. Genevieve Le Louarn (chief curator of cultural heritage, France) showed dramatic photographs of erosion of the Carnac megalithic sites, and described the difficulties of reversing an entrenched practice and re-educating people to stop deterioration. David Dolan (director, Research Institute for Cultural Heritage, Curtin University) spoke about the need to increase tourism to lesser-known sites to save the over-visited ones, saying that in the Southern Hemisphere it is through visitation that inaccessible sites are actually saved and financed. Neal Putt (ICCROM, Rome) described the difficulties faced by the people of the Pohnpei Islands in the Pacific, where the cultural impact of tourism requires careful management. Nicole Gesche-Koning (ICOM-CECA) and Catheline Perier D'Ieteren (ICOM Europa) spoke about sensitising and training the public on the preservation of cultural heritage; Gunther Dembski (ICOM-ICMS) discussed the preparations necessary for institutions receiving mass tourism; and Marta de la Torre (ICOM-INTERCOM) discussed cultural tourism and the consequences for management of museums and sites.

(ICOM-CC's resolution No. 2. Museums and Heritage Tourism is printed in Noticeboard with other ICOM resolutions.) Samantha Shellard — (03) 9669 9024.

ICOFOM (Museology) — Delegates discussed the impact of globalisation on museology, beginning with a survey of museology in the Pacific and Australia.

Discussions focused on globalisations' cultural aspects in order to understand its affect on museology. At the same time, developments in communications technology — the engine of globalising processes — has direct, practical influences on museum practice. The symposium discussed four aspects of the problem with keynote speakers Bernice Murphy, Caroline Davies, Margaret Coaldrake and Linda Young.

Ideas and theories about globalisation — the major source is the discipline of sociology, which produces a complex, interpenetrating view of culture and globalisation. Despite tidal waves of homogeneous culture from Europe and America, particular heterogenous cultures are maintaining their presence and actively asserting their difference within the global whole. The role of museums in documenting, exhibiting and interpreting these varieties of culture is evident.

How museums react to globalisation and localisation — participants stressed the intercultural nature of the world, not as clear-cut as the intimate vision of the 'global village' proposed 30 years ago. The specifically local or national nature of many museums should not constrain them in addressing global issues. In presenting cross-cultural encounters, museums can explore the resolution of environmental and social issues.

Exhibitions in museums' global context — speakers noted the proliferation of international exhibitions and biennials. Do they represent hegemonic monostories, or expressions beyond 'influence', 'syncretism' and 'hybridisation'?

Present and future possibilities for globalised communications in museums — Internet communication opens up the museum to the public in unprecedented ways. We do not know who surfs the museum websites and what they think — nor do we know what meanings they give to the reality (virtual reality?) of the cyber-museum.

ICOFOM also held joint meetings with ICTOP and with MINOM, ICME and ICMAH. Papers were published as pre-prints. Linda Young — (02) 6201 2079.

ICOMON (Numismatics) — Sessions covered topics relating to how museums respond to change. In terms of the European monetary system, there was discussion on how museums should present the new monetary system. During a visit

to Sovereign Hill, there was discussion on future interpretations of the gold rush and the sesquicentenary of the discovery of gold in Australia, to be celebrated in 2001. Earlier gold rushes in the USA and their impact on trade, gold rushes in the Pacific Basin, the discovery of gold and its mining in Asia also provided a useful context of new interpretations on Australia's gold rush. Papers will be published. John Sharples — (03) 9291 2162.

NATHIST (Natural History) — The natural history group met at ICOM 98 for a 'journey' to a dozen countries around the world. Speakers introduced a diversity of life forms from fungi and insects to trees and tigers as they discussed their work in natural history museums and related institutions.


Keynote speakers outlined the challenges we face in communicating to the public the current loss of biodiversity. 'In the past four hundred years about five hundred animal species have been lost, with much higher figures for plants, at an extinction rate estimated to be up to ten thousand times greater than would be expected without human presence.' (David Hancocks). Speakers illustrated successful approaches to education about biodiversity: giving children direct contact with nature; nationwide environmental competitions; providing public access to museum databases through the Internet. Other speakers described exciting new exhibitions in Germany and the Netherlands. Research and collections in museums provide a basis for understanding biodiversity. Keynote speakers also focused on marine biodiversity and the largely undiscovered diversity of fungi. Other speakers discussed issues such as the increasing difficulty of moving

specimens across national borders and the challenges of conserving wet specimens. A visit to the new Melbourne Museum, currently under construction, gave delegates a feeling of the building, including its outdoor exhibition the 'gallery of life'. Our final journey was a day trip to Healesville Sanctuary and Galeena Beek to experience Australian wildlife and Aboriginal culture. The conference provided a great opportunity to meet colleagues from around the world and revitalise an international network of people concerned about natural history issues in museums. The new committee is headed by Anne-Marie Slezec (France). Ross Field — (03) 9651 6777.

ICOM-MPR (Marketing and Public Relations) — Presentations sought to accurately reflect the shift in values being experienced by our cultural institutions. The need for museums to convincingly entice, embrace and communicate with their collective audiences has never been so vital. The primary responsibility for achieving this outcome lies with those who develop and implement the communication strategies for our museums: namely those who mediate on marketing, sponsorship, public relations and development programs on behalf of their institutions. This ICOM-MPR triennial meeting witnessed great consultation between more traditional museum marketing practitioners and those cultural sector advocates of education, visitor studies, conservation and sponsorship/development. Through the sharing of experiences and the promotion of enlivened debate, delegates sought to embrace each other's disciplines and ideas. On day one, presentations from a myriad of viewpoints sought to identify key issues facing the representation and preservation

of Australia's, and other nations', Indigenous peoples through our cultural institutions. These issues present a compelling challenge for society as a whole, let alone the complexities one faces in the marketing of such programs. Day two was devoted to issues of integration between the disciplines of marketing and visitor studies/audience evaluation, and sessions examining the growing importance and changing landscape of cultural sector sponsorships and fundraising/development. Day three involved a morning excursion along the 'Puffing Billy' heritage railway journey. Participants considered the topic 'As museums, are we to promote ourselves as a viable parallel education system, or position ourselves in the mainstream entertainment/leisure market; or do we in fact attempt to brand ourselves as both?' Puffing Billy, variously described as everything between a 'heritage experience' and a 'theme park ride', provided a suitable setting for such deliberations. Finally, delegates enjoyed a selection of presentations from a variety of regions: exploring marketing and visitor evaluation case-studies from Sweden's Malmo Museer, Geneva's Museum d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris' Palais de la Decouverte, Auckland's Museums Aotearoa, Russia's Moscow History Centre, and Ljubljana's Slovene Ethno-graphic Museum. Some 147 delegates representing every continent registered with ICOM-MPR, with each session boasting near-capacity occupancy. Graham Ryan — (08) 8207 7000.

For information on **CIPEG** (Egyptology) proceedings contact Piers Crocker (03) 9650 3477; **CIMAM** (Collections of Modern Art) contact Jason Smith (03) 9208 0374; **ICR** (Regional Museums) contact Roger Trudgeon (03) 5331 1944.



- easy access to over 700 Australian cultural sites
- powerful searching of Australian cultural information
- national cultural events calendar
- Internet development guides
- demonstration networks and projects

www.acn.net.au

An initiative of the Federal Department of Communications and the Arts

Museum Strategy and Marketing:

By P. Kotler and G. Neil

ISBN 0787909122 USD39.95 AUD67.75*

A practical guide for all types of museums. Explains the strategic relationship between audience and funding. Shows how marketing strategies can be used to make a healthy museum. The approach is encyclopedic, covering research, market segmentation, targeting, pricing, communications and public relations, strategic planning, and more.

*prices subject to change without notice



tel: 03 9210 7777
fax: 03 9210 7788

to browse & buy at country of origin prices visit our online bookshop at

www.dadirect.com.au

Professional Initiatives in Asia

Asialink Arts supports a range of programs that facilitate the exchange of cultural understanding and artistic endeavour between Australia and countries of the Asian region. Programs such as artists' residencies, touring exhibitions and advocacy enable Australians to develop their talents and experience by working in and with Asia, and by establishing personal contacts and ongoing communication networks. Two recent projects organised by Asialink Arts highlight the scope of projects being undertaken in the region.

The ASEAN Art Museum Professionals' Workshop and Study Tour, 1998

RHANA DEVENPORT

For two weeks during May, nineteen art museum professionals from nine ASEAN countries participated in an intensive study program in Australia. Participants were drawn from senior museum management and curatorial streams in Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar (Burma), Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

The program included eleven workshops and 21 visits to national, state, regional, university and specialist museums. Optional visits to commercial art galleries were also available. Eighty Australian museum personnel led workshops or addressed the delegation during these visits.

The tour provided delegates with an overview of current museum practice in Australia, while also offering opportunities for meaningful discussion and possible future collaborations. The program was developed as a direct result of the successful 1995 ASEAN Curatorial Training Workshop in Kuala Lumpur (auspiced by Asialink and Museums Australia) during which delegates from six ASEAN countries focused on planning processes involved in a contemporary art festival.¹ A recommendation from that workshop concerned the need for an expanded program involving museum and gallery visits in Australia. Consequently, the 1998 workshop and study tour was designed with a broad brief to address the conception, development, management and touring of major art exhibitions.

Museological practice was addressed on many levels. Innovative and flexible

lighting systems, conservation techniques, collection storage, collection and research database software, crate manufacture and in-house graphic design systems were demonstrated and discussed. Case studies offered practical strategies that would translate across delegates' own professional contexts. Specific issues identified prior to the program — including exhibition planning, collection management systems, exhibition display, security systems and public programs — drew special interest. During the program, models of community involvement, travelling exhibition programming, current conservation practice and photography storage procedures were also noted as being of special interest. Reference materials (including catalogues, CD-Roms, sample documents and resource listings) were freely available from all institutions and were much appreciated by delegates. Those with particular interests in curatorial models addressing contemporary art practice were offered extra gallery visits and meetings. As a result, a number of projects are now under negotiation.

On a global level critical issues confronting museums in the 21st century, including management, financial and visioning strategies, were addressed. Interestingly, many cities in Australasia and South-East Asia are currently engaged in museum expansion and restructuring, both architecturally and organisationally. Associated issues, shared experiences and optional approaches for the future were discussed at length.



Brunei Darussalam delegate Pengiran Haji Hashim (Director, Brunei Museum) on a site visit to the Museum of Sydney.

Filipino delegate Eric Zerrudo's comments typify the participants' responses,

'It was clear from the program that networks, both within the country and internationally, are extremely important, and although they take considerable time to nurture and develop they are essential for successful international projects. Also, one of the most valuable outcomes has been the establishment of person-to-person contacts with professionals within the Australian museum community, as well as within the ASEAN group itself. Another strong outcome has been the clear "vision" required for museum development and the visits provided opportunities to engage with key professionals involved with the expansion of museums as well as future programming.'²

It was apparent from the outset that the commitment of the international and Australian participants was total. All participating museums and organisations provided access to their personnel, information and venues with great generosity. Those involved strongly supported the continuation of subsequent programs and the expansion of established professional relationships, and believe that the program offered a genuine and valid contribution to the development of cultural understanding. By presenting practical systems and models, by inviting discussion and through encouraging person-to-person connections, it is hoped that the

program has substantially contributed to Australia's cultural engagement within the region.

Rhana Devenport is curator, Asia Pacific Triennial, Queensland Art Gallery.

References

1 Julie Ewington, Grace Cochrane, James Dexter, Simon Elliott and Joe Devilee led sessions during the 1995 ASEAN Curatorial

Training Workshop in Kuala Lumpur and generously continue to advise on the development and implementation of the Australian program.

2 Eric Zerrudo, Filipino delegate and director of the GSIS, Museum of Art, Philippines, in his summary statement of the program.

The 1998 workshop and study tour was organised through Asialink Arts by Alison Carroll, and led by Margaret Birtley (Deakin

University) and Rhana Devenport (Queensland Art Gallery). Grace Cochrane (Powerhouse Museum) and Simeon Kronenberg (Museums Australia) also offered valuable advice during the program's development. The program was supported by ASEAN-COCI (Association of South-East Asian Nations: Committee on Culture and Information), Business Victoria's Cultural Industries Program and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

ASEAN Workshops: Asialink and the National Gallery of Australia

RON RAMSEY

It was Alison Carroll's phone call from Asialink, asking whether I would be available to run a workshop in Singapore, about public communications in museums, that started me thinking: what would it be like delivering this sort of information to representatives of eight nations — a diverse range of countries, languages and museums; how effectively would we be able to communicate? Further phone calls to Alison and I was put in contact with Ms Thangamma Karthigesu of Singapore's National Heritage Board (NHB), custodian of the National Museum, the Singapore Art Museum and the Asian Civilisations Museum.

Thangam and the NHB were responsible for organising this ASEAN-COCI sponsored event. The workshop's objectives were to explore the relationship between education and public relations, focusing on how they complement each other and lead to a common goal; how information can be disseminated to the public; how schools can instil a sense of 'nationhood'; and how museums and exhibitions can be marketed in a competitive environment. The focus on programming and promotion was particularly relevant for Singaporean delegates as their three main museums are located within walking distance of each other, not far from Raffles' Hotel. A real challenge for them is to draw the public away from the shopping arcades of Orchard Road and into these museums located downtown.

It was an all-Australian presentation, which I believe is the result of Asialink's good networking and product delivery throughout Asia, and also the high regard in the region for our museums and their

services. The facilitators for the four day workshop were Jenny Manning from education and public programs at the NGA; Anne Gately, group marketing manager for Woods Bagot, and myself. Jacky Healy, former director of the Museum and Art Galleries of the Northern Territory (MAGNT) gave the keynote address 'From Darwin to Crocodiles: Communicating with the Community'. She spoke of the immediate tasks which faced her in Darwin and how she had marketed the Museum. She outlined a review of activities at MAGNT, which included a corporate planning process to clearly define its functions and objectives. Market research identified audiences, and a new corporate logo and design communicated clearly to the community and to major sponsors.

We had structured the Singapore program to ensure a balance of formal presentations and project work. The aim was to produce, at the end of the program, a hypothetical exhibition with a theme, marketing plan and public program. The workshop included a day at the Singapore Art Museum to allow the opportunity to interact with works of art. We also had to strike a balance between art, history and natural science museums as not all the delegates were art-oriented.

Participants were divided into groups to devise the mock 'exhibition' using postcards of various themes such as landscapes, animals, female figures and abstract art as materials. In these brainstorming sessions groups had to select a theme, title and target audience. They then wrote a media release and devised an education and public program to attract the widest possible audience. Using interview skills

practised in one of the workshops, selected delegates promoted their 'exhibition' to the 'press', while others acted as 'official representatives' to open the exhibition.

As presenters, we were watched with great interest on the opening morning of the workshop. This was partly a result of recent events in Australia — the workshop followed the Queensland elections and Pauline Hanson was front page news in Singapore's *Straits Times*. Thankfully, most Singaporeans at the workshop had been to Australia and knew of Ms Hanson's reputation — but I make the point for any of us working in Asia — we're now 'starting on the back foot'.

The delegates were terrific — enthusiastic, committed and, despite various levels of English, all helped each other in a wonderfully cooperative spirit. Their challenge will be to secure resources for their museums and to promote their collections and programs — not so easy in the current economic and political climate. Nonetheless, the delegates took with them a range of marketing and communication strategies to apply to their own situations.

Most importantly, the program introduced the delegates and the presenters to a valuable network of colleagues throughout a diverse and fascinating part of the world.

Ron Ramsey is head of education & public programs, National Gallery of Australia.

Forthcoming Asialink Arts projects include the selection of artists and art managers for around 30 residencies in Asia in 1999. Recent exhibitions include 'Enjoin: to join into, to urge,' curated by Ingrid Hoffman, Cairns Regional Gallery, which showed in Manila during November; 'Unhomely' curated by Jason Smith, National Gallery of Victoria, which showed at the Pusan International Contemporary Art Festival, Korea, during November; and 'Other Stories: Five Australian Artists' curated by Alison Carroll, which travelled to three venues in Pakistan during November and early December.

The 5th Annual Museums Australia Publication Design Awards

The Museums Australia Publication Design Awards were established in 1994 in recognition of the need to foster the highest standards of design in publications produced by public museums and galleries. They are now regarded as a mark of excellence and design achievement within Australia's museum community. Judges focus on excellence in the graphic design of museum publications, and the way in which a design interprets its subject matter, as well as the museum and its programs.

The 1998 Awards Presentation Ceremony was held on Tuesday, 13 October, in conjunction with the ICOM'98 conference in Melbourne. Hosted by Dr Chris Anderson (Vice-President, Museums Australia) the awards were announced by Ms Frances Lindsay (Director, Ian Potter Museum of Art) and presented by Mr Paul Stevens (Click Systems Pty Ltd).

There were eight categories of entry: Exhibition Catalogues; Posters; Books; Magazines; Education Kits; Electronic Publications; Annual Reports; and Supplementary Materials. The entries were also divided into three levels according to the annual operational budget of the institution.

Level 1 Annual Operational Budget less than \$250,000

Level 2 Annual Operational Budget between \$250,000 and \$1,500,000

Level 3 Annual Operational Budget more than \$1,500,000

The Publication Design Awards Committee would like to thank our major sponsor — Click Systems Pty Ltd.

Exhibition Catalogues

Level 1

First Place

Premium Collection Selected Works
Deakin University Museum of Art
Designer: Sharon McNamara/Liana Luccarini
Evolution Graphic Communications



Second Place

Ecologies of Place and Memory
University of Tasmania
Designer: Lorinda Taylor

Third Place

Material Perfection
Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery
Designer: Matthew Cullen/John Stringer/Neil Sellick

Lukas Kandl
ANU Drill Hall Gallery
Designer: Petr Herel

Level 2

First Place

Mask Auction
Jewish Museum of Australia



Designer:
Garry Emery
Emery
Vincent
Design

Second Place

A View of the Collections
New England Regional Art Museum
Designer: Angela Brown

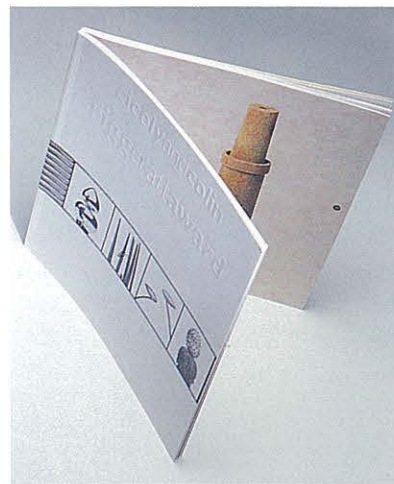
Third Place

Escape Artists: Modernists in the Tropics
Cairns Regional Gallery
Designer: Mandy Sullivan

Level 3

First Place

Cicely and Colin Rigg Craft Award 1997
National Gallery of Victoria
Designer: Fadi Abdel-Massih



Second Place

An Exquisite Eye
Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales
Designer: Spatchurst Design Associates

Third Place

Portraits of Oceania
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Designer: Analiese Cairns

Honourable Mention

Ginger Riley
National Gallery of Victoria
Designer: Norma van Rees

Rosalie Gascoigne — Material as Landscape
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Designer: Analiese Cairns

Posters

Level 1

Second Place

The Bogside Artists
Mildura Arts Centre
Designer: Dingo Design

Third Place

The Meeting Place
Artback NETS
Designer: Nadine Jones
Nova Graffix

Level 2

First Place

A Sense of Place
Parliament House Art Section
Designer: John White
City Graphics



Second Place

1998 Heritage Council Victoria Calendar
Heritage Victoria
Designer: Nick Mau
Heritage Council of Victoria

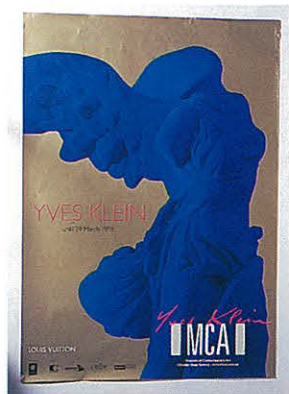
Third Place

Next Wave Festival 1998
Next Wave Festival Inc
Designer: Lin Tobias

Level 3

First Place

Yves Klein
Museum of Contemporary Art
Designer: Trudi Fletcher



Second Place

Stepping Out: Three Centuries of Shoes
Powerhouse Museum
Designer: Alison Hastie
Nova Design

Third Place

Ndebele — African Art in the Making
Auckland Art Gallery
Designer: Bates Advertising

Books

Level 1

Second Place

The Exhibition Handbook
Museums Australia (Vic)
Designer: Mark Brewster

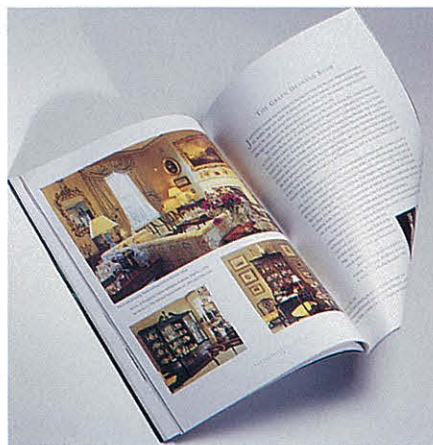
Third Place

Swingtime East Coast West Coast
Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery
Designer: Neil Sellick

Level 2

First Place

The Johnston Collection
The Johnston Collection
Designer: Alistair Hay
Monogram Graphic Design



Second Place

Installations
Institute of Modern Art
Designer: Rodney Spooner/Michael
Snelling/Anna Marsden

Third Place

Purpose: An Australian Regional Gallery
and Venue Development Guide
Art on the Move
Designer: Simon Elliot
The Globe

Level 3

First Place

Discovering the Powerhouse Museum
Powerhouse Museum
Designer: Catherine Martin
Beagle Press



Second Place

Backroom Briefings
National Library of Australia
Designer: Bev Swifte

Third Place

Evolution and Revolution: Chinese Dress
1700s–1900s
Powerhouse Museum
Designer: Deborah Brash
Brash Design

The scythe honed fine
National Library of Australia
Designer: Kathy Jakupec

Honourable Mention

Movements in Modern Art
Tate Gallery
Designer: Slater Anderson/Isambard
Thomas
Tate Gallery Publishing

Magazines

Level 1

First Place

Dialogue
West Space
Designer: Sarah Stubbs



Second Place

Object
Centre for Contemporary Craft
Designer: Analiese Cairns Design/Slade Smith Design

Third Place

Artscape
Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery
Designer: Margaret Hunt
Oxform Printery

Level 2

Second Place

Inherit
Heritage Victoria
Designer: Heritage Council of Victoria

Third Place

Limelight
Performing Arts Museum
Designer: George Yacub/Niki Voundoris
Victorian Arts Centre

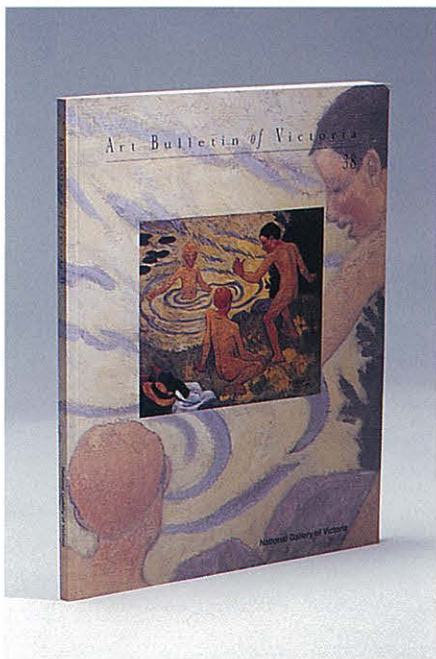
Honourable Mention

History
Royal Australian Historical Society
Designer: Mark Matheson

Level 3

First Place

Art Bulletin of Victoria
National Gallery of Victoria
Designer: Des Konstantinidis



Second Place

SAM Newsletter
South Australian Museum
Designer: Matthew Remphrey
Ian Kidd Design

Third Place

Powerline
Powerhouse Museum
Designer: Richardson Finley Design

Honourable Mention

National Library of Australian News
National Library of Australia
Designer: Bev Swifte

Education Kits

Level 1

Second Place

The Meeting Place
Artback NETS
Designer: Nadine Jones/Penny Miles
Artback NETS/Regional Galleries
Association of NSW

Level 2

First Place

Geelong Art Gallery Education Kit
Geelong Art Gallery
Designer: Ian Robertson



Second Place

Tee Physics — Electric Power
World of Energy
Designer: Philip McVey
The Globe Ad Company

Third Place

The G-File
Australian Gallery of Sport & Olympic
Museum
Designer: Sean Savannah/Bernadette
Murphy
Savanah Design

Level 3

First Place

Knights from Imperial Austria
National Gallery of Victoria
Designer: Cathy Bernaldo/Des
Konstantinidis



Second Place

Captive Lives
National Library of Australia
Designer: Kathy Jakupec

Third Place

Sydney Sites Map
Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales
Designer: Historic Houses Trust of New
South Wales

Honourable Mention

Voices for Democracy
National Archives of Australia
Designer: Zoe D'Arcy

Electronic Publications

Level 1

Third Place

Construct
University of Southern Queensland
Designer: Yvonne Wiese

Level 3

First Place

Real Wild Child! Australian Rock Music
1950s–90s
Powerhouse Museum
Designer: Mike Fronzek
Real Wild Child! consortium



Second Place

One Destiny! — The Federation Story
National Archives of Australia
Designer: Global Vision

Third Place

Convict Fleet to Dragon Boat
National Archives of Australia
Designer: Ripple Media

Annual Reports

Level 2

Second Place

Heritage Council Annual Report
Heritage Victoria
Designer: Heritage Council of Victoria

Third Place

Annual Report
Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory
Designer: Steven Carroll

Level 3

First Place

Art Gallery and Foundation Annual Reports
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Designer: Mark Boxshall



Second Place

Annual Report
Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales
Designer: Virginia Buckingham

Third Place

Annual Report
Australian Museum
Designer: Kristina Rand

The judging panel reserves the right not to award prizes in every category.

Supplementary Material

Level 1

Second Place

Ecologies of Place and Memory
University of Tasmania
Designer: Lorinda Taylor

Third Place

Inge King — Guardian Angel
Deakin University Museum of Art
Designer: Sharon McNamara/Uana Luccarini
Evolution Graphic Communication

Honourable Mention

Invitations
John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library
Designer: Steven Goddard/Insite Communication/Lesley Carman-Brown

Level 2

First Place

Prime Ministers on Prime Ministers
Old Parliament House
Designer: Trish MacKintosh
Rochfort Thomas MacKintosh



Second Place

Publication Flyers
Heritage Victoria
Designer: Heritage Council of Victoria

Third Place

Spring Time at Carrick Hill
Carrick Hill
Designer: Greg Rice
Clemenger Adelaide

Honourable Mention

Opening Invitations
Brisbane City Gallery
Designer: Clara Trifunovich
Liveworm Studio

Level 3

First Place

An Exquisite Eye exhibition invitation
National Library of Australia
Designer: Kathy Jakupec



Second Place

Captive Lives exhibition invitation
National Library of Australia
Designer: Kathy Jakupec

Third Place

Store Catalogue
Museum of Contemporary Art
Designer: Trudi Fletcher

Honourable Mention

Evolution and Revolution: Chinese Dress 1700s–1900s
Powerhouse Museum
Designer: Nova Design

Orientalism — Delacroix to Klee
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Designer: Analiese Cairis

Judging Panel: Ian Watts, Alistair Hay, Anthony Knight, Dana Rowan, Oliver Streeton, Kathy Richards, Sue Allnutt

Photographer: Sam Karanikos, Whitehouse



Cultural Reverberations Between Australia and Japan

NATALIE KING AND PROFESSOR KAZUKO KOIKE

Professor Kazuko Koike, founding director of the visionary and contemporary Sagacho Exhibit Space, has initiated and curated over 100 exhibitions at her independent gallery — the first alternative space in Koto-ku, a historical ward area of downtown Tokyo. Professor Koike is also head of the fashion design course and a lecturer in the Design Department, Environmental Art and Design, at Musashino Art University. She has published, edited and translated books on Judy Chicago, Eileen Gray and Issey Miyake.

Earlier this year, Professor Koike visited Australia as part of a cultural exchange program between Australia and Japan. The program involved four Australian artists working in Japan as residents of the Australia Council's Tokyo studio between 1992-95. The resulting collaborative exhibition, 'Yoin: Reverberations between Australia & Japan' was displayed at Tokyo's Sagacho Exhibit Space and Melbourne's RMIT Gallery. Curator Natalie King later spoke to Professor Koike by email about Sagacho and the importance of cultural exchanges between curators, artists, writers and institutions.

A recent article in The Japan Times reviewed the two-person installation 'Gohasam' (starting from zero) and described the innovative aspects of Sagacho Exhibit Space,

*'Experimentation is nothing new for the Sagacho. Occupying some 300 sq m of a tired but charming 1927 building that once housed Japan's main rice market, the gallery has been taking chances since it was founded by Musashino Art University professor Kazuko Koike some 15 years ago. Marooned in a warehouse wasteland a good 10 minutes from the closest train station, Koike's gallery has nonetheless debuted many now-famous Japanese artists — including Yasumasa Morimura and Rie Naito — and always featured a smart selection of avant-garde foreign artists. With near-perfect combination of vision, a large space in which to realize it and the determination to do so, Sagacho is, not surprisingly, regarded as the best gallery in the city by many Tokyo art insiders.'*¹

Clearly, Sagacho has a unique position in the contemporary arts landscape in Tokyo. How was it initiated and what was your role?

I founded Sagacho Exhibit Space in the autumn of 1983. Its organisational framework was based upon a design, editorial and project planning company I founded some years before, a studio called Kitchen

Inc., where I cooked up ideas for art and design projects. Kitchen Inc. started as an editorial and graphic arts office for commercial campaigns and has been in operation since 1976. Later, I shifted to a more independent kind of planning organisation for exhibition ideas. We would plan and execute the shows as well as edit the catalogues. During that period, for example, exhibitions were held at Parco, Seibu Museum and Art Forum, as I enjoyed doing independent curatorial work on shows about artists like Frida Kahlo, Charles Rennie Mackintosh and some Japanese designer shows. The

underlying philosophy of Sagacho Exhibit Space is to create a new approach to art and society in Japan. I felt the necessity to create an alternative art space for Japan because in those days Japanese museums and commercial galleries did not function as support bodies for young or unestablished artists who were not well-known or members of prestigious groups.

How do public art spaces operate in Japan, and specifically in Tokyo?

In the latter half of the 1980s, the Japanese economy was stretching its wings towards a buoyant financial future and museums and galleries were busy introducing, importing and/or investing in famous artists' paintings and sculptures from the West. Fighting the current, Sagacho Exhibit Space emerged in this frightening cultural climate of financial gamble with an urgent mission to champion emerging Japanese artists. In the 1980s, Japan developed many large-scale museum buildings and art spaces but in my opinion they were not really functioning as attractive, stimulating or even inspiring undertakings.

Do you seek funding from the government, corporate or private sector?

In general, public funding, i.e. private sector or individual support, is very hard for us to realise in Japan. There is no tax deduction for artistic support so there are



Left to right: Emiko Namikawa, Lunami Gallery; Natalie King; Kazuko Koike, Sagacho Exhibit Space; Sachiko Tamai, Australia-Japan Foundation at the opening of 'Yoin: Reverberations between Australia & Japan', Sagacho Exhibit Space, 29 January 1998.

few people who contribute. We have to approach corporate foundations for support. Usually, support for individual artists is easier if we are looking for smaller amounts of money of around 200,000-300,000 yen. It can be used to pay for artists' materials but does not pay for the actual running costs of the facility. Few Japanese companies have departments devoted to social contributions or to so-called 'corporate communications', which take care of artists or artistic events.

Large-scale events which are tied in with advertising campaigns have a phenomenal effect but, in such cases, the expectations (or demands) for huge numbers of visitors at the event is a high priority for the sponsor, and a considerable pressure on us. Sagacho is grateful for foundational support from KAO Foundation, POLA Foundation and Saison Corporation. My own personal business commitments as a creative supervisor made MUJI Company donations possible for some exhibitions. And Miyake Design Studio and Cōmmes des Garçons are supportive of specific exhibition proposals. These foundations and companies value the quality of curatorial and artistic ideas.

You have initiated first time projects with some of Japan's leading artists such as Yasumasa Morimura and Hiroshi Sugimoto, not to mention international artists such as Sylvie Fleury. How do you strike a balance between a local and an international program?

During our first ten years we were chiefly concerned with promoting emerging Japanese artists. I was upset with a situation in which they had to pay for the rental of gallery space in which to show their works, while at the same time museums did not pay any attention to them. However, for the past five years I have gradually developed my own specific interests and have been involved in finding new and up-coming artists on a more global basis. For me there is no criteria regarding the balance of local and international; I am thinking on a global scale.

How have you developed an international program for Sagacho Exhibit Space that crosses the boundaries of contemporary art, fashion, architecture and design?

I think my varied career has had an important effect upon the development of the international program for Sagacho Exhibit Space. During the hot-steaming

sixties and seventies I was able to develop my skills with the best contemporary colleagues in fields such as graphics, fashion, interior design and architecture. We were the emerging professionals of the time. Then, during the eighties, we became firmly established on the international scene. Through editorial and museum collaborations I was able to develop good relationships with many creators working in different genres. In another way, I have tried to ignore the hierarchies both in and out of the worlds of art and design. I have approached many different genres with the same attitude and relationships.

Your interest in fashion is renowned, especially your friendship with Issey Miyake. How do you think these personal relationships and interests have affected your directorship of Sagacho Exhibit Space?

I am lucky to have had so many powerful, understanding, supportive and active friends. Along with many designers and creative thinkers, we share the feelings of our contemporaries. We have also had to stand up and make ourselves heard, as official and government support was often lacking.

Earlier this year, our joint efforts culminated in the exhibition 'Yoin: Reverberations between Australia & Japan'. The exhibition sought to return to Tokyo, in the spirit of cultural exchange, the work of four Australian artists — Charles Anderson, Louise Forthun, Penelope Lee and Andrew Hurlé — who had undertaken studio residencies in Tokyo. The project involved a series of visits to Japan in order to start a dialogue with Sagacho and to form a meaningful professional relationship. What is your impression of the value of artist-in-residence programs in the context of joint exhibitions and projects?

Joint exhibitions or projects which result from artist-in-residence programs are, for me, the most necessary steps in reinforcing the cultural exchange concept. While major museums may be able to transport their masterpieces from country to country in exchanges, it is still more enjoyable for me to see active artists spending time on other cultural soils, then creating work from their physical and metaphysical experiences. In this way, 'Yoin' was truly successful and I was able to fully appreciate the support of the Australian Government in the artist-in-residence program in Japan, and I hope it will be sustained in the future.

Our project involved collaboration between governments, public institutions, curators and artists. Each participant and organisation injected particular skills and expertise to the project, which was essentially modelled on a symmetrical framework. Do you think this is an effective model for establishing collaborative projects between Australia and Japan?

It should be mentioned here that exchanges, not only at the level of artists but also at the level of curators and writers, should be encouraged, as in the case of working with you. I always make a claim for support in the mounting of exhibitions with curatorial involvement, but I am not finding satisfactory support from the Japanese side. I think that a program for curators-in-residence may become more important in the future.

What kinds of ancillary events do you program for Sagacho Exhibit Space?

We host artists' talks on the occasion of each exhibition, sometimes on the scale of a symposium on related themes. For music performances, we have organised a series of events called MUSES (Music at Sagacho Exhibit Space). MUSES was part of our musical program and utilised the services of the contemporary Japanese composer Akira Inoue, and three other professional music and event producers. Among the groups presented was Meiwa Denki — two brothers who create their own musical instruments and play their original music as a performing art. These music programs were an experiment during the 1994 and 1995 seasons. They were independent from visual arts but in some cases the musical presentation itself involved a visual presentation, such as Meiwa Denki.

What do you envisage for the future for Sagacho Exhibit Space?

While our financial base is still weak and we have to push for funds, I still feel confident of launching into creative work with other curators and organisers of different nationalities. My dream is to turn the whole Sagacho building into a visual and performing arts complex for the city of Tokyo.

Natalie King is an independent curator and writer based in Melbourne.

Reference

- 1 DiPietro, Monty June 20, 1998, *The Japan Times*.

From Whence to Whither?

A Special Interest Group in Museums Australia

PETER STANBURY

The Council of Australian University Museums and Collections (CAUMAC), the association representing those involved with university museums and collections, joined Museums Australia as a special interest group earlier this year. In such a relationship it is important for both parties to have a realistic perception of the other if there are to be significant gains for the Australian museum community. In this report, Peter Stanbury gives his personal overview of the concerns which are central to both constituencies.

Background

CAUMAC was established in 1992 amidst concerns about reduced resources for university museums and an apparent lack of understanding of university museums by the national bodies involved with these institutions.

CAUMAC's founders decided the situation called for immediate action and set out to establish effective communication and joint action between university museums at the state and national levels. They also sought to make universities aware of the urgent problems and responsibilities facing their museums, and to raise professional standards within these museums. In raising government awareness of the issues, CAUMAC sought a formal review.

Achievements

CAUMAC has made significant advances in the past five years. It has played a key role in the two reviews of university museums and collections, and its own substantial submission was well received by the review committee. *Cinderella Collections*, the first review in 1996, made 68 recommendations. The second review, *Transforming Cinderella Collections* (1998) reported that half of these recommendations had been substantially implemented and action had been initiated on a further quarter. Today, 32 of the 36 Australian universities with collections have a formal written policy for their museums and collections, or a draft awaiting final approval.

Prior to the reviews even the number of university museums and collections was underestimated by 50 per cent. However, we now know that there are 275 collections in universities throughout the country, containing some five million objects, with a value approaching

\$AUS1,000 million, and employing 225 staff. A directory of these university collections, the Australian University Museums Information System, (AUMIS at <http://www.lib.mq.edu.au/mcm/aumis/>) contains contact information and basic statistics on the collections.

CAUMAC has also made its presence felt to positive effect within universities. In New South Wales the Vice-Chancellor's Committee has formed a Standing Committee on Museums and Collections. This committee levies universities in NSW and the ACT to provide for staff training, mentorships, joint research funds and, from 1999, with the assistance of Visions Australia, a major travelling exhibition.

University museums also enjoy the growing partnership of Australian University Museums on Line (AUMOL at <http://aumol.usyd.edu.au/>). Among other collections, classical archaeology specimens feature in the database. This is important because Australian federal and state museums do not collect or regularly exhibit in this field despite indications of strong public demand. AUMOL is seamlessly interfaced with Australian Museums on Line (AMOL).

Allied to AUMOL, and managed also from the University of Sydney by a partnership of universities, is the National Teaching and Learning Database (NTLD), which will provide a web site with images, text, tables, video, sound and small software programs for specialised teaching and material.

There have been alarms and disappointments. The University of Queensland funded an internal review of its own museums and collections, upgraded its Geology Museum, constructed one of the first university collection home pages (Physics), and became a partner in the

AUMOL project. But in August, the University of Queensland Senate passed a motion to give its Geology Collection to the state museum, before it had had an opportunity to consider the university-wide policy for its museums and collections. The university recently postponed action on the Senate decision until the matter has been further considered. There were tense moments, too, when the Council of the University of Adelaide discussed giving its Mawson Collection to the South Australian Museum. Up to two curator positions may also be lost at Macquarie University, although provision is being made for retaining the collections.

In general, however, senior executives of universities are better informed and advised than before CAUMAC and are thus able to make better decisions about museums and collections.

CAUMAC has proved very effective and has attracted many university museum people to its organisation who had not previously shown interest in the museum sector per se. Now CAUMAC is a SIG of Museums Australia, there is potential for these recruits to make a useful contribution to the general museum sector.

Museums Australia and University Museums

While CAUMAC was busy with its own projects, Museums Australia was also active on behalf of smaller museums, including university museums. It formed a Standing Committee for Regional, Local and Specialist Museums (RLS), and a representative from university museums was invited to join the committee.

The RLS Standing Committee was an active committee of the association. It promoted widespread networks and, in 1998, published *Caring for our Culture*, the national guidelines for museums, galleries and keeping places. The committee's *Audit of Resources for Museums* and its *Strategic Planning Manual for Small Museums* are currently being published. It also provided travelling fellowships to enable people from small museums to attend conferences and undertake internships.

As part of a review of the structure of its standing committees, the council of Museums Australia has incorporated the RLS as a working party of a broader charter undertaken by the Museum Practice Standing Committee. Both the standing committee and the working party, together with the Community Museums SIG and CAUMAC, will work across issues affecting the sector.

Where To Now?

In seeking Museums Australia's support for university museums, CAUMAC and Australia's universities must expect that they have an equal responsibility to contribute to the wider agenda of Museums Australia. The long history of active contribution by members of university museums to the national museums' agenda should be maintained and extended.

Each university in Australia has a senior member of staff who is the contact person for issues pertaining to its museums, and the addresses of all university curators are listed in the AUMIS directory. Through these avenues, Museums Australia could raise its profile within universities and show how the wider museum sector could contribute to research and teaching. New partnerships could result.

University staff engaged in museum training use university museums to help prepare their students for a career. However, as noted in the *Cinderella Reports*, campus museums are increasingly used in a variety of non-museology tertiary courses. Many university museums conduct lectures, run workshops, accept students on practicum placement and make their resources available for

research. These activities contribute to the university mission and should be seen by Museums Australia as significant investments in the wider museum culture. Positive museum experiences on campus build museum audiences for the future and also help to develop a constituency for the future maintenance and development of museums in society.

Universities are rapidly embracing distance education and lifelong learning. There is opportunity for Museums Australia, in partnership with universities, to reach a more diverse and motivated audience, unlimited by geographical boundaries. Universities, assisted by their contacts through CAUMAC, have the opportunity to franchise their teaching (or learning) activities through kindred institutions such as museums.

University museums are staffed in diverse ways, though with few paid staff. Whatever their designation, university museum staff have won their positions through fierce competition and hold their positions through demonstrated performance. They can also make substantial contributions to the general museum sector.

One of the *Cinderella Collections'* recommendations was that government bodies should give university museums access to funds equal to that enjoyed by other museums. There has been improvement in this area, but some members of adjudicating committees still see universities as wealthy institutions which should support 'their' collections. University collections are maintained for all Australians; and frequent university redundancies well demonstrate the lack of wealth. Now that CAUMAC is a special interest group of Museums

such notions. In turn, universities must also be encouraged to recognise their full responsibilities to the museum sector and to the community.

Change is a fact of life. Those who adapt and plan are increasingly rewarded. Universities, like the larger state and national museums, are becoming adept at managing change. Partnerships with mutual aims greatly assist the process. How can partnerships between universities and museums be nurtured?

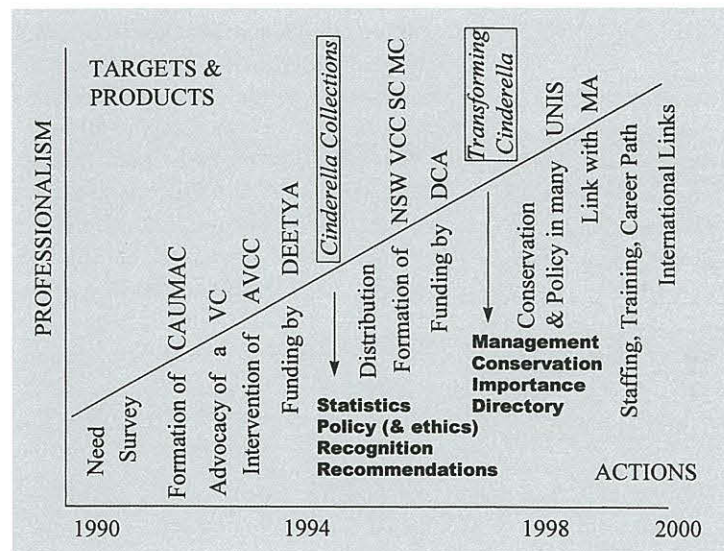
Conclusion

CAUMAC has recently been taking a breath. However well earned, such action is unwise unless occupied with active planning.

CAUMAC cannot contribute to a partnership unless it has:

- Members — Can CAUMAC retain its membership? For membership to grow, benefits must be demonstrated. Both parties have a stake in the outcome. Should SIGs with similar interests amalgamate? For example, should CAUMAC join forces with the Community and Specialist Museums SIG? This SIG has representatives from small museums, including army museums, which, like university museums, operate within various local authority structures and have diverse collections and access to useful power bases.
- Good communication — CAUMAC has ready access to information technology (IT), but where is its home page and monthly news update? Does Museums Australia have sufficient on-line presence, individually or in collaboration with AMOL?
- An understanding of its place among the various museum sectors — Do CAUMAC members as a group understand where their collections fit in the national scene? Where are the links between Academe and the museum profession?

of Museums Australia, it seeks active help from the association in dispelling



The formation of CAUMAC and its activities helped increase professionalism in some university museums. The bold type indicates what was achieved from the two reviews of university museums. The last item, international links, is presently being addressed, but staffing, training and career paths await attention.

CAUMAC (Council of Australian University Museums and Collections); VC (Vice-Chancellor); AVCC (Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee); DEETYA (Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs); NSW VCC SC MC (NSW Vice-Chancellors' Committee's Standing Committee on Museums and Collections); DCA (Department of Communications and the Arts); UNIS (Universities); MA (Museums Australia Inc.)

Is there an understanding of the ways in which active CAUMAC members can contribute to Museums Australia?

- Support from its parent universities — Do universities support CAUMAC's activities? Has there been sufficient advocacy and is it understood that university museums not only serve an individual department, but also their university and the Australian nation? Do Australia's universities understand Museums Australia's vision?
- Activity — CAUMAC members must be encouraged to participate as members of Museums Australia's committees. All active SIGs should encourage their members to seek positions on Museums Australia's council and committees.
- Energy and vision — CAUMAC must have strong leadership which is supported by active membership. There must also be an understanding of Museums Australia's vision amongst the SIGs.

CAUMAC has enjoyed some notable achievements but it must find the energy

and leadership to define new goals if it is to be an effective force for university museums. Museums Australia is potentially a dynamic ally and can provide positive support for SIGs. SIG executives and Museums Australia should work closely together and be seen to do so. Future challenges can only be met by clear communication and strong partnerships. Time and resources are well invested in museum partnerships which provide above average returns. They bring lateral solutions, augmenting the all-important internal bottom-up and top-down discussions.

Solutions of best fit are the result of team work. There must be a clear and mutual understanding between CAUMAC (and similar SIGs) and Museums Australia as a whole or the Australian museum community will be poorer. Unless needs are met, new groups will arise phoenix-like from the ashes of spent ones.

Peter Stanbury, *Collections & Heritage, Vice-Chancellors' Office, Macquarie University.*

(I am indebted to Brian Shepherd, president of CAUMAC — who is recovering from a serious illness; Karl Van Dyke, acting CAUMAC president; and Barrie Reynolds, CAUMAC's past president, with whom I have discussed ideas for this article. However, the opinions expressed remain my responsibility.)

At the recent ICOM and UNESCO forums in Melbourne, meetings were held to discuss the formation of an international university museums group. Two hundred people have expressed interest from countries in Africa, America, Asia and Europe, as well as ICOM Secretary General, Mr Manus Brinkman. A letter has been sent to ICOM headquarters in Paris proposing an International Committee for University Museums. If such a committee is formed, new members for ICOM may be recruited from universities. The aims of the proposed committee reflect issues affecting university collections including protection, access, staffing and the facilitation of new links between institutions. Contact Peter Stanbury on (02) 9850 7431 or email peter.stanbury@mq.edu.au

Diversity at the Powerhouse Museum

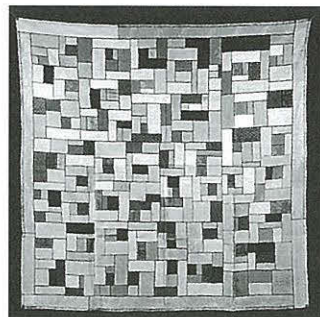
'Ngaramang Bayumi: an exhibition about Indigenous Australian music and dance' presents traditional and contemporary culture of Indigenous Australians. Exhibition development was informed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisory committees. Indigenous Australian artists also played a prominent role: Bronwyn Bancroft designed and hand-painted the *Bloodline* design on 600 m of dyed and silkscreened fabric which lines discrete exhibition areas and the tunnels that link them; David Page composed a surround-sound audioscape. A Museum survey of visitors revealed that both features are especially popular and that 81 per cent of those surveyed learnt something as a result of seeing the exhibition.

Bronwyn Bancroft painting her *Bloodline* image which represents the past, present and future of Indigenous peoples.



Ngaramang Bayumi was reviewed in the May issue of *Museum National*. Until 28 February 1999.

'Rapt in colour: Korean textiles and costumes of the Chosŏn dynasty'. On loan from the Museum of Korean Embroidery in Seoul, this major Korean exhibition includes a collection of intricately embroidered costumes and more than 60 wrapping cloths (*pojagi*) from the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. During the Chosŏn dynasty (1392-1910), wrapping cloths of striking design and brilliant colour occupied a prominent



min po – wrapping cloth for ordinary people. *Oppo*, thin silk with patchwork design, 19th century

place in the daily lives of Korean people, serving as both ceremonial and functional items. Made by women from scraps of fabric, including silk and cotton, they signified respect for the object being wrapped and its recipient. Until 18 April 1999.

'Precious legacy: treasures from the Jewish Museum in Prague' presents a collection of unique objects, some dating from the sixteenth century. The exhibition includes manuscripts, paintings, richly embroidered synagogue textiles, silver ceremonial objects and folk artefacts. They tell the story of central European Jewish communities, with audiovisual testimonies from Czech Australian Jewish people helping to bring the objects to life. Until 28 February 1999.



Synagogue Key from Maisl's Synagogue, part of the Jewish Museum, Prague. Made from cast steel, end of 19th century

First Impressions

KENNETH PARK

Judging by the unexpectedly large crowds, the new Museum of New Zealand, 'Te Papa', is a huge success with the public. It seems that everyone wants to experience it.

Designed by Ivan Mercep of Jazmax Architects, Te Papa, 'our place', is spectacularly sited on Wellington Harbour and features the wonderful Bush City exhibition (an outdoor exhibition area). It is a large portside 'warehouse scale' building that has provoked mixed reactions in Wellington as to its architectural merit.

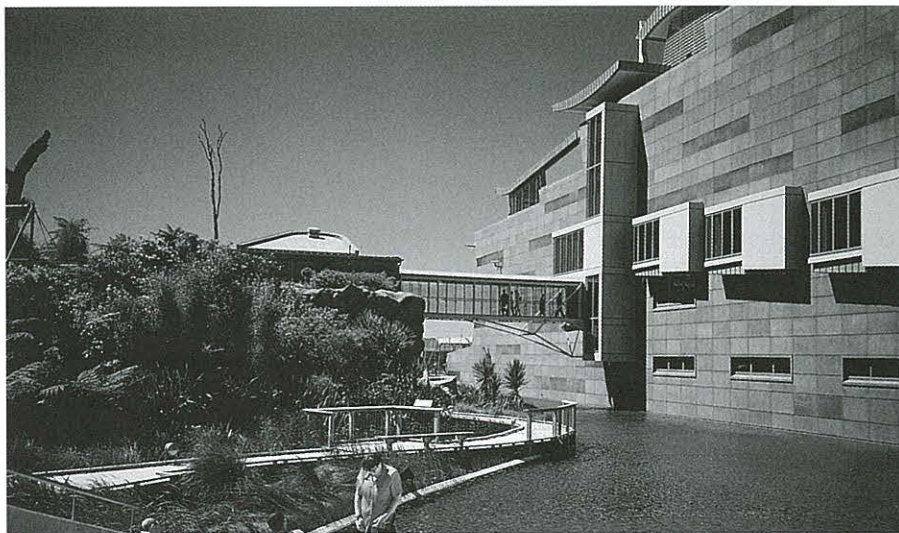
In Noumea, Renzo Piano, co-designer of the Pompidou Centre, has given the world another wonderful museum, the Tjibaou Cultural Centre. This amazing new building in the French Pacific is also destined to keep the tongues of museum professionals and public alike wagging for many years to come.

The two museums are very different. For me, Te Papa is all about challenging and innovative exhibition design that creates, at times, an intense visitor experience. The variety of small and large-scale themed exhibitions engage visitors, prompting some sort of response: good, bad or indifferent. Collections of artefacts are 'mixed together' to provide a series of social statements that are intended to make visitors think. Paintings are no longer simply lined up along a wall; they are presented alongside other objects familiar to us through everyday life, such as furniture.

In many ways it is nothing like a museum but more, perhaps, like the latest ultra-modern shopping mall. In fact, the line between visitor and exhibit is so unclear that visitors can forget they are in a museum and staff have been forced to install 'please do not touch' signs.

On the other hand, Tjibaou makes its impact as a series of ten stunningly sited buildings that are a remarkable blend of Indigenous and Western architectural traditions. It looks fantastic from a distance with what looks like a string of Kanak huts running along the spine of Tina Peninsula, 16 km from the town centre. Like a superbly interpreted artefact, it tells a story of the Pacific and its cultures.

Named after Jean-Marie Tjibaou, a Kanak nationalist assassinated in 1989,



Spectacularly sited on Wellington Harbour, Te Papa features the Bush City exhibition, an outside exhibition area. Photo Kenneth Park

the Cultural Centre explores the issue of cultural identity. As you wander through the grounds, along the Kanak Path, you find the traditional culture laid out in a series of external exhibits, which include Kanak huts (points of reference for the architectural wonder that is the Cultural Centre).

The interior of the building features traditional Western-style galleries that work well and brilliantly exploit the natural light. The various hut-like elements of the Cultural Centre building are linked by a long spine-like corridor, which is also one of the 'meeting places' of the Centre. These hut-like structures display Indigenous traditional art in the nearest thing to an authentic setting. Some also serve as meeting and research areas.

The quality of contemporary art and the magnificence of traditional art is impressive. However, one wonders, particularly as an outsider, if the messages of the exhibitions could have been more convincingly conveyed with more interpretive aids. The introductory audiovisual presentation was very enjoyable but could have said more. Indeed, the Cultural Centre is yet to fully exploit the potential of its interior spaces, some of which seemed under-utilised. Tjibaou's challenge is to successfully develop its exhibition and associated education programs to match the quality of the visionary building. I am pleased to say that Tjibaou is doing this, not just at the local level,

but also at the international level where, for example, it is developing relationships with Australian institutions and organisations. If the architecture is symbolic of the 'body' of Kanak culture, then revealing and revelling in the soul of this culture, like most cultures subject to colonial rule, will take time.

Tjibaou makes a wonderful signature-like opening statement. It is more than just a building, it is emotional architecture and I was more enraptured by the exterior presence of the building and the surrounding landscape, dotted with superb exhibits telling the story of the Indigenous societies, than I was by the interior displays. For me, the building imparted a far more lasting message.

Conversely, Te Papa's strength ultimately lies in what is happening on the inside and the way it challenges the way museums do things.

Both are must-see museums.

Kenneth W. Park is community affairs manager at Wesley College, Melbourne.

Kenneth Park acknowledges the Friends of MoNZ, Te Papa Tongarewa, Air New Zealand and particularly Tourism New Zealand for their support during his visit to New Zealand earlier this year.

Diversity of Purpose and People

The Second National Remote Areas Museum Conference

KAY PALMER

In August, 75 attendees forded creeks and battled through flooded roads to enjoy two days of lively presentations, discussions, workshops and exhibitions at the Second National Remote Areas Museum Conference in Cobar. The papers were interesting, many were heartfelt, and some raised impassioned responses.

Mining represents Cobar's past, present and, hopefully, its future. Dr Peter Standish, a consulting mining engineer, addressed many of the issues at the heart of this sometimes controversial industry and the relationships between the miners' industry and local communities. Museums in mining towns such as Cobar can, with cooperation and collaboration from the mining companies, play an important part in ensuring that the history of mines and miners is not lost. He also outlined advances made in environmental rehabilitation and the increasing sensi-

tivity to Aboriginal and European cultural heritage concerns, an aspect of the mining industry that needs to be understood and supported by heritage institutions.

Dr Tamsin Donaldson's address on the culture, language and history of the Wangaybuwan people offered a timely insight into the living community of Cobar's original inhabitants, and the ongoing exchanges between all cultures.

Tim Hart, project manager of the AMOL Coordination Unit and Luisa Dal Molin, project officer with the Department of Communications and the Arts, demonstrated various Internet-available, museum-related information sources and packages. Responses were heated. Participants felt that institutions in large population centres have always assumed that the information revolution has been for everyone and that the tyranny of distance is no more. This assumption was

strongly refuted. Most remote area museums and heritage organisations draw their paid and volunteer staff from a small population base and training requires enormous investments of time, resources and travel. Upgrading information and accessing expert help present similar problems. People working in these under-resourced conditions are not consulted about their needs as it is the major rural centres close to the big cities that have generally been considered examples of 'remoteness', and therefore suitable testing grounds for the various packages. Both speakers suggested ongoing debate via the AMOL discussion site. It was also suggested that the HCC's project to produce a significance manual should be trialed in a remote area.

Chris Dalitz, Advance Energy's historian and archivist, touched on the concept of the company as a 'good corporate citizen'.

99

S
E
E
Y
O
U
A
T
E
C
U

Get your career sorted

Recordkeeping Studies

Looking for a leading edge course in records and document management? Need the flexibility of self paced independent learning? ECU offers courses which:

- are available in distance education mode (requiring no on-campus attendance);
- employ the latest technologies (CD-ROM and Internet); and
- have been developed in co-operation with national and international content experts to meet the requirements of new and emerging standards in record and document management.

Postgraduate and Graduate

- Graduate Diploma of Science (Archives and Records)
- Master of Science (Information Science)

Undergraduate/Professional Development

- Bachelor of Science (Communications and Information Technology) (Records minor)
- University Certificate in Public Sector Records Management

These courses are recognised by the Records Management Association of Australia. Special entry and advanced standing are available. Course details available at <http://liswww.fste.ac.cowan.edu.au>

Applications close soon.

For further information contact:

Postgrad/Grad/ Professional Development Kay Noble, phone: (08) 9370 6344, fax: (08) 9370 6624
email: k.noble@cowan.edu.au

Undergraduate: Pam Phillips, phone: (08) 9370 6299, fax: (08) 08 9370 6100,
email: p.phillips@cowan.edu.au or phone K. Anderson on (08) 9370 6276.

www.cowan.edu.au



EDITH COWAN
UNIVERSITY
PERTH WESTERN AUSTRALIA

BENCHMARK EC5445

Many large companies support internal historical archives and collections and also become involved in the community by funding local heritage projects. However, the benefits must be balanced by an awareness of differing agendas and the potentially destructive effect of the market forces that operate on corporations.

Syd Kirkby, MBE, spoke about his experiences of hardship and achievement in the Antarctic, which epitomises remoteness in terms of its facilities, distance and size. Mr Kirkby made a passionate plea for help in establishing a permanent Antarctic collection/exhibition.

Kay Soderlund, director of Museums Australia (NSW), spoke about the proposed amalgamation of the branch with the Regional Galleries Association. This could mean MA (NSW) would no longer be a membership body and that it would lose its advocacy power. While currently a state-based issue, it may have national implications and feedback from members is essential.

The conference gave participants a chance to stocktake the wealth of their remote areas and encouraged them to make others aware of this rich resource of human endeavour, and to search for

the hidden lodes that run through their own towns and districts.

Kay Palmer is assistant curator at Great Cobar Outback Heritage Centre

The conference was supported by the Australian Museum, the National Museum of Australia, Museums Australia and the Commonwealth Department of Communications and the Arts. Papers will be published, with profits going to the Antarctic collection/exhibition project. A third conference is planned for 1999. Contact Colin Jones, curator, Great Cobar Outback Centre (02) 6836 1194, fax (02) 6836 1818.

Interpreting into the Future: Interpretation as Management

RACHEL FAGGETTER

In September this year Heritage Interpretation International, in partnership with Interpretation Australia, held its 5th World Congress in Sydney. With 200 delegates from thirteen countries it signified a new stage in the consolidation of heritage interpretation as a profession, and showed the extraordinary range of people who teach, research or work in the field. They represented national parks, Aboriginal keeping places, historic houses, urban and maritime parks, local historical societies, museums of every kind, and government and private organisations. The Old Quarantine Station on Sydney's North Head provided a fabulous setting rich in cultural and natural history.

The congress theme — the future role of interpretation in the conservation of our natural and cultural heritage — attracted interesting presenters.

Don Aldridge, the Scottish guru, transformed the overhead projector into a major art form as he depicted the seven hells of interpretation. Tim Merriman, of the US National Association for Interpretation, reminded us of our advocacy and political roles. Vladimir Krogus, from Moscow, reflected on the responsibilities of conserving and presenting Russia's 383 historic towns in the context of rapid socioeconomic change. Mike Watson and Dave Dahlen, directors of education and training for the US National Parks Service, refreshed our understanding of first prin-

ciples. Evelyn Maher, a Barkandji woman, challenged us on the vital theme of Aboriginal control of the representation and interpretation of their country. Sam Ham, educator and activist in international interpretation training, shared his practical enthusiasm for content and power walking and talking. Canadians talked of picking up the pieces after the overly enthusiastic application of downsizing and outsourcing of public programs.

In the Australian context, activity and interest in interpretation has never been higher, a reflection of pressures for high quality cultural tourism and ecotourism, demand from our ever more informed and sophisticated visitors, and leadership from some major cultural institutions. Sharon Sullivan, head of the Australian Heritage Commission, which provided major support for the congress, signalled the Commission's increasing support for interpretation and public education. Pam Allan, the NSW minister responsible for NSW national parks, also a major sponsor, opened the congress with the encouraging announcement of a new SES position for interpretation and community education.

The national awards for interpretation excellence were taken out by Tasmania and West Australia, both scenes of lively activity. The Queensland Department of Heritage and Environment now boasts

more than 40 full-time interpreters. And if all this wasn't enough, the Australian and New Zealand Ministerial Environment Committee (ANZEC) has commissioned a report on benchmarking and best practice in interpretation and education in parks and protected areas, with a report due soon.

The thinking and talking consolidated and settled on a number of themes. Chief among these was the idea that interpretation is management; not just a management tool, still less icing on the cake, the last thing to be planned if there's room in the budget, or the first thing to be offered for contracting out after rubbish collection.

Rather, interpretation is whole-site institutional planning from the top down, just as it is design, staff training, publications, marketing, community participation, research and joint management with Aboriginal people. If we see everything we do and everything we say as providing an interpretive opportunity, we will understand what constitutes excellent practice in interpretation.

Interpretation is the art of communicating the meaning and significance of a place in order to secure visitor understanding, appreciation and support for its conservation.

Rachel Faggetter is national president of Interpretation Australia.

Encyclopaedia of Underwater and Maritime Archaeology

Edited by James Delgado. British Museum Press, London 1997.

This is the first comprehensive illustrated encyclopaedic reference book on the discovery and recovery of the submerged past. Written by a team of over 170 international experts, anthropologists, archaeologists, historians and other scientists, it covers all aspects of the theory and practice of maritime archaeology. This fascinating book, well illustrated and easy to read, explores spectacular underwater discoveries from around the world and throughout time.

The book contains much more than just shipwrecks. It has ship and boat burials and other ship or boat sites on land as well as non-shipwreck sites. These include submerged prehistoric American Indian settlements and other submerged settlements from the Bronze and Iron Age in Europe. It also includes sunken Phoenician, Greek and Roman cities as well as inundated port and harbour sites.

Detailed entries also cover techniques of excavation and conservation, treatment of human remains on underwater sites, treasure hunting and the maritime antiquities market. In fact, so comprehensive is this encyclopaedia, that many aspects of the theory and practice of underwater and maritime archaeology have also been thoughtfully addressed.

Legislation and other legal issues relating to the administration and management of underwater archaeological sites are covered. Far from being site specific in terms of individual shipwrecks or archaeological sites, however, the book also has entries devoted to current research themes and topics of study, both at a regional, national and international level. It deals with the development of technology and the techniques employed in the general practice of maritime and underwater archaeology as well as listing the organisations, institutions and agencies involved in the development, research and administration of this vast subject.

The encyclopaedia has more than 500 topic headings, arranged logically by site type, time, location and a general category. Of these, a quarter have been cross referenced to other articles that deal with the subject concerned. There is a bibliography or reference list at the end of most individual entries and although not exhaustive

by any means, the reader is certainly encouraged to read more.

It is difficult to find fault with this book, particularly when considering that it is the first comprehensive illustrated encyclopaedia of its kind to be published on such a vast topic. One criticism is the slant towards North American maritime and underwater archaeology, but considering that the book's editor and over half of the editorial advisory board come from that part of the world it is, perhaps, not surprising. It is hoped that this will be addressed in subsequent editions.

The Encyclopaedia of Underwater and Maritime Archaeology is an excellent resource and reference work; definitely not a picture book or a coffee table photo album. It is authoritative and comprehensive and will be a very useful reference book for students, teachers and all those interested in ships, seafaring and the recovery effort.

Paul Clark

Curator of maritime archaeology & history,
Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory

Wanderlust: Journeys through the Macleay Museum

Museum of Sydney, September–November 1998.

The journey is among literature's oldest devices to tell a tale of human experience. Today, it is a popular postmodernist vehicle to disembed and recontextualise old tales. The Museum of Sydney picked up the trope of 'Wanderlust' to reinterpret the collections of the country's oldest university museum, the Macleay at the University of Sydney.

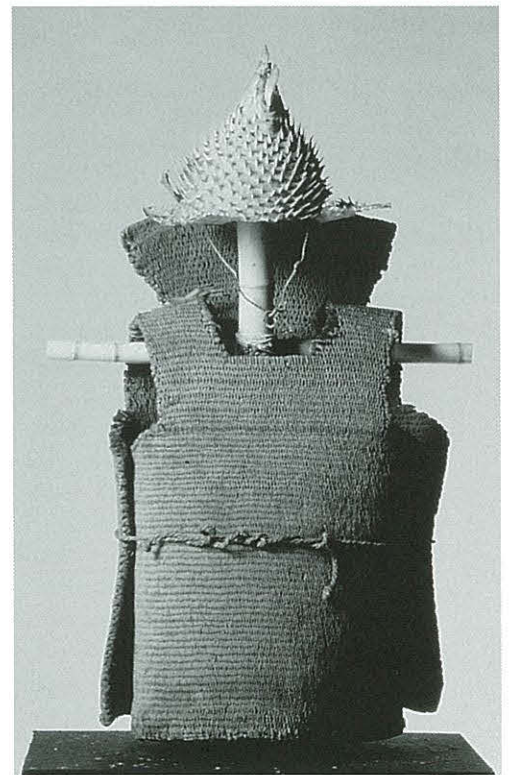
The Macleay Museum was established in the 1880s, based on collections extending back to the 1790s. A museum of natural history in the eighteenth century sense, it applied modern nineteenth century principles of scientific taxonomy to the natural and cultural materials of Australasia: flora, fauna, the local humans, their products and expressions. Macleay is now effectively a closed collection.

What brought together MoS and the Macleay in a journeying theme? Specimens of exotica and science, the cross-over between systems of knowledge as magic and measurable certitude. Recent historians of museums have explored

the fundamental knowledge-constructing function of collections. They observe that the range of specimens in a museum comes to represent the entire span of knowledge about such materials. As knowledge develops, older systems look dated, but remind us that our own epistemologies will seem ignorant in the future. Thus old museum collections demonstrate the relativity of knowledge(s) — material evidence of the shape of human thinking.

MoS curator Peter Emmett put it differently in a label statement at the door, '...this exhibition is not a map or a traditional guide of exotic places, or zoo of natural history, or inventory of strange customs. Each cluster of objects is an imaginary landscape, like visiting a new place, a strangeness when preconceived views clash in new experiences. This is confronting; it shatters hierarchy, disrupts taxonomies, acknowledges differences, prompts us into fresh ways of seeing new connections between old things.'

The form of the exhibition derived from the cabinet of curiosities: strange creatures and objects lined the walls on shelves, hung from the ceiling and crowded the floor. Yet as the set for an antique performance it defied the musty-dusty image with a casual, open lightness.



Porcupine Fish Helmet, Kiribati (Gilbert Islands). WJ Macleay Collection, collected 1872.

'Wanderlust' also mimicked the anti-quarian's conjunction of wonders. One end of the long gallery comprised shelves forming frames for a mounted orang-outang skeleton, a marble bust of William John Macleay, an albatross skin. Other frames were occupied by bottles of preserved animal specimens and intricate scientific instruments. The placement was artful and amusing in its references to the cabinet of curiosities.

Most other objects were arranged in geographical 'stories', though without the cohesive narrative of the traditional tale. Thus 'Arnhemland Stories' grouped pre-1870s bark paintings from Port Essington (the oldest surviving) and 1940s Yirrkala barks; more than a dozen ochre-engraved pearl shell ornaments from the Kimberley; and a stuffed emu and brolga. By contrast, 'Kiribati Stories' described the 1860s-70s collecting journeys of conchologist John Brazier. The objects displayed did not represent his specialisation but a remarkable set of body armour composed of a densely knotted coconut fibre cuirass and a skull-hugging helmet made from the spiky dried skin of a porcupine fish.

This extraordinary outfit was emblematic of a certain class of objects chosen for display: the unique, the amazing. Another class selected for the show was animal specimens, stuffed and mounted, dried, preserved in alcohol. All shared a pitiful deathliness.

Cedar drawers from collection cabinets contained another category that might be called 'strange and beautiful specimens': colourful bird skins, bone tools, weird insects — arranged with an interior decorator's eye in charming disarray. All represented the bizarre end of the specimen spectrum.

This aestheticised selection floated in an ether of metaphor: the museum as *wunderkammer*, as exotica, as deadhouse... Yet like all museum collections and exhibitions, it was selective, privileging the curator as the decisive voice in establishing the canon of science or truth. Emmett's view of the Macleay was marvelous — but grotesque. Was this the challenge to convention intended in the curatorial statement cited above?

I found myself amused by the conceits of the exhibition, but concerned that the integrity of the objects was compromised by jokes, artfulness and fantasy. Of course, this view presupposes that there was an integrity and that I could know it. But to

regard objects collected within a particular framework of knowledge as the playthings of another paradigm seems to me to trivialise the intention, the agency, of the original collectors.

To treat them so might be the project of an art curator or indeed, an artist, but if it is history, I think it is history made in bad faith.

This is not to say that museum history presentations can only take a single, reverent road in their interpretations. The infinite perspectives of people past and present may all throw different lights on the lumps of matter we collect into museums. Selecting one or some perspectives as the master narrative for a museum presentation privileges the curator, but so does the dadaist selection of 'imaginary landscapes'. 'Wanderlust' offered an interesting aesthetic experience but an unconvincing historical interpretation.

Linda Young

Senior lecturer in cultural heritage management, University of Canberra

www.useum.org.au

www.useum.org.au is a development project with a 100 day appearance on the web. It aims to connect people, cultural items, institutional collections and contemporary practitioners. Its objective is the development of 'a pilot project based on the concept of an independent virtual cultural institution, i.e., the design and production of a new paradigm for cultural involvement'.

The site uses the digital medium as a display mechanism for collections which are difficult to access and interpret. By presenting social, historical and cultural readings of 'hidden' objects, useum feeds into traditional methods of displaying collections. The use of the web as medium allows the reading of such collections at a distance, in one's own time and without the bureaucratic processes sometimes necessary to access stored or sensitive collections.

The world wide web as a form of content delivery has become a common practice in museums everywhere. Major museums have directed resources to documenting and delivering collections through this medium as a way of suggesting their significance on a global scale. Regional and special interest institutions rarely display in the digital environment. The distinctive feature of useum is that it

is not an enhancement of conventional physical space, but a repository and advertiser of a wide range of object collections from many different cultural institutions.

The notion of a national or international virtual repository for collections is interesting; potentially it is a model for collaborative museum practice and virtual display. The concept has the ability to expand to offer diverse information-making resources available to institutions which cannot afford to document and display their entire collections for the web. useum has the ability to act as an umbrella organisation for Australia's regional and special interest museums in tandem with national and international institutions.

The prototype useum site displays mainly content from the major Australian cultural institutions. These institutions have the resources to allow them some level of autonomous exposure on the web. The very institutions that would benefit from such a collaborative site — those that do not have big operating grants, which struggle with significant but perhaps unknown collections — are not represented here yet, marking a lost opportunity in the prototype site.

ARCHIVE STORAGE MANUSCRIPT BOXES

TEXTILE COSTUME BOXES

WALLETS AND FOLDERS

SHEETS OF ACID-FREE TISSUE & BOARD

Further details supplied upon request

*South & Justice
Pty Ltd*

CARDBOARD BOX AND CARTON MAKERS

1 Ralph Street, Alexandria NSW 2015
Ph (02) 9667 4441 Fax (02) 9669 1451

Were the site to recognise collaborative ventures with regional and special interest institutions, and promote these links, it would fill a gaping hole in web content.

The site is designed as autonomous from its sponsoring institutions, reflecting the virtuality of the concept. It is distinct in that it establishes its own protocols, graphics, text and interpretation. While this approach delivers a distinctive and seductive sight, the conspicuous nature of the interface masks subordinated imagery.

In the category of 'Hidden Treasures', the object collection is so fragile it cannot be displayed physically even in its own institutions. The virtual representation becomes our only opportunity to easily access such rare and beautiful objects. 'Byzantine manuscript' is one such, whose most important feature, the text reads, is 'painted decorative sections and initial letters'. But the accompanying visual occupies only one third of the already-halved screen space and is photographed so that the details which make this object so distinctive are illegible. Luckily, other items are more clearly and usefully depicted.

That such little care has been taken in documenting imagery specifically for web delivery undermines the potential of the venture. As the virtual and only deliverer of this information, useum would do well to define the difference between physical and virtual display and use it as the basis for object representation. Thus it would establish itself as unique in its understanding of the medium.

Angelina Russo

Master of Architecture student at the University of South Australia, writing a thesis on virtual museums.

Civilising Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums

By Carol Duncan. Routledge, London, 1995.

Despite a rapidly expanding corpus of literature on current museum issues, few published writers have radically challenged the way we think about museums as distinct from their collections and public programs. In 1978 and 1980 Carol Duncan and her colleague Alan Wallach produced two ground-breaking papers,¹

using the Louvre and the Museum of Modern Art as case studies, to argue that the art museum is not simply a neutral context for its collections and programs, but a ritual structure that actively programs visitors to respond in particular ways, thus acting as an agent in shaping the histories it represents.

Duncan synthesises much of the debate generated from the earlier work by developing the theme further in *Civilising Rituals*, a detailed theoretical examination of the ritual nature of art museums followed by European and American case studies that expand on different aspects of the theme. The result is a work of impeccable scholarship that is, at the same time, entertaining and highly readable.

In the generalising framework for the study, she rightly points out that what we see and do not see in art museums, and on what terms and by whose authority we see it, is linked to the larger question of what constitutes community and who defines its identity. She poses the idea of museums as places of secular ritual, developed out of the breakdown of church power that led to the separation of church and state. In this view museums became sites of

Museum Studies 1999

Deakin University offers postgraduate courses and training opportunities for people in the museum sector.

Off-campus delivery, anywhere in Australia

The Graduate Certificate of Museum Studies is available by correspondence, augmented by telephone and internet support. Students need to have a good working relationship with a nearby museum that can provide case-study material for some of the assignments. Applications for off-campus study in 1999 should be forwarded by 30 November 1998.

Flexible delivery to suit busy professionals

On-campus students at Burwood (in Melbourne's eastern suburbs) can enrol for the Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma or Master of Museum Studies. A mix of on and off-campus subjects and a carefully designed timetable, are compatible with most museum workers' needs. Applications for on-campus study in 1999 close 31 January 1999 (but earlier submissions are welcome).

Update your knowledge in a specific area

Most of the subjects offered for the Graduate Diploma can be taken as single units, 'not-for-degree'. This allows a museum practitioner to extend or update their skills and knowledge in fields such as planning, collections, public programs and marketing.

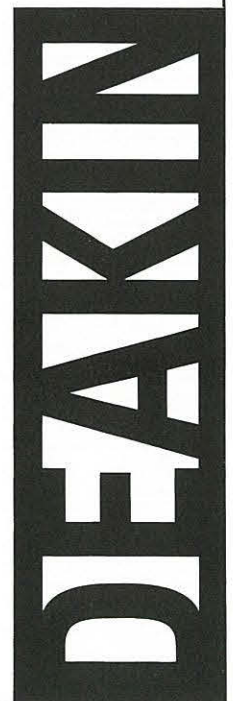
Tax-deduct your fees

The up-front fee payable each semester is normally tax-deductible for people working in museums.



Applications are now invited for commencement in late February 1999. For more information contact telephone (03) 9244 7218 for a course brochure and application form.

Celebrating 20 years of Museum Studies 1979-1998



public representation of beliefs about the order of the world and the place of individuals within it: preservers of a community's official memories and the voice of authoritative secular truths.

Duncan argues that in visiting art museums we step out of the normal day to day consciousness into a separate and special space where we participate in a 'different quality of experience' analogous to religious observance. The museum provides a theatrical and structured narrative based on the transformative powers of art associated with enlightenment and improvement. It is a sacralising experience that suggests a link with immortality through the contemplation of works of genius.

Chapter 2 uses the Louvre in Paris and the National Gallery in London to examine the transformation of European aristocratic collections into public art museums that serve the ideological needs of two quite different emerging bourgeois states.

Chapter 3 argues that the development of the great municipal galleries, particularly New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Art Institute in Chicago, demonstrates the adaptation of the ritual forms of European galleries to new political and ideological circumstances in the USA.

Chapter 4 shifts the study from the state to rich and powerful individuals, many of whom achieved their status by means that were at best questionable, through examination of donor memorials, including the (old) J.P. Getty Museum in Malibu, the National Gallery in Washington and the Dulwich Picture Gallery in South London.

The final case study uses key modern art museums, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Tate Gallery in London, to 'construct a gendered ritual space' that reinforces the gender attitudes imposed by the consumerist culture of the day to day world outside.

Civilising Rituals is dense, richly textured and a pleasure to read. Free of the jargon that bedevils so much theoretical writing, it is accessible and thought provoking. But it encompasses one significant dilemma. In setting the parameters of the study in her introduction, Duncan states that the primary question addressed concerns the fundamental purposes served by Western museums in the context of Western societies. I would argue that the development of museums in the nineteenth century is

so closely related to European imperialism that her question cannot be answered without examining ritual museum constructions of authoritative imperial values and their relationship to European identity. However, nineteenth century European art museums had no overt imperial focus, except for the Louvre during the Napoleonic era (and that was a European empire). They were about the hegemony of the centre. An extension of the case studies to non-art museums would be required to address imperialism (the title suggests wonderful opportunity). However, this would result in a vastly different book. I am left impressed but also mildly dissatisfied by *Civilising Rituals*.

Shar Jones

Museum Studies Unit, University of Sydney

1 Duncan, Carol and Wallach, Alan 1978, 'The Museum of Modern Art as a Late Capitalist Ritual', *Marxist Perspectives*, Winter; 1980, 'The Universal Survey Museum', *Art History*, 3/4.

Discovering the Powerhouse Museum

By Terence Measham. *Powerhouse Publishing, Sydney 1997, \$49.95.*

Terence Measham asserts that the aim of his sequel to *Treasures of the Powerhouse Museum* is to explain what a museum is, to show what has been acquired over the last few years, and to shine a light behind the scenes.

This table top book has sumptuous pictures and large text. The high quality photographs show off the new exhibits very well. In some instances it could be argued they make the object more attractive than it is in real life — as the food in the cookbook looks better than it does on the table. But you do not have the aroma, the atmosphere — that atmosphere of presence — which the real object has and which the virtual has not. This awe and aura is the core of museums. Measham's spin and puff may whet the appetite, or may remind one of a visit, but it cannot replace a visit to experience the real.

Measham claims the Powerhouse Museum is 'Australia's largest and greatest museum', the aim of which is 'to present Australian material culture in an international context'. He defines material culture as 'all things that people have made'. This gives the museum a wide brief, but does not explain why so much

money and human resources are expended on unique pieces of high art or technology rather than those objects which are at the very heart of ordinary Australian life. How are these objects made? How do they function? What makes them work? What are the steps in their evolution? One might think that a museum evolving from an institution of 'Applied Arts and Sciences', and now housed in a former electricity building, would want to consider the path and transformation of clay from the ground into toilet bowl or fine bone china, and so put the end product in context with the raw materials. For the average Australian who lives in a city, this is where the need is — few people now know how milk gets into plasticised cardboard, what makes a good chip (computer or otherwise) or the origin of colours in print.

But such programs have inherent disadvantages. Do people want to know? Do such programs attract sponsors? Sponsors like high art and popular entertainment rather than education; they, like politicians, want audiences composed of decision makers for the masses rather than those merely interested in learning. Consequently, the new or the revamped museum, especially in today's financial imperatives, needs courage to maintain or introduce the relatively unpopular and unpalatable, however important in the long run.

Many museums today, like many universities, are moving away from the idea of liberal education to embrace audience accreditation, from a rounded, liberal offering to a popular response to customers, fashion, and quick returns. This may help to explain why the first chapter is entitled, 'When one Dior opens' and the fourth, 'Gilt by association'. The words reflect market research and target a particular audience.

The book is peppered with the personal. For example, Measham's visit to 'Condomania' in Tokyo resulted in the survival 'in perpetuity in the museum's computerised records, of a large poster depicting dozens of colourful and comically drawn condoms, all at full stretch: Gift of Terence Measham'. Describing a glass by Richard Clements, Measham writes, 'It is an exercise in astonishing verisimilitude. The opaque glass cup is an iced drink — Ukrainian champagne, perhaps — whatever tempts you. The rest is a delicious sweet, the kind that induces

guilty longings. One is tempted to lick the stem of the goblet; it could be a twist of custard or cream, or maybe blanc-mange...I decided to acquire the piece for the collection. However, I do have a reservation about it: the separate strawberry seems solitary. If Richard Clements reads this book, I hope he will consider making a mate for it. Not that I wish to appear greedy!

When Measham says the extensively restored Cierva C30A autogyro VH-USR, one of eight in the world and the only one in Australia, will hang in one of the Powerhouse's galleries indefinitely, some readers will feel comforted. But indefinitely means for an undefined period, so it may come down next week.

Museums, like society, are changing. Change is being imposed by demographics, by information technology, by government regulation and by globalisation. As an institution such as a museum changes, the visitors and especially the staff feel disquiet. The clarity and stability of the structure alter; familiar patterns become confusing. There are winners and losers; themes disappear to be replaced by others. Those people who have lost favourite displays and activities face loss of meaning and find difficulty letting them go. Directors managing change acknowledge these feelings, try to realign relationships and share their vision. Like it or not, this book is part of that process for visitors and dignitaries. It is an entertainment and a lesson.

Peter Stanbury

Museums, Collections & Heritage,
Macquarie University

Manual of Museum Management

By Barry Lord and Gail Dexter Lord.
Stationery Office, London, 1997.

Few would deny that the management of museums is far from straightforward, and is becoming increasingly challenging. All of us working in or with museums have been buffeted by changes in philosophy, funding and community expectations, coupled with the challenges emerging from new technologies.

The *Manual of Museum Management* is said to be targeted at those interested in the challenge of managing and leading museums, whether working inside the museum or in other agencies responsible for providing grant-aid or services to

them. This includes designers and other museum service providers, teachers and students in museum studies, directors of smaller museums, curators, department heads, project managers and team leaders, as well as those who aspire to take on management responsibilities in the future.

The manual is not a theoretical treatise, nor a cobbled-together adaptation of broad management theory bent to the museum environment. Barry Lord and Gail Dexter Lord bring to this book perspectives and intimate knowledge gained from experience working in museums, running training courses and acting as planning and management consultants for museums in North America, Europe, Asia and Australia. This gives them a knowledge of the failures and successes in the real world of museum management.

The first chapter introduces the reasons for having museum management and management tasks. Topics covered include objectives of museum management, statements of purpose, museum functions and roles of management. An excellent set of diagrams progressively builds a model of museum management as a mechanism for balancing the intrinsic tensions arising from the competing museum functions of asset management and public programs.

The second chapter deals with ways to enable people in museums to work together to achieve and sustain their institution's mission, mandate, goals and objectives. Roles of trustees, staff and volunteers are considered together with alternative modes of governance. Topics include organisation/staff structures, task forces/teams, roles of volunteers and job descriptions. The appendix further builds on this with a demonstration set of job descriptions, developed as part of a planning study for an American museum. Again, this chapter is supported by a series of diagrams and case studies from two museums in which innovative programs have been developed with front-of-house staff roles.

The final chapter focuses on methods of museum management. Topics covered include the executive role, collection and public program management, accommodation and financial management. A further ten case studies support the principles being presented.

I was drawn to the section on accommodation planning, which will prove an

invaluable resource for anyone involved in a new museum development or significant extensions. It provides excellent coverage on functional briefs and planning. This section, however, also highlights a shortcoming of the book — a sparsity of cross references.

The Lords are leaders in the field of museum planning and their earlier book from the same publisher (*Manual of Museum Planning*. HMSO, London, 1991) deserves to be on the shelf of anyone working in this area, but it receives no mention. *The Manual of Museum Management* is full of wisdom which would have been further strengthened by inclusion of a bibliography and brief recommendations for further reading at the conclusion of most sections.

The manual provides an overview and introduction to the area for students and a primer for curators, educators and others new to museum management roles. Many could benefit from dipping into this book as a source of ideas and to brush up on methodologies. It would also be an excellent introduction to museum roles for an 'outsider' member of a team working on a museum project.

Greg Wallace

Manager of the museum assistance program,
Western Australian Museum (<http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/map/map.htm>)

Exhibiting Dilemmas: Issues of Representation at the Smithsonian

Edited by Amy Henderson and Adrienne L. Kaeppeler. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, 1997.

The Smithsonian Institution is a complex of museums of many styles and disciplines, in sum constituting the national museum of the United States; it rejoices in the soubriquet 'the nation's attic'. If that nickname makes the Smithsonian sound cute, think again, because in practice these museums of African America, air and space, the American Indian, art, history, natural history, portraits, sculpture and assorted other topics are at the cutting edge of museology.

Exhibiting Dilemmas presents a dozen case studies of problems encountered by curators and exhibition planners, some of which will ring familiar bells in the ears of Australians. They are problems of memory, authenticity, contextualisation,

changing social values, shifts in popular culture — many of which resolve into the problem of museal authority and who controls it in the museum-community dynamic. Not all the case studies conclude with firm answers.

The editors' introduction traces many of the issues discussed to the rise of the idea-driven museum or exhibition, as opposed to the object-focus that informed the old style of specimen-museums. Ideas require contexts to show how they work in the human world, and contexts are notoriously individual and multitudinous. Further evidence of the shift in museum interests, several of the case studies deal with the trend towards collecting the recent past and its popular culture manifestations, far from the traditional ambit of high culture.

Characterising both these trends is the case of the Woolworth's lunch counter from Greensboro, North Carolina, collected in 1993. For six months in 1960 it had been the site of a sit-in by black college students demanding counter service in what had been a whites-only cafeteria. Woolworth, a national shopping chain, treated its customers as equals everywhere but in the south, where local tradition maintained its racist sway. So when the Greensboro shop caved in and desegregated, it was a significant victory.

As with so many museum acquisitions, the discovery of the lunch counter was a mixture of curatorial alertness and luck. It was then necessary to convince the Woolworth public relations people that the counter was an important symbol of the Civil Rights movement, in which Woolworth's would figure positively. The Smithsonian people also consulted with the Greensboro African-American community and a local group which had hoped to turn the site into a national Civil Rights museum.

Eventually all agreed that a segment of the counter plus four stools, a soda fountain and mirrors would be acquired. They were subsequently displayed in the National Museum of American History as an iconic emblem under the title 'Sitting for Justice'. The whole exercise brought forth questions of people's different memories of the event, the museum's power to determine social value, and the truth that the past is political. It also addressed the central contemporary US question of race, one of the last 'unmentionables' in

the museum scene. Authors William Yeingst and Lonnie Bunch conclude, 'Clearly, exploring contemporary history is dark and bloody ground that is not for the faint of heart. But, oh, the ground is so fertile.'

Other such cases include exhibiting memories of the Second World War; collecting TV icons such as a set from M*A*S*H; and reconstructing 'lost' music by Duke Ellington for a museum-based performance. More classical problems of museum representation appear in an oeuvre of 'ethnographic sculptures' of Africans (somewhat similar to Goldie's Maori portraits recently seen in Sydney); the concurrent Zuni and Hispanic Catholic meanings ascribed to seventeenth century religious sculpture from New Mexico; and a history of an Eskimo ethnographic diorama from the 1850s... Questions of authenticity and significance are raised in pieces on the tussle between history and aesthetics in national art; arguments for the presentation of the Hope Diamond as mineralogy, folklore, design and/or history; and a technical argument about whether the Wright brothers' airplane of 1903 deserves its claims to originality. Each chapter is a fascinating story.

There are similar and even equivalent stories in every Australian state museum. It would be rewarding to gather them into an antipodean volume of *Exhibiting Dilemmas*. In the meantime, Henderson and Kaepler's fine book will interest all who reflect on how museums construct meaning.

Elizabeth Old, Blundells' Cottage, Canberra

aka Linda Young, senior lecturer in cultural heritage management, University of Canberra

The Ian Potter Museum of Art: The University of Melbourne

The University of Melbourne's Ian Potter Museum of Art occupies a very beautiful and significant new building at the top end of Swanston Street in Carlton. The museum is an elegant, stylish, sensitive and restrained addition to major art spaces in Australia, setting very high standards for other galleries.

Importantly, the Ian Potter Museum of Art was managed on a relatively small budget. The architect, Melbourne's Nonda Katsalidis, and gallery personnel Frances Lindsay and others, worked closely



Sally Smart, *Stuttering*, 1993, oil and synthetic polymer paint on canvas. On loan from the Vizard Foundation, acquired 1993. The Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne.

together, to create a building that is entirely satisfying from the viewer's and artist's perspective and is, I imagine, a joy to work in. The gallery brief, to show art and promote the collection, was obviously clearly articulated and just as clearly understood. A great brief and a great architect!

For the first time, a substantial part of the University collection is able to be permanently and properly displayed — and its value recognised. This is a bonus, because the University holdings are rich and deserve to be seen. Also, the hanging is broadened through the addition of very full wall texts which contain much conservation information. This is an innovation that deserves to be applauded, as it provides valuable resource material that further contextualises the works.

What is compelling about the new hang is the attempt to make thematic and conceptual links between works, which is rather more interesting than subjecting the viewer to yet another traditional, chronological hang. As a consequence Australian and international art is juxtaposed, as are works from a range of periods and styles.

My favourite section — one that exemplifies the richness of the Australian landscape tradition — combines recent works by Mandy Martin, Peter Booth and Jan Nelson alongside earlier paintings by William Strutt, Sidney Nolan and other nineteenth and twentieth century Australian artists.

Each of the works displayed breathes new life in its revitalised context. In the tiny *Race for Life, Black Thursday* (1863) William Strutt paints an ominous black cloud that blots the sky. In the foreground a lone rider races desperately away from the gathering flames. Alongside this work, Mandy Martin's magnificent *O-b-l-i-v-i-o-n*, a large oil on canvas, also suggests the indifferent power of nature in Australia. But here no figure is present, just a huge dust cloud and an empty, shadowed foreground. Ominous indeed! Even Peter Booth's nearby *Drawing 1984*, a pastel work on paper, looks somewhat benign by comparison — a kind of surreal play with the landscape of the apocalypse.

Another compelling section, within the collection display, is one that deals with images of women in Australian art. Here, we are presented with such delights as a small genre painting by Frederick McCubbin, *Kathleen* (c1912), a large recent Sally Smart work titled *Stuttering*

and several fine studio paintings by Rupert Bunny, among others.

What we see is part of this century's history of the portrayal of women in art: from the sentimental *Woman and Child* (c1910) by Bunny, a conventional and less than riveting portrayal of womanhood, to Smart's lively and seductive evocation of the New York Fox sisters (who apparently galvanised bohemian New York at their spiritualist gatherings) to *The First Step*, again by Bunny, a small jewel of a painting about tenderness between two women. Each work in this grouping is made distinct and memorable, through its placement with other contrasting and/or similar partners. Individual works then add to the importance of the group as a whole (and as a significant part of the collection) while asserting their own value, through careful placement and curatorial sureness.

The hang is also at times very witty. For example, at one end the curators have placed Peter Booth's *Banshee* of 1986, a large and imposing painting of incredible energy and power, where the central figure, heavily encrusted with paint, occupies much of the canvas. Her huge breasts swing grotesquely as she strides purposefully forward. At the other end of the same wall is Norman Lindsay's *Don Juan* (c1940s) with its kitsch and vulgar depiction of the famous rake, clothed in black, surrounded by a bevy of buxom lovelies falling out of their clothes. The prurient may once have snickered about works like these, or even been shocked. Now all we can do is scorn the absurdity of such ridiculous and self important works, masquerading as they do as high art. Peter Booth and Norman Lindsay together — a revelation!

The hang is exciting and exploratory. It is also idiosyncratic and imaginative — even at times poetic. Metaphors abound and the works are granted renewed life. This provides plenty of reflective room for the audience to freshly approach works by many familiar and some less well known artists. The hang exemplifies respect for the intelligence of the viewer and the integrity of the works displayed. The building itself expresses the same attitude. The new Ian Potter Museum of Art is a valuable and timely addition to Australia's visual arts culture.

Simeon Kronenberg

National director, Museums Australia

THE CASE FOR QUALITY



At Parmac, we not only supply an 'off-the-shelf' designed range of free-standing showcases, we pride ourselves on our bespoke systems.

Because your exhibits are so valuable (or invaluable!), you need the latest protection — both physical and environmental. With high quality locking systems, high security glass, humidity protection, and fibre-optic lighting as just some of the options available, we help your exhibits stay the way they were... and stay put!



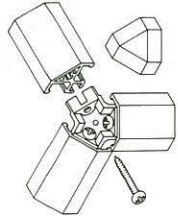
PARMAC HOUSE
SECURITY SHOWCASES

*Protecting the
Treasures of the World*

Parmac House Pty Ltd
PO Box 1139 Gumeracha
South Australia 5233
Telephone: (08) 8389 1777
Fax: (08) 8389 1345
Mobile: 0417 807 648

in association with Profile Glass Ltd

Kelly Gang Captured in Click Showcases



MEN OF IRON

at The Old Melbourne Gaol is an exhibition showcasing The Kelly Gang's original suits of armour, Ned Kelly's death mask, his pistol and the criminal offence report.

Click Systems is proud to sponsor this National Trust Exhibition by supplying Qudos Showcases.

Visit Men of Iron - Old Melbourne Gaol until 31st January 1999 to view our Qudos Showcases.....

Oh, and have a quick look at the armour.

click
made to measure systems

Click Systems Pty Ltd

7 Cato Street, Hawthorn East,
Victoria, Australia 3123
Telephone: (03) 9822 7891
Fax: (03) 9822 1140

