

Conference Report

*Under Pressure. Museums
in Times of Xenophobia
and Climate Emergency*

5–7 November 2021

Lodz and Gdansk, Poland

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CiMAM's 2021 Annual Conference, Lodz and Gdansk, Poland.

Report from Mami Kataoka, President of CiMAM



The 53rd edition of the CiMAM Annual Conference raised the debate on the "under pressure" situation affecting modern and contemporary art museums in the context of xenophobia and climate emergency.

Despite the difficult circumstances under which we have had to organize and hold this important conference, we are proud that this year's Annual Conference

brought together more than 150 museum professionals in the Muzeum Sztuki in Lodz and NOMUS New Art Museum/Branch of the National Museum in Gdansk, Poland. And another 100 participants joined virtually the three days of lectures and discussions on the pressures facing modern and contemporary art museums worldwide.

The high quality of the speaker presentations, together with the excellent program of exhibitions and visits to the key contemporary art centers and collections in Lodz, and Gdansk as well as in Warsaw during the post-conference tour, made the perfect combination for success. This was a wonderful occasion for CiMAM members to get to know more about the vibrant Polish contemporary art scene and its rich history.

During the meeting in Poland, it was also announced that Es Baluard Museu d'Art Contemporani de Palma, Spain, has been chosen as the institution that will host the 54th edition of the CiMAM Annual Conference in November 2022, coinciding with

the 60th anniversary of CIMAM and the election of the new President and the Board Members of this Committee.

In the context of the conference, CIMAM announced the winner of the Outstanding Museum Practice Award, which in this first edition recognizes the work of museums in response to the consequences of the global pandemic. After the first round of voting by CIMAM members, CIMAM Board Members selected the Queens Museum, New York, to receive this inaugural award.

Thanks to CIMAM's Travel Grant Program, supported by the Getty Foundation, the V-A-C Foundation, the Byucksan Foundation, Mercedes Vilardell, the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Office for Contemporary Art Norway, this year, 50 contemporary art curators and museum professionals from 32 different countries were able to attend the conference – 23 of them in person. This was an excellent opportunity for all of us to expand our network of contacts.

The pandemic has shown that it means a lot for us to come together physically in one place. The CIMAM Annual Conference has always been a place where each of us has been reminded that we are part of a broad, global or planetary museum community. Whether we have participated physically or virtually online, this planetary imagination is extremely important more than ever.

I look forward to seeing you all at Palma de Mallorca, Spain in November 2022. Best wishes,

Mami Kataoka
President of CIMAM
Director, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, Japan

Thursday 10 December 2021



Under Pressure. Museums in Times of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency

While the pandemic appears to be the most pressing challenge today, it is merely a product of more global political and environmental changes. The conference addressed the roles of artists and museums in this dramatically changing global situation. How can artists be agents of change and museums be places to test proposals for the communities of the future? Can museums guide the development of political and/or technological solutions?

Over three days of discussions, the conference focussed on the two interconnected current crises of xenophobia and climate change, and the sometimes hidden or unexplored connections between the two.

Keynote speakers and relevant case-study presentations showed how institutions, artists, and thinkers working together can provide practical laboratories concerning these emerging issues and offer methodological tools to combat discriminatory and nationalistic tendencies in an increasingly divisive and divided world.

Day 1: Conflicts, Crises, and the Politics of Growth

The first day of the conference examined closely how xenophobia and the climate emergency are intertwined, their commonalities, and the most recent institutional and curatorial responses to them. If the Anthropocene has been born out of a

capitalist acceleration that is reaching its peak, what will happen next, and how can museums further the process of rethinking their subjectivities?

Day 2: Museums as Spaces for Recognizing Differences

The second day of the conference shed light on the possible role of museums as spaces for recognizing differences and learning to respect them. Museums today face fierce xenophobic reactions and emotions fostered for political and economic reasons.

Is there a way of addressing these reactions at the level of institutional programming? How can an art institution evolve to create platforms for a better understanding of difference?

Day 3: New Perspectives on Climate and Commonality

The aim of the third day of the conference, held in Gdansk, was to go beyond disciplinary thinking in addressing the responsibility of museums in times of climate emergency, tackling not only the natural environment but also the atmospheres of the commonplace. Being aware that our material and social environments are not separate entities, it is essential to look towards unique research and practice fields that represent transdisciplinary approaches toward the environments we inhabit. How can we be more attentive, responsible, and engaged in the process of making museums more sustainable in the broadest sense?



The CIMAM 2021 Contents Committee thought the Annual Conference. It was composed by members of the Board of CIMAM and both hosting museums.

From the CIMAM Board:

Malgorzata Ludwisiak (Chair), Chief Curator, Department of Modern Art National Museum in Gdansk.

Saskia Bos Independent Curator and Critic, Amsterdam.

Victoria Noorthoorn, Director, Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires.

Agustín Pérez-Rubio, Independent Curator, Madrid.

Eugene Tan, Director, National Gallery Singapore, and The Singapore Art Museum, Singapore.

From the hosting museums in Lodz and Gdansk:

Daniel Muzyczuk, Head of Modern Art Department, Muzeum Sztuki, Lodz.

Jaroslaw Suchan, Director, Muzeum Sztuki in Lodz, Lodz.

Aneta Szylak, Head, NOMUS New Art Museum/ Branch of the National Museum, Gdansk.



CIMAM's 2021 Contents Committee. From left to right (top): Saskia Bos, Malgorzata Ludwisiak, Daniel Muzyczuk, Victoria Noorthoorn. From left to right (bottom): Jaroslaw Suchan, Agustín Pérez-Rubio, Aneta Szylak, Eugene Tan.

Overview about CIMAM's 2021 Annual Conference Lodz y Gdansk

The CIMAM 2021 Annual Conference was held in Lodz and Gdansk, Poland on 5–7 November, hosted by Muzeum Sztuki in Lodz and the NOMUS New Art Museum/ Branch of the National Museum in Gdansk. An optional post-conference tour was organized to Warsaw on 8–9 November.

For the first time in CIMAM's history, this year the conference offered a hybrid format with the programs adapted to physical and virtual scenarios, to facilitate access and attendance for all CIMAM audiences.

150 delegates attended in person and another 100 attended online to CIMAM's 2021 Annual Conference – a total of 250.

In 2021, 50 professionals residing in 32 different countries were awarded support to attend the Annual Conference through the CIMAM Travel Grant Program – 23 attended onsite and 27 joined virtually.

The three-day program included 3 keynote speakers, 8 perspective presentations, 3 panel discussions, 1 networking session, 2 workshops as well as organized visits to the art institutions of both cities.

The afternoon program included visits to Muzeum Sztuki (ms1 and ms2), Centralne Muzeum Włókiennictwa, Signum Gallery, Gallery Wschodnia, NOMUS New Art Museum/Branch of the National Museum in Gdansk, European Centre of Solidarity, Green Gate, Laznia Center for Contemporary Art and National Museum in Gdansk.

The Aniel's Hotel and the European Centre of Solidarity were the reception hosts.

The Getty Foundation was the main sponsor of the virtual platform, allowing participants the possibility of attending from abroad.

The Spanish Ministry of Culture and Sports was a project supporter contributing to the organization of the Annual Conference.

SAHA Association, İstanbul supported the participation at the Annual Conference of Pelin Tan, Senior Researcher, Center for Arts, Design and Social Research, Boston. Prof. Faculty of Fine Arts, Batman University, Turkey, and perspective speaker on Day 3.

Warsaw Post-conference Tour

The post-conference tour to Warsaw on 8–9 November included visits to Museum of Modern Art, Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art, Museum of Warsaw, BWA Warszawa, Monopol Gallery, Raster Gallery, Foksal Gallery Foundation Exhibitions Bureau, Edward Krasiński's, and Studio Wanda Czełkowska's Studio, POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, the Starak Family Foundation | Spectra Art Space and Zachęta – National Gallery of Art.

Mr. Jerzy Starak and the Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw were the reception hosts.



Keynote speakers included

Dipesh Chakrabarty, Lawrence A. Kimpton Distinguished Service Professor of History, The University of Chicago, Chicago

T.J. Demos, Patricia and Rowland Rebele Endowed Chair in Art History and Visual Culture, and Director of the Center for Creative Ecologies, UC Santa Cruz; Santa Cruz

Maristella Svampa, writer, sociologist, Dina Huapi

Perspective presentations included

Alex Baczyński-Jenkins, artist and choreographer, Berlin/Warsaw

Binna Choi, Director, Casco Art Institute: Working for the Commons, Amsterdam

Jaroslaw Lubiak, Dr. Art College, Szczecin; Otobong Nkanga, visual artist, Antwerp

Oleksiy Radynski, filmmaker and writer, Visual Culture Research Center, Kyiv

Joanna Sokolowska, Curator, Muzeum Sztuki, Lodz

Pelin Tan, Senior Researcher, Center for Arts, Design and Social Research, Mardin

Hilke Wagner, Director Albertinum, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Dresden.

Otobong Nkanga, Visual artist, Antwerp.

Panel moderators included

Bart de Baere, CIMAM Board Member and Director of M HKA — Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst Antwerpen

Malgorzata Ludwisiak, CIMAM Board Member and Chief Curator of the Department of Modern Art at the National Museum in Gdansk

Ann-Sofi Noring, CIMAM Board Member and Vice-Chancellor / Chairman, Royal Academy / Swedish Arts Grants Committee, Stockholm



CIMAM's 2021 speakers. From left to right (1): Dipesh Chakrabarty, T.J. Demos, Jaroslaw Lubiak, Joanna Sokolowska, (2) Hilke Wagner, Oleksiy Radynski, Alex Baczynski-Jenkins, Pelin Tan, (3) Binna Choi, Otobong Nkanga, Maristella Svampa.



Jaroslaw Suchan,
Director of the Muzeum
Sztuki in Lodz and
member of the
Contents Committee
commented:

"The CiMAM Conference in
Poland was the first such meeting

since the outbreak of the pandemic. More than 250 people attended, and almost 150 of them decided to come in person. The unexpected number of the latter shows that, when interpersonal contacts are increasingly mediated virtually, there is a strong need to meet and be together for real. Moreover, the willingness to attend the conference despite all the obstacles imposed by the pandemic regime shows that we all feel part of a global community."

Suchan commented on the contents of the conference: "Undoubtedly, it was the burning issues that drove people to attend the conference. Xenophobia and the climate crisis are some of the most critical challenges facing the contemporary world, and no one, no museum, can remain on the sidelines. We all have to face these threats. The great speeches and inspiring presentations by our colleagues, artists, curators, and activists have provided us with intellectual food that we will digest for months to come and that, I am sure, will help us reorient or reshape our activity to make it more inclusive, more socially engaged, more ecologically responsible and guided by true care for the human and non-human environment."

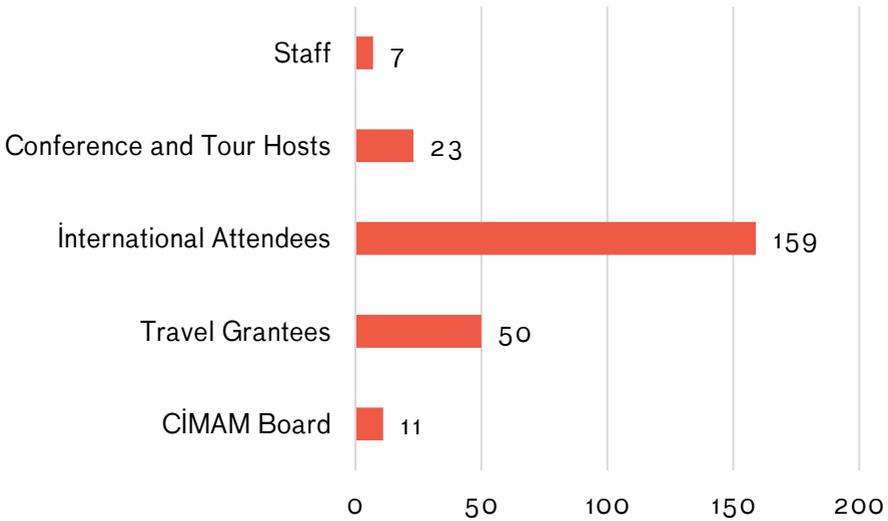


Conference Participants

The Annual Conference is CiMAM's most important meeting throughout the year. It is attended by directors and curators of modern and contemporary art museums and collections and independent professionals.

The CiMAM 2021 Annual Conference in Poland was attended by 250 professionals from 52 different countries – 150 onsite and 100 online.

The first CiMAM Annual Conference took place in 1962 in The Hague. Since then, the Committee has celebrated 53 conferences that have been held in over 30 different cities around the globe.



Conference Participants 2006–2021

The CIMAM Annual Conference takes place in November in a different city each year to focus on a series of topics that reflect the needs and the diversity of the international contemporary art museum community.

2005 São Paulo	112
2006 London	140
2007 Vienna	130
2008 New York	170
2009 Mexico	150
2010 Shanghai	200
2011 Ljubljana and Zagreb	180
2012 İstanbul	218
2013 Rio de Janeiro	159
2014 Doha	224
2015 Tokyo	260
2016 Barcelona	230
2017 Singapore	280
2018 Stockholm	229
2019 Sydney	200
2021 Lodz and Gdansk*	250

*150 onsite and 100 online.

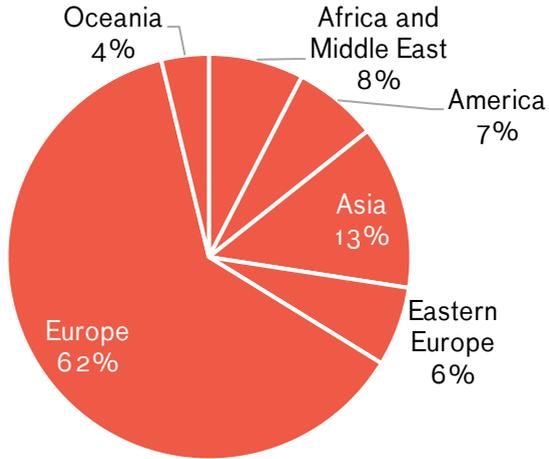
Conference Participants by Country

Due to the pandemic, there were many mobility restrictions in place which impeded the international delegates from traveling. However, as the conference was offered hybrid, many could join thanks to the virtual format available.

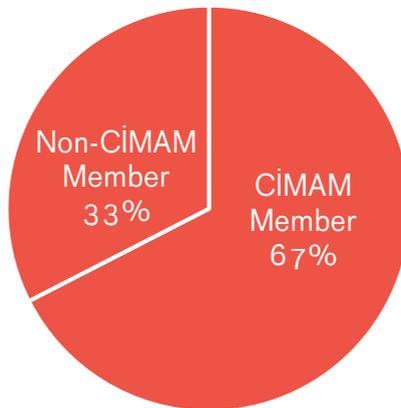
Poland	63	Chile	2
Spain	15	Denmark	2
Germany	10	Hungary	2
Australia	9	Indonesia	2
Finland	9	Jordan	2
Japan	8	Mexico	2
Singapore	7	Morocco	2
South Korea	7	Romania	2
Turkey	7	Ukraine	2
United Kingdom	7	Albania	1
Netherlands	6	Austria	1
China	5	Azerbaijan	1
Norway	5	Belarus	1
Sweden	5	Bulgaria	1
Switzerland	5	Canada	1
Portugal	4	Croatia	1
United States of America	4	Egypt	1
Argentina	3	Haiti	1
Belgium	3	Iraq	1
Brazil	3	Ireland	1
France	3	Kazakhstan	1
Luxembourg	3	Latvia	1
Lithuania	3	Lebanon	1
Russia	3	Senegal	1
South Africa	3	Taiwan	1
Armenia	2	Thailand	1

Conference Participants by Continent

There was a strong presence of colleagues from Poland attending the Annual Conference.



Conference Participants and CIMAM Membership





Mami Kataoka, president of CIMAM and director of the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo, Japan, reflected on the conference with these words:

"The pandemic has shown that it means a lot for us to come together physically in one place, learning from the history of the country and the region, especially in the land of Gdansk, where the memory of solidarity is accumulated in the European Solidarity Center."

Regarding the political context in which the conference took place, Kataoka comments:

"It was essential to be aware of what we are discussing here for three days, while real political conflicts are taking place on the border between Poland and Belarus, which is not so far away. This situation constantly reminds us of the role of the museum here and now."





Malgorzata
Ludwisiak, Chief
Curator of the Dept.
of Modern Art at the
National Museum of
Gdansk and CIMAM
Board Member,
reflected on the
contents presented:

“Three keynote speakers – Dipesh Chakrabarty, Tj Demos, and Maristella Svampa – provided a broad theoretical background for discussions on how the issues of climate emergency and xenophobia are deeply intertwined. Speakers from Eastern Europe brought case studies from this region to the conference attendees. Jaroslaw Lubiak proposed a new museum model in response to the climate catastrophe; Joanna Sokolowska shared her curatorial responses to this issue; Hilke Wagner showed how the Albertinum in Dresden successfully managed a massive wave of hatred directed at the institution by turning the crisis into a new platform for mutual understanding with diverse audiences. Performer and choreographer Alex Baczynski-Jenkins proposed community and body-based artistic practices to respond to the crisis, and filmmaker Oleksiy Radinsky spoke about the memory of post-Soviet monuments in public spaces. Finally, two curators, Binna Choi and Pelin Tan, and one artist, Otobong Nkanga, shared their different approaches to extractivism and the destruction of a landscape for political or economic reasons.”



Travel Grant Program

This is an essential program for CĪMAM because it allows the participation of a broader range of professionals in the international debate concerning contemporary art.

In 2021, 50 contemporary art curators, researchers, and museum professionals from 32 different countries – 39 different cities – were awarded support to attend the CĪMAM 2021 Annual Conference, in-person and online.

Almaty, Baku, Bangkok, Barcelona, Beirut, Budapest, Cairo, Cape Town, Dakar, İstanbul, Johannesburg, Kyiv, Krakow, Leipzig, Leon, Palma de Mallorca, Marrakech, Mexico City, Montreal, Oslo, Paris, Port-au-Prince, Riga, Rosario, Saint-Petersburg, Sale, Salta, Santana de Parnaíba, São Paulo, Seoul, Shanghai, Sulaimanyah, Taipei, Tirana, Tromsø, Vilnius, Warsaw, Yerevan, Yogyakarta, Zagreb.

For the first time, and thanks to the generous support of The Getty Foundation who sponsored the virtual platform, 27 grantees attended the conference online, while 23 attended onsite.

Launched in 2005, CĪMAM's Travel Grant Program is designed to foster cooperation and cultural exchange between contemporary art curators and museum directors in emerging and developing economies and their counterparts in other regions of the world.



CiMAM's 2021 Annual Conference, Lodz and Gdansk, Poland. Travel Grantees.

Key Aspects of the Travel Grant Program

→ CiMAM's Travel Grant Program supports the curatorial and research development of individuals through their attendance at the Annual Conference where the most current concerns regarding contemporary art practices are being discussed.

→ Awarded candidates benefit from unique networking opportunities through interaction and exchange with international museum directors and peers.

→ Successful applicants become members of CiMAM for the 3-year term they have been awarded allowing continuity and belonging to the most relevant international contemporary art museum community.

→ Beneficiaries receive wide international visibility as their profiles and reports are announced through CiMAM's newsletter, website, conference report, and social media before and after the conference along with the names of the Travel Grant Funders that have supported their participation.

→ Over the years CiMAM's travel grantees have constituted a remarkable group of professionals, many of whom have gone on to become important participants in the field of museums of modern contemporary art.

→ Since 2005 over 300 young curators and museum directors from emerging economies have been awarded support to attend CiMAM's Annual Conference.



CiMAM's 50 contemporary art professionals awarded.

Purpose of the Grant

The main aim of the grant was to facilitate the selected candidates' access to the Annual Conference.

In 2021, candidates could choose their preferred format of attendance (online or onsite) while others were had no option to travel due to mobility restrictions.

The support was limited to cover the conference registration*, travel expenses (round trip economy flight tickets), and 4-night accommodation in one of the hotels recommended by CIMAM. The distribution of funds was set on a case-by-case basis for each recipient.

*included access to all conference sessions, lunches, dinners, refreshment breaks, access to organized visits and coach service to and from planned visits, tote bag, pen, and badge.

CIMAM booked and pre-paid all expenses directly (travel and accommodation) avoiding reimbursements to any grantee. Funds did not cover transportation to/from the airport, visa expenses, travel insurance, and registration to the optional conference tours.

Online grantees could benefit from all the functionalities offered by the virtual platform which included watching all sessions in streaming and the recorded videos, sending questions to conference speakers, posting your comments on the wall of the conference and asking questions to speakers, chatting privately and arranging video calls with other attendees, take part at the networking session and two workshops online, and watch the videos about the main exhibitions in the hosting cities presented by the artists and curator of the show.



Selection Committee

Travel grant applications are evaluated and conferred by CIMAM's Travel Grant Committee, composed of members of the CIMAM Board, and the Travel Grant Funder.

The 2021 Travel Grant Program committee consisted of four CIMAM board members:



Agustin Perez Rubio
Independent Curator,
Madrid



Victoria Noorthoorn,
Director, Museo de Arte
Moderno de Buenos Aires



Eugene Tan, Director,
National Gallery Singapore
and The Singapore Art



Ernestine White-Mifetu,
Curator and Artist,
Kimberley

Selection Criteria

Grants were evaluated and conferred by CiMAM's Selection Committee and the travel grant funder based on their assessment of the professional's genuine financial need, the potential benefit to their career development and/or research, and the relevance of field experience in relation to the objectives of CiMAM.

Grants were restricted to modern and contemporary art curators and museum directors working and residing in countries with emerging and developing economies according to the International Monetary Fund.

Researchers and independent curators whose field of research and specialization is contemporary art theory and museums were also eligible.

While curators of all career levels were encouraged to apply, priority was given to junior curators (less than 10-year experience).

Applications were reviewed by the travel grant funders and the Selection Committee of CiMAM constituted by 4 members of the CiMAM Board.

In 2021, they reviewed 72 completed applications from eligible candidates. All grant recipients were first approved by the grant funder.

Every year CiMAM seeks to increase the number of travel grants that CiMAM can offer to contemporary art professionals from around the world to participate in the Annual Conferences.

Funders of the 2021 Travel Grant Program

CiMAM is grateful to those institutions and individuals who made possible this year's Travel Grant Program in very challenging circumstances and with many mobility restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2021, CiMAM received 60.748,55€ to support the Travel Grant Program, generously provided by:

The Getty Foundation	39.840,00 €
Byucksan Foundation	4.118,96 €
VAC Foundation	5.000,00 €
Mercedes Vilardell	5.000,00 €
Office for Contemporary Art Norway	4.220,73 €
Garage Museum of Contemporary Art	2.568,86 €



The Getty Foundation

Since more than a decade ago, The Getty Foundation has been the main sponsor of CiMAM's Travel Grant Program.

This year, not only they have supported extensively the attendance of contemporary art professionals from emerging and developing economies at the conference, but also they are the main sponsors of the virtual platform, allowing participants the possibility of attending from abroad. The Board of CiMAM is grateful to them for their continuous and always vital support.

Since 2005, the Getty Foundation has been generously contributing to CiMAM's development by supporting the attendance of 262 professionals from developing economies around the globe to CiMAM Annual Conferences.

In 2021 the total awarded amount by the Getty Foundation to CiMAM to carry out the Travel Grant Program was 39.840,00€. The funds were used to cover the virtual and onsite registration fees of 25 grantees (22 online and 3 onsite). from 19 countries with Emerging Market and Developing Economies according to the International Monetary Fund's World Economic Outlook. For those 3 professionals attending physically, their grant covered their registration, transportation, and accommodation.

Grant beneficiaries funded by the Getty Foundation since 2005:

2005 São Paulo	19	2013 Rio de Janeiro	15
2006 London	17	2014 Doha	22
2007 Vienna	20	2015 Tokyo	20
2008 New York	0	2016 Barcelona	20
2009 Mexico	0	2017 Singapore	20
2010 Shanghai	0	2018 Stockholm	22
2011 Ljubljana and Zagreb	25	2019 Sydney	14
2012 İstanbul	23	2021 Poland	25



CiMAM's 2021 Annual Conference, Lodz and Gdansk, Poland. Networking Session.

Beneficiaries of the Getty Foundation:

1. Zeina Arida, director, Sursock Museum, Lebanon
2. Mira Asriningtyas, Curator, LIR / goomdpl, Indonesia
3. Duygu Barlas, Founder, Narmanlı Sanat, Turkey
4. Endri Dani, Artist and Researcher, ZETA Contemporary Art Center, Albania
5. Duygu Dogan Taupitz, Exhibition architect, Production Manager, Arter, Turkey
6. Dominique Domerçan, Writer, educator, founder and curator, Haiti Women's Museum, Haiti
7. Salima El Aissaoui, Cultural mediator, Curator, Mohammed VI Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Morocco
8. Jaime Guillermo González Solís, Adjunct Curator, MUAC Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico
9. Michał Grzegorzek, Curator, Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art, Poland
10. Rebeen Hamarafi, Artist, Curator, Researcher, Directory of Fine Art, Iraq
11. Giancarlo Hannud, Independent Curator, Brazil
12. Remy Jarry, Lecturer, Researcher PhD, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand
13. Małgorzata Kaczmarska, Art director, Chef Curator and Associate Professor, PhD in Fine Arts, IMO Gallery of Contemporary Art in Stary Sacz, Poland

14. Victoria Machipisa, Student, University of Cape Town, South Africa
15. Ana-Maria Maciuca-Pufu, Curator, Bucharest Municipality Museum, Romania
16. Sabrina Moura de Araujo, Curator, Vasto/ University of Campinas, Brazil
17. Varda Nisar, Phd Candidate/Researcher, Concordia University, Canada
18. Fernanda Ramos, Curatorial Assistant and Independent Curator, Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico
19. Marcela Romer, Cultural Director, National Historic Flag Monument, Argentina
20. Marcela Sastre, director, Fine Arts Museum of Salta, Argentina
21. Rogerio Victor Satil Neves, Museologist and Master Student, Brazil / Budapest
22. Ana Škegro, Curator, Head of Experimental and Research Department, Museum of Contemporary Art Zagreb (Muzej suvremene umjetnosti Zagreb), Croatia
23. Yuliya Sorokina, PhD, Independent curator, Tutor, Asia Art+ Public Foundation, Kazakhstan
24. Alexandra Stock, Creative director, ARCHiNOS, Architecture & Heritage Preservation, Egypt
25. Krisztián Gábor Török, Independent Curator, Hungary



Byucksan Foundation

Since 2018, Byucksan Foundation has been a key ally in supporting the attendance at the CIMAM Annual Conference of contemporary art museum professionals from the Northeast Asia region.

In 2021, the total awarded amount by Byucksan Foundation to CIMAM to carry out the Travel Grant Program was 4.118,96 €.

The funds were used to cover the virtual and onsite registration fees of 3 grantees (1 online and 2 onsite). For those 2 professionals attending physically, their grant covered their registration, transportation, and accommodation.

Grant beneficiaries funded by Byucksan Foundation since 2018:

2018 Stockholm	2
2019 Sydney	2
2021 Poland	3
Total	7

Beneficiaries of Byucksan Foundation:

1. Nadejda Cervinscaia, Cultural Manager, POD, China
2. Hanul Cho, Independent curator, researcher, South Korea
2. Zoe Yeh, Curator, Honggah Museum, Taiwan



V-A-C Foundation

Started in 2018, CIMAM and V-A-C Foundation are proud of this fruitful partnership to support the attendance at the CIMAM Annual Conference of contemporary art museum professionals from Russia and countries of the former Soviet Union.

In 2021, the total awarded amount by V-A-C Foundation to CIMAM to carry out the Travel Grant Program was 5.000,00€.

The funds were used to cover registration, transportation, accommodation, and virtual registration fees of 6 award recipients (2 online and 4 onsite) from Azerbaijdan, Latvia, Ukraine, Lithuania, and Russia.

Grant beneficiaries funded by V-A-C Foundation since 2018:

2018 Stockholm	3
2019 Sydney	2
2021 Poland	6
Total	11

Beneficiaries of V-A-C Foundation:

1. Azad Asifovich, Curator, Ta(r)dino 6 Art Platform, France/Azerbaijdan
2. Anastasiia Kharitonova, Curator of Museum Education, The State Hermitage Museum, Russia

3. Valentinas Klimašauskas, Independent curator and writer, Lithuania
4. Tatiana Kochubinska, Independent curator, Ukraine
5. Īnga Lace, C-MAP Central and Eastern Europe Fellow Museum of Modern Art, New York/Latvia
6. Asli Samadova, Founder of Ta(r)dino 6 Art Platform, Azerbaijan



Office for Contemporary Art Norway

In 2020, the year of the start of the COVID-19 pandemic CIMAM and OCA – Office for Contemporary Art Norway launched the collaborative project *StayHome Online Curatorial Residency* to support curatorial and research development of contemporary art professionals residing in Norway, with priority to professionals from Sámi or diaspora backgrounds.

Besides their grant in 2020, the three candidates were awarded a travel grant to attend the 2021 CIMAM Annual Conference in Poland.

In 2021, the total awarded amount by OCA Norway to CIMAM to carry out the Travel Grant Program was 4.220,73€.

The funds were used to cover registration, transportation, accommodation, and virtual registration fees of the 3 professionals awarded in 2020 (1 online and 2 onsite) from Oslo, Tromsø, and Vadsø.

Beneficiaries of the Office for Contemporary Art Norway:

1. Susanne Hætta, Author, artist, and photographer, Vadsø
2. Nicole Rafiki, Artist and curator, Oslo
3. Inger Emilie Solheim, Artist, writer, and curator, Tromsø



Mercedes Vilardell

In 2021, CIMAM was honored to count on the generous funding from Mercedes Vilardell to support the attendance at the CIMAM Annual Conference of contemporary art professionals from Africa.

CIMAM is sincerely grateful for the generous contribution of Mercedes Vilardell which allowed 4 professionals from Senegal, South Africa, and Cameroon to attend in person.

In 2021, the total awarded amount by Mercedes Vilardell to CIMAM to carry out the Travel Grant Program was 5.000,00€. The funds received were used to cover registration, transportation, accommodation of the 4 awarded professionals.

Beneficiaries of Mercedes Vilardell funds:

1. Janine Gaëlle Dieudji, Exhibitions Director, Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden, Morocco
2. Riason Naidoo, Independent Curator, South Africa
3. Gabi Ngcobo, Curatorial Director, Javett Art Centre at UP, South Africa
4. Marie Helene Pereira, Director of programs, RAW Material Company, Senegal

**CIMAM
2021
ANNUAL
CONFERENCE
Poland Łódź Gdańsk**



Garage Museum of Contemporary Art

In 2021, CIMAM initiated a new collaboration with Garage Museum of Contemporary Art to support the attendance at the CIMAM Annual Conference of contemporary art museum professionals residing in the Eurasian Economic Union.

The awarded amount by Garage Museum of Contemporary Art to CIMAM to carry out the Travel Grant Program was 2.568,86€.

The funds were used to cover the virtual and onsite registration fees of 4 grantees (2 online and 2 onsite). For those 2 professionals attending physically, their grant covered their registration, transportation, and accommodation.

Beneficiaries of Garage Museum of Contemporary Art:

1. Lilit Hovhannisyan, Art historian, curator, Nikolay Nikoghosyan Cultural Foundation, Armenia
2. Anna Karpenko, Independent curator, GFZK (Leipzig), Germany
3. Alice Scope, Art Curator, Cultural Policy, Ukraine
4. Seda Shekoyan, Curator and Researcher, Aliq Media, Armenia



Reports of the 50 contemporary art professionals awarded with a CIMAM grant in 2021:

Xavier Acarín, Curator, Barcelona, Spain

Zeina Arida, Director, Sursock Museum, Beirut, Lebanon

Azad Asifovich, Curator, Ta(r)dino 6 Art Platform, Paris/Baku, France/Azerbaijan

Mira Asriningtyas, Curator, LIR / 900mdpl, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Duygu Barlas, Founder Narmanlı Sanat, İstanbul, Turkey

Javiera Luisina Cádiz Bedini, Researcher, Universitat de Barcelona, Spain

Nadejda Cervinscaia, Cultural Manager, POD, Shanghai, China

Hanul Cho, Curator, Researcher, Seoul, South Korea

Endri Dani, Artist and Researcher, ZETA Contemporary Art Center, Tirana, Albania

Janine Gaëlle Dieudji, Exhibitions Director, Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden, Marrakech, Morocco

Duygu Dogan Taupitz, Exhibition architect, Production Manager, Arter, İstanbul, Turkey

Dominique Domercant, Writer, Educator, Founder and Curator, Haiti Women's Museum, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Salima El Aissaoui, Cultural Mediator, Curator, Mohammed VI Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Sale, Morocco

Beatriz Escudero, Exhibitions Department, Es Baluard, Palma de Mallorca, Spain

Jaime Guillermo González Solís, Adjunct Curator, MUAC, Mexico City, Mexico

Michał Grzegorzek, Curator, Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art, Warsaw, Poland

Kristine Guzman, General Coordinator, MUSAC, León, Spain

Susanne Hætta, Author, Artist, Photographer, Vadsoe, Norway

Rebeen Hamarafiq, Artist, Curator, Researcher, Directory of Fine Art, Sulaymaniyah, Iraq

Giancarlo Hannud, Curator, São Paulo, Brazil

Lilit Hovhannisyan, Art historian, Curator, Nikolay Nikoghosyan, Cultural Foundation, Yerevan, Armenia

Remy Jarry, Lecturer, Researcher, Ph.D., Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand

Małgorzata Kaczmarska, Art Director, Chief Curator, Associate Professor, Ph.D. in Fine Arts, IMO Gallery of Contemporary Art in Stary Sącz, Kraków, Poland

Anna Karpenko, Curator, Minsk, Belarus

Anastasiia Kharitonova, Curator of Museum Education, The State Hermitage Museum, Saint-Petersburg, Russia

Valentinas Klimašauskas, Curator, writer, Vilnius, Lithuania

Tatiana Kochubinska, Curator, Kyiv, Ukraine

Īnga Lace, C-MAP Central and Eastern Europe Fellow, Museum of Modern Art, New York, Riga, Latvia

Victoria Machipisa, Student, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa

Ana-Maria Maciuca-Pufu, Curator, Bucharest Municipality Museum, Bucharest, Romania

Martina, Millà, Head of Exhibitions, Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona, Spain

Sabrina Moura de Araujo, Curator, Vasto/ University of Campinas, Santana de Parnaíba, Brazil

Riason Naidoo, Curator, Fish Hoek (Cape Town), South Africa

Gabi Ngcobo, Curatorial Director, Javett Art Centre at UP, Johannesburg, South Africa

Varda Nisar, Ph.D. Candidate/Researcher, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada

Marie Helene Pereira, Director of Programs, RAW Material Company, Dakar, Senegal

Nicole Rafiki, Artist, and Curator, Oslo, Norway

Fernanda Ramos, Curatorial Assistant and Curator, Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City, Mexico

Marcela Romer, Cultural director, National Historic Flag Monument, Rosario, Argentina

Asli Samadova, Founder, Ta(r)dino 6 Art Platform, Baku, Azerbaijan

Marcela Sastre, director, Fine Arts Museum of Salta, Salta, Argentina

Rogério Victor Satil Neves, Museologist and Master Student, Budapest, Brazil / Budapest

Alice Scope, Art Curator, Kyiv, Ukraine

Seda Shekoyan, Curator and Researcher, Aliq Media Armenia,
Yerevan, Armenia

Ana Škegro, Curator, Head of Experimental and Research
Department, Museum of Contemporary Art Zagreb (Muzej
suvremene umjetnosti Zagreb), Zagreb, Croatia

Inger Emilie Solheim, Artist, Writer, Curator, Tromsø, Norway

Yuliya Sorokina, Curator, Tutor, Ph.D., Asia Art+ Public
Foundation, Almaty, Kazakhstan

Alexandra Stock, Creative director, ARCHiNOS Architecture &
Heritage Preservation, Cairo, Egypt

Krisztián Gábor Török, Curator, Budapest, Hungary

Zoe Yeh, Curator, Honggah Museum, Taipei, Taiwan



Xavier Acarín , Curator, Barcelona, Spain

I would like to express my gratitude to the Board of CIMAM for having granted me the opportunity to assist the 2021 Annual Conference in Poland. The pressing issues treated at the Conference, confirm that Art Museums are facing a myriad of challenges

when tackling the deep and much-needed transformations in our societies.

The current global alterations to climate and democracy, align both phenomena and their effects, placing the museum at the center of a collective task. While stimulating creativity and imagination, the museum is also a social agent, embedded in a locality, and thus capable of negotiating the complexities of conflictual realities. The authoritarian and illiberal tendencies that shape a cultural atmosphere of intolerance, are reinforcing narratives of essentialism, that need to be contested by a coalition between artistic practices, institutional labor, and social activism.

In this context, it is urgent to develop collaborations with different constituents, amplifying museums as sites of encounter, debate, and proposition. While this implies a revision of work processes and conditions, with important changes on internal issues, such as decision-making and funding; it also suggests an effort on public programming. Whereas the exhibition is seen as a problematic format, connected to a budgetary effort that does not always meet the expectations, we shouldn't dismiss the transformative force of exhibitions. As discussed at the

conference, when we merge natural and cultural processes, we are situating humans on an ecological continuum that happens while being exposed. This gives a new impulse to the exhibition as a performative device, one that affects the perceptual and the cognitive, that is conscious of the troubled legacies of our pasts while generating a collective frame for grounded political visions. Museums are resonance chambers of our times, and as such, they serve the public in tackling the current complex crises, yet this can not only be discursive, it also needs a material dimension of coming together, where things can tell other stories.

The visit to the reconstruction of the *Abstract Cabinet* at the Sztuki Museum in Lodz brought us back to Alexander Dorner's vision of the museum as a "power plant". Although today, in light of the energy crisis we could apply his idea quite literally, it is also an invitation to consider how the flows of thought and affection are serendipitous and unexpectedly created. Similarly, the exhibition as a mode of co-existence, makes visible the movement of being-with, it is immersive and tactile, aware of the underlying privileges and inequalities, and notably ongoing, unfinished, inconclusive, capable of provoking aftermaths outside the museums' walls. These are some of the thoughts that accompanied my staying in Poland, and I'm grateful to the other participants who made the conference a special moment for reflection and togetherness.



Zeina Arida, director,
Sursock Museum,
Beirut, Lebanon

"We have never lived so well" is how Dipesh Chakrabarty decided to start his keynote lecture stressing the inevitability and urgency of the climate crisis. A bittersweet realization as we acknowledge that our lifestyle is unsustainable – 'inhabitable' to use terminology more attune to the planetary.

A quick search on the web confirmed my suspicions. The weather was strangely dry and hot for this time of the year. Using November 8th as a reference date, it was clear that the temperature was slowly rising. On this day in 1990, the highest temperature attained 24°C. In 1998, it reached 25°C, 26°C in 2006, and since 2017, it has been closer to 27°C.

It has been hard, though, to focus our energy and attention on what climate change requires us to change; to critically examine our consumption and how we have been operating as a museum. Ingrained habits, supposed best practices, material limitations, and lack of time and energy are factors hindering any goodwill. So, what when the strenuous day-to-day of living in a country in delinquency, rooted in toxicity and corruption, makes this job nearly impossible? How can we think of the necessary changes to implement when running around frantically to secure fuel to operate and keep the collection safe and the Museum secure? When holding on to any semblance of normality is what actually allows us to survive?

But what if instead of holding on, we acknowledge that we have reached the point of no return, that we have reached the threshold of "destructive plasticity" to borrow from Catherine Malabou and think with CIMAM's speaker Jaroslaw Lubiak, also referencing Malabou and asking 'how to make a plastic institution'? Echoing Lubiak, T.J. Demos pushes us to think beyond the confine of the traditional Museum and listen to the bodies and voices on whose exploitation we lived on so well, recognizing that the status quo was built on colonial genocide and environmental violence, and the continuous destruction of the ecosystem. And thus, that the only way forward is to follow a more radical approach as we "imagine a future beyond the Museum as it currently exists."

The work at bay looks daunting. Luckily the speakers also gave hints and tools to operate these paradigm shifts. As such, during Jaroslaw Lubiak's talk, we were introduced to the concept and process of 'deep adaptation' and the four steps we could apply. They offer very useful insights and essential points of discussion to think of our priorities and mission as a museum: resilience (what do we most value), relinquishment (what should we let go of), restoration (what should we bring back), and reconciliation (look for friends and allies).

As we embark on this reflection, it is impossible to think along the same line of 'growth' as we previously did. Our quest for 'more' and 'bigger' came to a crashing end in 2019, with one of history's worst financial, economic, and political crises. It will be hard enough to maintain what we built when the bubbles buttressed on Ponzi schemes, and paramount debts hadn't burst yet, swallowing our savings, salaries, and infrastructures. We are no longer at the edge of the precipice but entangled in the fall. Growth is not an option anymore. Still, de-growth remains a conscious choice, one that is associated with its specific set of values and artistic productions, as Binna Choi pointed out.

Again, she highlights that "we have never lived so well" during this great acceleration period, but have we? Art offers new perspectives in that regard, questioning the status quo and what we think we know, showing us new perspectives on 'living well. What if we were to slow down and take the time to regenerate together with our communities?

Azad Asifovich, Curator, Ta(r)dino 6 Art Platform and Asli Samadova, Curator and Founder, Ta(r)dino 6 Art Platform, Baku, Azerbaijan



With this letter, we would like to thank you for organizing this year's CIMAM Conference. Organizing an international conference is a big task in itself. Ensuring that a hybrid conference meets all current regulations and additional complexities that appear due to the Covid-19 pandemic from one side and exceeding the expectations in delivering an impactful and though igniting/provoking program is a challenge. However, the CIMAM team succeeded in this task by organizing the "Under

Pressure: Museums in Times of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency" conference this year.

The world lives in times of uncertainty and growing political tensions, so the CiMAM conference developed and maintained sustainable professional relations and shared experiences across national borders. The present circumstances redefine the notion of 'togetherness' and invite us to look for alternative languages – onsite, online, or in between. Many cultural workers in Azerbaijan operate in a cultural vacuum precluded from integration in international art events and discourse due to language barriers, mobility (aggravated now, but also existed in pre-pandemic time), and other miscellaneous circumstances. Taking part in this conference was a unique learning and networking experience that would help to be up to date with current international discourse in the art and museum world on xenophobia, nationalism, and responses to humanitarian and environmental challenges. We were particularly interested in the topics discussed on the second day of the conference: museums as a non-hierarchical space of respect and a horizontal learning area. During the third day, we found several interesting and informative talks, but two were singular and inspiring for us. It was essential to look at the situation from the point of view of an artist – Otobong Nkanga and "none"-museum-related researcher Dr. Maristella Svampa. We found the presentation of the CiMAM Toolkit on Environmental Sustainability in Museum Practice inspiring and practical.

It was our first Annual Conference as a member of CiMAM and, unfortunately, both of us were unable to travel to Poland. Undoubtedly, no online experience can yet substitute in-person communication, the energy of physical gatherings, and the spontaneity of discussions. Nevertheless, the level of preparation that the CiMAM team put into the organization allowed many colleagues and us from all over the world to have the best

experience we could have in the given circumstances. Online networking sessions were particularly well-thought-out networking tools as a substitute for physical socialization conferences.

New knowledge and discussions help us in our present-day tasks – building an organization from scratch in Azerbaijan: after 2.5 years of functioning as a nomadic self-organized art platform, Ta(r)dino 6 Art Platform succeeded in registering as a non-profit, non-government contemporary art organization in Azerbaijan, first in more than a decade. Ta(r)dino 6 supports the discourse on Azerbaijani contemporary art within an international context, focusing on gender, identity, and equality in the art world.

Kind regards,

Azad Asifovich and Asli Samadova Ta(r)dino 6 Art Platform

As young art workers, we are permanently questioning the adaptability of the art institution program to answer to the constantly changing world. We strongly believe that nowadays, to be able to offer horizontal and inclusive content, we need to be engaged more and more into professional and transcultural interactions, and the dialogue, through the meetings, conferences, colloquiums, etc., is the only method for calibrating compasses!



Mira Asriningtyas,
Curator, LIR /
goomdpl, Yogyakarta,
Indonesia

In 2017 I started a biennale site-specific art project titled "goomdpl" in Kaliurang, a resort village under Mt. Merapi, one of the most active volcanoes in

Indonesia. As a continuation of the project and the effort to build a growing archive of the village and the people, together we built a prototype of the community museum "MUKKA" (Museum Komunitas Kaliurang) or also known as "The Transient Museum of a Thousand Conversation". At this particular moment, I am looking into ways to create a more environmentally responsible form of the transient museum and a more ecological way to produce the 3rd edition of "goomdpl" and its international residency platform. Through CIMAM, I wish to be connected with like-minded museum practitioners and learn from each other. The grant provided by the Getty Foundation made it possible for me not only to join (online) the CIMAM 2021 Annual Conference "Under Pressure: Museum in Times of Xenophobia and Climate Change" but also to become a member of CIMAM. It is reassuring to be part of a community like CIMAM while being part of the collective movement even without proximity. I am grateful for the opportunity.

The conference is also triggered me to think of the state of mobility/immobility that we are in at the moment. The pandemic triggered the idea of almost sculptural immobility, and it felt as if we were cursed and where we last stood was set in stone. For a short moment, it felt as if immobility would be our collective

reality for the next few years. At the same time, it was a much-needed break for the earth to heal while our carbon footprints were reduced significantly. It also leads to some crucial projects around site-specificity, situated knowledge, ecological wisdom that is deeply rooted in one's context-- an increasing trend to focus on the struggle that is personally close to us and things that are happening around us.

On the other hand, it is easy to fall into the trap of regionalism. The pandemic and immobility trigger fear-induced sentiments, discrimination, and nationalistic tendencies in this increasingly divisive and divided world. It is now more than ever to be engaged in reflectivity, solidarity, and cross-continental dialogues that go deeper than identity and geography.

Such spirits of solidarity, reflectivity, and dialogue were present and humming during the three days of the conference. I believe that this feeling must be felt stronger by those lucky enough to join the conference on-site. It is important to come together physically in one place, learn about the host city's context, and once again share the intimacy and the simple pleasure of having in-between coffee sessions with old and new friends. Mami Kataoka reminded us of the importance of de-pressure, especially during times of crisis: to relieve pressure, resist the temptation to postpone joy, and take care of ourselves.

From the conference, the opening keynote by Dipesh Chakrabarty was incredibly moving. He also reminded us of the urgency of climate emergency and how the word 'Times' as written in the conference title shall always be in the plural because they are not the same time. Time of the climate emergency is a planetary time, and planetary is about connectedness between the human and the non-human. There was an exciting question specifically addressed to T.J.Demos about what it means to keep talking about the issue of climate emergency? He said it is crucial to do more than talking, but

talking can be seen as a form of collective education, and it is essential to engage in a collaborative conversation that will later lead to something else. This process of anticipatory learning for the future of socio-political and spatial justice is a continuous process. Although invisible and immaterial, we might build something together in the future that emerged out of the conversation, arguments, contradictions, and constant effort to remake the world.



Duygu Barlas, Founder Narmanlı Sanat, İstanbul, Turkey

I have been developing a curriculum on subjects related to arts and culture, freedom of speech, and gender equality. My focus group is a selected group of young women from disadvantaged Turkey regions, aged between 18 to 22. Thus, I found Joanna Sokolowska's take on the subject exceedingly inspiring. 'Denaturalization of women as an available natural resource; capitalism demanding cheap-nature'. The question arising from this observation is how to overcome it. Maybe as she suggested, all men [should] become sisters! Without any segregation, we all have to play an active role in reaching an effective solution. My program, as mentioned before, is solely for young women, but I am aware that educational programs for young men must be designed as soon as possible. Realistically, we live in a male-dominant culture; hence, changing the male perspective on gender is necessary; otherwise, empowered women might even suffer more in barren

lands. As T. J. Demos noted, we all need to play an active role to achieve D.E.A. and social justice in a broader scope.

Dipesh Chakrabarty's distinction of global and planetary was also eye-opening. Especially worldwide reactions: passivity and rejection, delayed action towards global heating within the historical frame were gripping. Unfortunately, capitalism does not comprehend "earth as a system". Mostly everything is about short-term profit-making. This shortsightedness may be due to humanity's talent for ignoring death. (Which actually may be a curse.) We never live today as if this is our last day. Days seem to be infinite. We are selfish.

In summary, we should find a way to unite. That seems to be the only solution. But the unfortunate reality is that with increasing authoritarianism, we are headed/dragged in the opposite direction.

As Sokolowska stated at the very beginning of her speech, "I don't feel like an agent of change."... Somedays I agree, someday's I don't. But however we feel, we must act and act fast.



Javiera Luisina Cádiz
Bedini, Researcher,
Universitat de
Barcelona, Spain
Curare (to take care)

The third and final day of
“Under Pressure: Museums in
Times of Xenophobia and
Climate Emergency”

culminated conversations around pressing interrelated issues.

Titled "New Perspectives of Climate and Commonality", the panel included four women shaping the lens through which we view contemporary artistic practices: Binna Choi, Otobong Nkanga, Pelin Tan, and Maristella Svampa. These thinkers come from diverse disciplines and utilize different methodological frameworks and apply change and experimentation to personal and public art spaces.

In this short report, I want to unearth some examples of various works or strategies to which they refer that resonate with my own curatorial approach and that relate specifically to communal practices and the commons as methods of care.

The propositions they set forth push us to extend our thinking around art concerning the geopolitical context and think of more inclusive and humane ways of working towards the well-being of the land and others.

Choi, Director of Casco Art Institute in Utrecht, defines art for the commons as "resources that are co-managed as an object. But furthermore, it's more a method way of managing, sharing, caring, to be fair, equal, and joyful for the member of a community". (1)

Essential to this definition, however, she adds the importance of considering other communities when saying that "there are no single commons without other commons". In this way, and through her work at Casco, the curator is developing more inclusive approaches that can be seen in her next proposal, Commons. art, devised together with Yin Aiwen. This will serve as an online network of art professionals that she envisions to function as caretakers within "an economic ecosystem to sustain a new generation of socially engaged artworks, collective (art) practices, and artistic tools for the commons." (2) In an industry

marked by economic precarity, long hours, lack of transparency, and exploitation, Choi's idea may seem utopian at first, but it elucidates a necessary tool within our industry that takes currencies of care and knowledge seriously.

Artist Otobong Nkanga, on the other hand, discussed her ongoing project *Carved to Flow*, (3) which, amongst other things, was inspired by the Museum architecture of Cameroon and by the tall anthills she saw on her first trip to Namibia, where she contemplated the landscape as one painful housing memories of extraction and colonialism leading to dispossession. (4) The project meditates on the minerals extracted from the earth and thus reconsiders the economy of mined substances as one that gives back, or replenishes, what is extracted. First begun as part of Documenta 14 (2017) in Athens, Nkanga worked with a group of women to produce soaps made of oils (olive, sage, coconut, and others) from places in the Mediterranean, North and West Africa, and the Middle East. The soap came to signify movement and migration, and its utilitarian aspects extended to draw attention to the ecological crisis and the question: How do we give back? This is echoed in its multisite structure, which is now in its third phase called the Germination, that signals the establishment of The Carved to Flow Foundation in Akwa Ibom, Nigeria, which takes to heart an economy that nourishes, unites, and creates ecologically conscious products.

Based in Mardin, Turkey, Pelin Tan is a senior researcher and professor whose talk, *Field as Entanglement and Transversal Methodology in Decolonial Practices*, (5) included multiple examples of how socially engaged art is not only a strategy for the commons but also one that works for spatial justice beyond the academy and into emergencies, such as the migration crisis. Tan spoke of *Camp as Commons* (2017) (6), which investigates

the self-organised Diyarbakir Çınar Refugee Camp, established in 2015, and where everyday activities such as gardening were studied and documented to build an archive of memory.

Gardening, Tan explains, can be seen as a "minor action against the effects of the Anthropocene." In an article on the subject, the academic says that "[a]ccording to Silvia Federici, commoning practices require community, which in itself is based on relations with the principles of cooperation and responsibility to one another". (7)

Lastly, Argentinean sociologist, Svampa presented *Pandemic, Socioecological Crisis and Alternative Proposals from the South*. (8) Using COVID-19 as the nexus to speak about the socio-ecological emergency, she argued that globalization has failed to unite and has caused even wider socioeconomic gaps. However, she also pointed to solidarity movements such as the *Pacto Ecosocial de Sur* (9) that are gaining traction and exposed local ecological disasters such as the *Paraná Delta Fires of 2020*, where the worst fires hit the marshlands in decades. In stressing the importance of ecofeminism and indigenous knowledge, the writer interweaved notions of art, nature, and society with concepts of care and sustainability in what she referred to as a situation of 'post-pandemic recovery.' While the recently discovered Omicron variant identified in South Africa sheds doubt on notions espoused in the prefix 'post', (10) Svampa maintained that "the pandemic put the Care paradigm on the agenda, revealing that this is the keystone for building a resilient and democratic society".

When moving to energy transition, she stressed the "need to have a geopolitical vision of the eco-social transition" and used this as an example of the *Aerocene Pacha Project* (2020) where Tomás Saraceno, together with indigenous communities

of Salinas Grandes in Jujuy, Argentina, launched a fuel-free hot air balloon, *Aerocene Pacha*, using only sun and wind energy. (11) Hailed as the most sustainable human flight to date, art became an important symbol of solidarity and hope in the region, where lithium mining for batteries is intended to ruin the landscape and infringe on the rights and beliefs of people living there. (12) While three of the four practitioners presented online due to travel restrictions, the physical space in which we were congregated was the ECS European Centre of Solidarity in the historic port city of Gdańsk.

The location is not lost on me, and it's important to contextualize the conversations, which, as Anna Karpenko describes in her moving piece *Nothing is There* (13) were taking place near the Belarus-Poland border, where a migrant crisis exists at the heart of winter. As we spoke about xenophobia and injustices during the very days of the conference, protesters were concurrently demonstrating against the country's restrictive abortion laws chanting "Her heart was beating too" in reference to Izabela, who had passed away in September this year, and who has become a national symbol of the suffering and struggle of the near-total ban.

Beyond this conference, the speakers urge us to be active participants in a world in crisis, but one that offers us the privilege of seeking multiple opportunities to develop artistic ties that defend the rights of people and create artistic frameworks that become forces of life. Art provides a potent imaginary for rethinking how humans treat the earth and the implications are indeed planetary, but change is also dependent on small gestures like gardening. On a personal level, the contributions shared by Choi, Nkanga, Tan, and Svampa are a treasure-trove in

developing my own curatorial and research-based practice with the intention of cultivating a more holistic and humanitarian art scene that strategically places the commons at the center of curation. From the emotional third and final day, I took away that collective well-being is the ultimate strategy for the arts, which is not separate from life.

1 Choi, B. (2021, November 7). What Does it Mean to Art-Institute while Unlearning to Practice the Commons and Maintaining an Ecosystem? CiMAM. <https://cimam.org/digital-resources/cimam-tv-ok/lodz-and-gdansk-2021/binna-Choi/>

2 Commons.art – Casco Art Institute. (n.d.). <https://casco.art/projects/this-is-a-test-project/>

3 Nkanga, O. CARVED TO FLOW. <http://www.carvedtoflow.com/>

4 Nkanga, O. (2021, November 7). A Circle Arching Out and Back – Carved to Flow. <https://cimam.org/digital-resources/cimam-tv-ok/Lodz-and-Gdansk-2021/otobong-nkanga/>

5 Tan, P. (2021, November 7). Field as Entanglement and Transversal Methodology in Decolonial Practices. <https://cimam.org/digital-resources/cimam-tv-ok/lodz-and-gdansk-2021/pelin-tan/>

6 Tan, P. (2017). Camps as Commons. https://www.academia.edu/31049225/Camps_as_Commons

7 Tan, P. (2017, July). Refugee Heritage conversations: Pelin Tan, "Camps as Trans-Local Commons"— Architecture—E-flux conversations. <https://conversations.e-flux.com/t/refugee-heritage-conversations-pelin-tan-camps-as-trans-local-commons/6760>

8 Svampa, M. (2021, November 7). Pandemic, Socioecological Crisis and Alternative Proposals from the South. <https://cimam.org/digital-resources/cimam-tv-ok/lodz-and-gdansk-2021/maristella-svampa/>

9 PACTO ECOSOCIAL LATINOAMERICANO. (n.d.). Pacto Ecosocial Latinoamericano. <https://pactoecosocialdelsur.com/>

10 Ellis, E. (2021, December 4). OMICRON: SA SCIENTISTS STRIKE BACK: Travel ban threatens information sharing, weakens global solidarity. Daily Maverick.

11. Barandy, K. (2021, August 29). Tomás Saraceno's clean, solar-powered Aerocene Balloon sets 32 World Records. Designboom | Architecture & Design Magazine.
<https://www.designboom.com/art/tomas-saraceno-aerocene-pacha-balloon-flight-32-world-records-08-27-2021/>

12. For more on the subject and the implications on the inhabitants of the region, see: Rappolt, M. (2020, April 16). Looking Back at Artist Tomás Saraceno's 'Aerocene Pacha' for CONNECT, BTS.
<https://artreview.com/aerocene-pacha-tomas-saraceno-connect-bts/>

13. Karpenko, A. (2021, November 30). Nothing is There—CİMAM.
<https://cimam.org/news-archive/nothing-is-there/>



Nadejda Cervinscaia,
Cultural Manager,
POD, Shanghai, China

*CİMAM is about the
discovery of people and
their professional
habitats*

It's not a secret that any young expert will benefit from professional development outside the work from diverse perspectives: be it conferences and events, reading, and, definitely, networking. However, different challenges may appear to access certain resources, and it usually takes time to reach the right place. After curating several exhibitions of Zaharia Cusnir archive since 2016, reaching out to institutions for more

projects, I have now been facing a slowed-down phase in our activities. This is why I was particularly motivated to apply to CIMAM and get there. For me, CIMAM 2021 Annual Conference has indeed tele-ported me right into the middle of a very professional, yearly summit of a tight network of museum professionals, experienced and young curators very eager to learn, share and include you into the benefits and secrets of this special group of people and knowledge.

I want to present my highlights. First, CIMAM has been a 'sparkling water' space: there are so many brilliant professionals with their shaped views on the meaning of art in educating society, presenting different perspectives, and engaging artists worldwide. The program was jam-packed, but that's the perk, I would say. The participants would get inspired by speeches and presentations and exchange passionately with different people during the breaks. I believe that initiating or joining different discussions during coffee breaks is the hidden parallel conference, unplanned, unstructured, and so much needed. Never forget your business cards, and have a handy brochure/book to present right away!

The second highlight has been the exhibitions which we visited. Among all the magnificent ones, I would like to highlight the curatorship of Aneta Szyrak and her devoted explanation of the shows, which she delivered to all the participants. I would also like to emphasize the Muzeum Sztuki in Lodz. The topics, artists, and exhibitions are top-notch. For example, I discovered the solo-exhibition of Agnieszka Kurant "Errorism" curated by Jakub Gawkowski in Muzeum Sztuki in Lodz. Agnieszka is a modern artist who approaches socio-political issues through the artistic prism and, to me, ordinary objects that bridge the message to the public. Particularly, I was impressed by the

juxtaposition of 'entirely unaware worker society of millions of termites specimen' building up hills from the artist's materials: colored sand, crystals, and gold. In my understanding, the three displayed hills in violet-green and red represent the joint social forces of contribution to something much bigger than ourselves, that it is difficult to grasp the tower we have just built. Notably, the curator Jakub Gawkowski has also kindly walked the CiMAM participants through his habitat, his show. It is a higher level of perceiving the show when the curator himself/herself delivers the message. As an amateur curator, I could learn a few techniques that will be definitive assets in my future exhibitions.

To sum up, CiMAM has been the environment where I discovered a tight, friendly, and mutually-supportive network of high-class museum professionals and independent curators, happy to share resources, establish potential collaborations, and are very approachable. You may drink a coffee next to some modern art museum director without knowing it, so I highly advise all young curators to jump into conversations, present your ideas, get connected, and flourish this unique fruitful circle of art professionals. I am highly thankful to CiMAM for the grant. I am happy to say that CiMAM is also very actionable: just by sharing about our Zaharia Cusnir archive, I got to know two other grants which may support our project. Additionally, I have connected to around six institutions whose workers I met, and now we are discussing our further collaborations. Lastly, CiMAM doesn't end on the last conference day. I am now granted access to unique online materials and partner institutions all around the Globe. It boosts my professional development and the development of our Zaharia Cusnir photo archive.



Hanul Cho, Curator, Researcher, Seoul, South Korea

CIMAM's Annual Conference allowed me to share concerns about the crisis and future of the museum due to social conflicts in the era of pandemics and climate change. In addition, I was able to focus more on my personal interests through the workshop program and tour of some exhibitions in Lodz and Gdansk.

Visiting the Avant-garde Museum in Lodz reminded me of the research I conducted, its concerns and limits, and how Muzeum Sztuki systematized and activated research on forgotten or scattered Eastern European avant-garde art inspired me and provided me rich information. I always thought that it is necessary to thoroughly study the influence and culture of the avant-garde in Korea, and its value and scalability should be treated much more critically, in addition to the fact that the avant-garde has influenced the Dansaekhwa (the Korean monochrome) as many people know. On the other hand, it made me think a lot about the museum's policy and support for mid and long-term projects. It was possible to see which projects and collections the museum strategically took and established its identity.

The history of *Solidarność* and the European Solidarity Center in Gdansk reminded me of Gwangju Uprising. For my parents' generation, the history of Solidarity called the Polish Freedom Union in Korean, overlaps with Gwangju's tragedy, including voluntary solidarity by ordinary workers and citizens,

terrible bloodshed and suppression of force, and the political debate that eventually led to the fall of the regime. I believe its meaning and spirit remain valid in the sense that we cannot overlook the implications of this story in the era of discrimination and fear we now face. Therefore, the special exhibition of the May 18 Uprising, which will be presented in Venice next year by the Gwangju Biennale Foundation and Gwangju City, is more meaningful than sharing the experiences of Gwangju and Korean art with everyone in this extension. The spirit of democracy and solidarity, breaking away from authoritarianism, made us realize once again that exhibition and art are still essential and should continue in this era when the ideal and purpose pursued by modern society and all broken boundaries are revived.

On the other hand, questions about democracy dealt with by the museum poured out from within me. I couldn't stop thinking about how much the message delivered through the exhibition as a media reflects the actual reality, whether it secretly reveals its political position and democratic practices and actions in art groups and institutions. We still have no choice but to raise questions about how free and open we are in repetitive and fragmentary messages, lack of sufficient research or understanding of delicate conflicts and complicated layers of relationships, narrow and rigid attitudes toward issues sometimes considered social taboos, interpretations under single perspective, neglected minority perspectives, and political considerations. We often face subversive situations where those who attacked vested rights amid complex interests and political power became the leading vested force. Regardless of interests or political concerns, the museum should handle all issues freely without hesitation. Regardless of political interests or concerns, the museum should address all issues freely and without hesitation. In addition to the fundamental purpose of the museum,

such as exhibition, collection, and research, I want to examine further whether the museum reveals democratic values in terms of its actual operation and management.

Watching various old practices within the art world, rejection of horizontal leadership, the confrontation between institutions' management and labor unions, I realized how sincere the institution is to various voices and whether it shows the limitations of carrying out given projects. As the term of Freedom Union, the situations in which only simple stories of events are reported, accepted, and appropriately used based on political considerations and understanding occur more often than expected. I agree that this crisis of leadership exists in the art world.

The museum's task to transform itself into a sustainable and eco-friendly organization seems to be in the distant future. There was also a workshop program to exchange opinions on how it can be embodied. Taking some examples of how the museum's interest in the Green New Deal is realistically applied to the museum's operation policy, I could also feel how indifferent and distant the Korean art field is to these global and universal issues. In addition to emphasizing and advocating Korean and Asian things, as some Korean representative organizations aim, these issues should be more active to move away from local art museums and interact and grow more actively with the international community. I am worried about how the museum will be transformed without a strategy for the future. But still, I am more personally interested than ever in what the next director of the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art plans to open in the upcoming year.

In conclusion, this conference was a place to get a glimpse of various concerns about the leadership and direction of

the art field. Furthermore, I think it has served as an opportunity to specify future plans for me, who currently works without the institution to which I belong. As a group of people who study and practice contemporary art, from CIMAM I expect to see clear and creative leadership and actions in the future.



Endri Dani, Artist and Researcher, ZETA Contemporary Art Center, Tirana, Albania

A few days ago, Etel Adnan, an influential Lebanese American writer-essayist, and artist died at 96; I am reminded of one of her most popular expressions, "Your identity is your prison." This expression had to do with the duality of her identity as an accumulation of contradictions between dynamic eastern cultures and Western supremacy.

With a dynamic experience for more than a decade in the art world, exhibiting in Museums, museums, or galleries on different continents, I think the art world continues to maintain a formal proportion to the social sphere because it still operates with labels statistical views guided by geopolitical notions. The art system, as a system that directly "feeds" the human ego (turns the individual into a cult) and the financial sphere, pragmatic approaches continue to strengthen the system's metabolism. Although, as a young artist born in the late '80s with a great development of mobility and access to information, at the beginning of my career, I was faced with a conservative cultural

world to protect comfort zones and a traditional mindset as a negotiated relationship with social parameters.

How is it possible that you speak so many foreign languages? How is it possible that you have visited so many places in the world? How many more days can you stay in the Schengen area with an Albanian passport?... These are some of the questions that often dominated over the interest of my work's subjects in openings (mostly in the west). This CiMAM Annual Conference was really of great interest as it dealt with two topics that resonate around me; 'Xenophobia' – related to my geographical identity and 'Climate Emergency' – related to my artistic practice. I followed all the speakers with great interest. I hope that soon the intellectual bubbles will "burst."

From a stabilized academic network, we will move to an active/progressive network of initiatives, organizations, or finally, protests, which can put into practice what we have discussed and re-discussed over the years, such as the creation of new value models referring to humanitarian approaches rather than to the "battle" of knowledge. Paradoxically, even though we were discussing "Xenophobia," my presence at this conference can be considered a marginal presence, since, in the online grouping, I was confronted every day in discussions with individuals from non-Schengen countries, without needing a visa to attend this conference and being vaccinated in the USA.

I think we will face a more emancipated art system at the moment when the synchronization of this system with structural conventions will be lost in time, and the gravity of geopolitical circumstances over the individual (as creator) will be deconstructed. Its internal spatial dimension will be the dominant consideration.



Janine Gaëlle Dieudji,
Exhibitions Director,
Museum of African
Contemporary Art Al
Maaden, Marrakech,
Morocco

As we're moving
towards the end of the year,
the 53rd edition of the CIMAM

Annual Conference entitled "Under Pressure: Museums in Times of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency" was definitely one of my highlights this year.

Beyond the fact that the theme resonated with several ongoing discussions on decolonizing, downsizing, and rethinking the museum of the future in a constantly changing world of global crisis, the choice of the location (Gdansk and Lodz) couldn't be more accurate due to current tense socio-political and geopolitical climate in Poland.

On the first day of the conference, framed under the title *Conflicts, Crises, and the Politics of Growth*, I came across the work of Prof. Dipesh Chakrabarty, who uses geobiological concepts to address our relation to the planet. His presentation depicted the globe as moral-political and stated that "the planetary forces reduce us to our creaturely lives" and "the global is about a human-dominant order of life." A specific sentence from his presentation struck me: "The planetary is about habitability." I immediately associated it with the writings of another lecturer I appreciate the work, Prof. Achille Mbembé. According to him as well, the existence itself is more and more

combined with the ability to move around, “habiter le monde c’est nécessairement en prendre soin et le partager avec d’autres.” (inhabiting the world is necessarily taking care of it and sharing it with others.). Day one was quite enriching in terms of knowledge and practices exchange during the different presentations, the networking session in the original format of "speed-meeting," and the groundbreaking exhibitions we visited.

On the following days, keynotes such as T.J. Demos' one emphasized the urgent necessity for museums to "recognize the climate emergency by distancing themselves from fossil fuel investment capital" and to attempt "to reconcile in advance a political transformation emancipated from institutional racism, xenophobia targeting minority groups, and growing socioeconomic and political inequality." We've been facing critical times for a few years now.

Between the Covid-19 crisis that clearly shows us that multilateralism only works in times of peace, and social protests around the world that brought special attention to matters such as racism, police brutality, inequality amongst peoples, xenophobia, discrimination in all its forms, and climate emergency, it's becoming crucial to develop and encourage critical thinking. Besides the essential need for viable policy measures, our duty as artists, curators, and museums professionals is to advocate for more inclusive spaces and platforms that create a safe and welcoming environment for all.

The CIMAM's 2021 Annual Conference was an excellent opportunity to meet and connect with colleagues from across the world. I remain grateful to the CIMAM team, the Getty Foundation, the V-A-C Foundation, the Byucksan Foundation, Mercedes Vilardell, the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Office for Contemporary Art Norway for selecting me

and other 49 contemporary art curators and museum professionals, and for awarding us the Travel Grant Program to attend the conference, as we move to "new paths of growth" and "healing the collective unconscious." (CIMAM 2021, Day 1, Perspective 2, Joanna Sokolowska)



Duygu Dogan Taupitz,
Exhibition architect,
Production Manager,
Arter, İstanbul, Turkey

Connectedness,
solidarity, mourning, producing
systems of support, care, and
repair, global/planetary,
inherent complexities of
resources, feeling and

belonging, interdependence, new technologies combined with social justice priorities, practices of care, mourning, politics, and urgency of touch and ways of being together, intimate to planetary, from the micro gesture to the macro, from macro to the infrastructural, deep evolutionary history of life, Diversity – Equity – Inclusion complex, whose emergency is it? Connect intersecting emergencies, colonial dispossession, spatial justice, field and the institution, biopolitics/geopolitics, scale, and proximity.

These keywords and phrases are my notes from different sessions and speakers, and I included them without any order. The whole paragraph is full of urgent topics that all of us experience in different geographies, in different contexts; ecological crises, economic crises, institutional crises, and extreme crises like wars, environmental destruction, migration,

eviction. The topics discuss the conditions of the crises and offer different pathways for thinking about living together, connectedness, solidarity, caring, and repairing.

Dipesh Chakrabarty, giving the first speech; provided a scientific look and academic ground for ecological crises, and he explained planetary connectedness, which I think is the key idea that could help search the reasons for the multiple crises and find new ways of dealing with the crises.

Alex Baczynki-Jenkins, performing queer feminist methodologies, shared his experience as an artist and choreographer, and like Chakrabarty; his performances and collective works focus on connectedness, strengthening the feeling and belonging, interdependence. He explained that he asks in his works how museums can engage rehearsing communities of the future; touching, mourning and dance, practices of care and solidarity.

Pelin Tan presented her latest research in the field of extreme crises where she lives and works. She explained that she engages architectural and artistic methods in her research and suggests finding modalities against extractivism that instrumentalized the landscapes and infrastructures on a planetary scale. She offers that we need to think about the role of the institutions and construct structures of solidarity based on proximity.

Otobong Nkanga explained that Mediterranean and African land that is subject to colonization and extractivism; are the places that nourish the world and also the places that have extreme crises. As an artist, she focuses on creating structures for care and repair through searching inherent complexities of resources like soil and earth.

T. J. Demos discussed the role of the intuitions in the Diversity – Equity – Inclusion complex explained how established

art institutions contribute to the DEI and how they use the museums and art as shields for their destructive actions, referring to movements like Strike-Moma.

As an exhibition architect working in an art institution, I felt part of a vital discussion that people from different practices presented their current studies, researches, or work on the very urgent issues of the planet. The presentations included institutional or non-institutional, collective or independent experiences. It was a great chance to hear practices, reflect on the many aspects of multiple crises, see the emergencies and priorities in different parts of the world, in different localities and institutions, and deeply feel the scientific and social connectedness.

Note: I have participated in the conference online. Unfortunately, I was unsuccessful with the interface; I could not follow the networking sessions. Therefore, my report comprises notes and comments about the panels, presentations, and group discussions.



Dominique Domerçant,
Writer, Educator,
Founder and Curator,
Haiti Women's
Museum, Port-au-
Prince, Haiti

I am honored to participate as a museum professional and proudly represent Haïti at the 53rd edition of the CIMAM Annual Conference, in which debates were held around the situation of "Under pressure" affecting modern and contemporary art

museums. In the context of xenophobia and the climate emergency, subjects concern both the North and the South. It is such an excellent opportunity for me to appreciate all the themes and sub-themes and to deepen the theme between the presentations, discussions, and research that I will continue. From 5 to 7 November 2021, the activities were organized at the Muzeum Sztuki in Lodz, and the new NOMUS Art Museum/branch of the National Museum in Gdansk, Poland, brought together more than 150 onsite museum professionals and 100 more virtually.

Since October 2021, with my selection among the 50 museum specialists, and until the organization of the Annual Conference, this new international experience, even in the context of national and global crises, has been positive for me, as a museum professional, from several angles. This authorizes me to thank all the organizers, speakers, participants, and partners involved in realizing and succeeding in such a global event.

The second day's theme, *Museums as a Space for Recognizing Differences*" was one of the most salient points for me during the activity. It was an opportunity to appreciate the different stakeholders' approaches, continue researching their profiles and backgrounds, understand their contributions to the evolution of museums, and the development of cultural projects that respond to these values.

Looking to the future, I hope that, thanks to the quality of the conferences and the sum of the speakers' experiences, the benefit of the CiMAM grant, and with my new status as a member of CiMAM, I would like to be able to initiate exchanges to establish collaborations around sustainable projects. Haïti,

more than ever, needs the contribution of these highly qualified resources and has an invaluable diverse heritage, apart from its contribution to universal history.

Through the Haïti Museum Collective that I manage and my new status of adviser committee of the International Council of Museums (ICOM-HAÏTI), from 2022 to 2024, I believe I have greatly benefited intellectually from this conference. I hope to be able professionally, institutionally, strategically, and, if possible, financially to help the Museum of Women of Haïti that I founded, and other cultural projects, such as virtual museums, in progress, expert resources, and networking the big CIMAM family will offer me.



Salima El Aissaoui,
Cultural Mediator,
Curator, Mohammed VI
Museum of Modern and
Contemporary Art,
Sale, Morocco

The CIMAM 2021 Annual Conference was a great opportunity for me to attend very interesting discussions around the urgent issues of climate change and xenophobia.

My feedback as a museum professional (cultural mediator) working in a state museum in an Arab, Amazigh, Mediterranean, African country, in a postcolonial context would

be very complex. My perspective on these issues is, therefore, very much influenced by all these considerations.

In the institution where I work, we have not yet begun to develop thematic exhibitions with dedicated curators and an elaborate and critical discourse on social issues or reflections on sensitive and present-world topics, such as climate change. This can be explained by the fact that the museum practice in Morocco, especially in terms of art, is very young. All the focus today is towards the establishment of a certain common cultural identity (i.e. retrospectives of Moroccan artists, historical group exhibitions, etc.), coupled with an opening to the international. An opening, moreover, that does not often meet the ambitions of the informed public, eager to see exhibitions that are aware of the postcolonial context in which we live.

The actions taken are more subtle, i.e., integrating the discourse on minorities, visualizing the work of women artists, etc., within these historically based exhibitions, which may later prove to be more effective and constructive. Could it be a way of "transcending superficial tendencies of inclusion in order to cultivate a culture of real equity and equality and democracy and transparency" as wished by T.J. Demos when he talked about the absurdities of "model" western museum institutions concerning greenwashing?

Nevertheless, attending the different conferences allowed me to compare the preliminary work that is done today in my institution with that of other more experienced institutions. This meeting and the factual knowledge that comes from it are very important and open me to enormous possibilities of actions, methods, and strategies.

I can also return to two very important aspects: the fact that the conferences gave the floor to specialists in the subjects discussed: the respective conferences of Dipesh Chakrabarty and Maristella Svampa were very crucial to better understand the context in which all our artistic, curatorial, and museum activity is developed.

Each of the communications by Pelin Tan and Otobong Nkanga was very relevant to my situation and identity, as they discussed issues related to the environment from the global south.



Beatriz Escudero,
Exhibitions
Department, Es
Baluard Museu d'Art
Contemporani de
Palma, Palma de
Mallorca, Spain

The CIMAM Annual Conference has allowed us to reflect on some of the most critical challenges the world faces. For three days, we have been able to experience "the urgency of being together and touching" again, as Alex Baczynski-Jenkins made evident in an inspiring presentation of his work. We have also learned from Pelin Tan that a "little scale" approach can be positive and beneficial when communities and territories are involved.

Many presentations reminded us of the relationship between "the one and the many", as Dipesh Chakrabarty pointed out. Or the need to be even more aware of our interdependence, a crucial fact to achieve a social and ecological transformation of our production models. In that sense, and during the last day of presentations, Maristella Svampa devoted her speech to stress the need to regard the pandemic and crisis scenarios we are experiencing as an opportunity to imagine and build up a complete transformation of the relationship between society and nature, which would place interdependency, sustainability and above all care at the core of it.

The pandemic has made visible the link between social inequalities and wealth concentration and the connections between zoonosis, pandemics, and socio-ecological crisis. Svampa insists that we must not only change our energy system from fossil to a more ecological source. We must also change our extractivist system and our production, consumption, and waste disposal models. Moreover, if we fail to articulate environmental and social justice, we will accelerate the ecological collapse and the inequalities we face.

And yet, it was the word "care" that overwhelmingly appeared in most speeches. As professionals working in museums, we must ask ourselves how care is integrated into our programs and our rapport with the communities we are inserted in, particularly with the staff and the people around our institutions. Museums may not be a factor of change, says Joanna Sokolowska. But, as reminded by Svampa, museums, as art does, can expand horizons and political imagination towards change.



Jaime Guillermo
González Solís,
Adjunct Curator,
MUAC, Mexico City,
Mexico

Reflections inside a
Contemporary Art Museum
have to address relevant
topics from diverse and
actualized points of view.

Sometimes, professionals' focus from within the institutions may tend to become self-centered, which may be prevented by connecting with perspectives from other geographies and contexts. As a young curator with only four years of experience, this conference meant a significant milestone in my career to participate in international platforms that share experiences and understand their relevance.

I was unfamiliar with Poland's art scene, cultural environment, or museum infrastructure. However, even from afar, by videos and testimonies, I could be way more aware of the implications behind this country's political and social issues. I think that its historical background and contexts were very well addressed through the conference speakers and through the projects that were selected to be discussed. This allowed me to begin to imagine and open up my sensibility to relate to the context and some of its issues through art and curatorial practice. In the past weeks, these questions have stayed with me in my daily labors in the museum, translating them to my very own reflections of Mexico's local problematics in contemporary art practice in very different ways.

The conferences and perspectives shared by the speakers at those three days of intense activity were very well selected. Mashed up together, the speakers' points of view guided me through different strategies to imagine curatorial answers to identified problems, dealt through the museum's potential force as an ever-changing space. I think that this consciousness of the museum's nature is rooted in the awareness of its historical origins and the problems they represent. In the context of these last years' planetary consciousness on colonial and climate-change topics, it is urgent to discuss this specific question in the professional field. T. J. Demos' keynote was compromised to address this particular matter in North American museums through a varied selection of actions. This specific contribution was vital to me because of the clarity of the questions raised that both recognized the radical propositions of the cases analyzed and the need to acknowledge the context not to destroy but to build up from the museum's capacity.

Getting to know other professionals in the museum field from very different contexts through online workshops and networking sessions was also really enjoyable. Personally, this was very significant for the point where I currently am in my career. I got to share experiences with similar people to me. I think it was really surprising to know that we can share questions and worries in countries from the other side of the world. Hopefully, this may lead to future collaborations.



Michal Grzegorzek,
Curator, Ujazdowski
Castle Centre for
Contemporary Art,
Warsaw, Poland

The following are given:

1) Otobong Nkanga is standing over an abyss. Stones appear on her head. Reversed

time (science-fiction). I cannot see their exact color from a distance, but I know from history that they are mala-chite green and azurite blue. Like all this land. She calls it *The Remains from the Green Hill*. She says: "meet the hole."

The mine ruins are a colonial story of Namibia. The land tells this story - how excitement becomes a machine that becomes an industry (1). A motion that captures bodies and doesn't end for deca-des.

In Nkanga's work/works, we see a body that vibrates. The trembling, the search for balance, vulnerability, and finally, the power. Gestures produce infrastructures. The hole in the landscape is the hole in the heart.

2) Steel stairs attached to the elevation of the Ujazdowski Castle lead through a window to the bar. The hole in the wall is an act of resistance. Kem calls it Dragana (Kem is a queer-feminist collec-tive[2]; Kem is kame; Kem is chem, is sex).

Dragana is a bar of dancing queer bodies in a Polish public institution. It derives from the lack of safe spaces in public spaces: dancefloor and dance hole.

Alex Baczynski Jenkins says that the path from gesture to infrastructure is through presence, touch, and dance. In the nightlife of the museum, we can see the need (and possibility) for creating new formats and hideouts. What could be the secret performance of an institutional structure? How to imagine a museum in a constant transition?

3) The CIMAM Annual Conference took place in Poland, wherein in 2020, the authorities established almost 30 percent of the country's territory as an LGBT-free zone.

A map with a blank spot. The unpromised land. The unglory hole.

I want to thank Ines Jover and the Getty Foundation as well as the CIMAM Travel Grant Committee for their trust and support, giving me the possibility of joining the CIMAM Annual Conference in Łódź and Gdańsk. Thanks to all the under-pressure artists and activists, present and absent at the conference.

(1) An interview with Otobong Nkanga at Kadist Paris, more: <https://vimeo.com/144554605>

(2) Kem is created by Aleksandra Knychalska, Anna Miczko, Krzysztof Bagiński and Alex Baczyński Jenkins. More: <https://www.kemwarsaw.com/>



Kristine Guzman,
General Coordinator,
MUSAC, León, Spain

The CIMAM Annual Conference coincided with the Glasgow Summit on Climate Change. While world leaders called for national plans to cut down on greenhouse gas emissions, 150 professionals

from the museum world held their own discussions of "museums as places to foreground proposals and strategies for future communities" in a post-Anthropocene world.

What does climate change mean in historical thinking? What kind of world do we want to live in together? How can we contribute to living more sustainably? What kind of practices with a transformative power can be put into practice? How can museums be more sustainable in the broadest sense? These were some of the questions that arose during the CIMAM Conference. And while it is hard to gather real prescriptions as there is no straight path towards the goal, art can provide a roadmap, one that has been accelerated by the pandemic and has brought to light other topics of concern such as social inequalities and diversity, and socio-ecological crisis.

Dipesh Chakrabarty's graphs were quantifiable methods of representation of our planetary condition. However, as TJ Demos affirmed, visual imagery is central to how people develop a sense of the meaning of the era we live in, an era Maristella Svampa defined as one that emphasizes civilizational collapse seeks capitalist-technocratic solutions and promotes different

forms of anti-systemic resistance. The examples of care and commonality provided by Pelin Tan, Binna Choi, and Otobong Nkanga have been very inspirational and has prompted me to rethink our own strategies at MUSAC in reaching out and establishing ties with our local communities, as well as our roles and responsibilities in a climate emergency, to which we can contribute by progressively adapting sustainable alternatives to processes of team management, art production, and exhibition.

I would like to sincerely thank the CÍMAM Board and organizers for the opportunity to attend this Conference and interact with other professionals who share the same passion for art. It has been a very enriching experience for me. I would also like to thank our hosts in the cities of Lodz and Gdansk for their hospitality and attention. Our planet is indeed "under pressure," but as a collective of leaders and initiators, we can enable change through art.



Susanne Hætta, Author,
Artist, Photographer,
Vadsoe, Norway

I am grateful for the grant I received last year, although I regret that I wasn't able to travel to the conference in Poland. I spent the grant period last December doing an investigation of whether I could find a subjective photographic view of Sámi people, the Indigenous people of Scandinavia and North West Russia. The Sámi are one of the most photographed Indigenous peoples in

the world, often being exoticized in visual representations as “others”. I tried to find early Sámi photographers, earlier than the 1950s, and that was a challenge. A few stood out, and it was interesting, as a Sámi photographer and visual artist myself, to view in which manner they chose motifs, settings and models. What and who they photographed showed an inside view of Sámi life, often humouristic and with an emphasis on daily life, rather than big occasions like weddings and birthdays.

The conference, that I attended digitally, had interesting speakers, and I followed it as much as I could, in between the activities of the daily life I have as a single parent. Maristella Svampa from Argentina had interesting and fruitful analyzes of the pandemic linked to zoonosis and the increasing divide between people of wealth and people of poverty.

I also learned that neo-extractivism didn't slow down during the pandemic, and I instantly connected that information to greenwashing in Sápmi. Indigenous peoples are expected to “take one for the team”, to give away traditional land and seasonal migratory routes to let large international corporations and investment banks start mining or build enormous wind power plants. There are many ongoing cases like this in Sápmi.

As I am not a museum academic, some themes and analysis were difficult for me to follow. However, I think this grant and the conference will have an influence on my curiosity about such topics as ecocide, neo-colonialism and neo-extractivism, and how museums can take part in the talks about these problems in the coming years. These topics are also connected to the lack of Sámi photographic voices from earlier years, in times where assimilation politics were dominant, and Sámi people were merely objects and had no political power.

This has changed, and I see museums as important participants in the ever-changing dialogues about truth, sovereignty and storytelling, everywhere, but especially in Indigenous areas.



Rebeen Hamarafiq,
Artist, Curator,
Researcher, Directory
of Fine Art,
Sulaymaniyah, Iraq

The name of the conference was coming in perfect timing. At the same time, migrants were waiting on the border of Poland, to enter

Europe. Pressures of the world force humans to leave their home country and to relocate or by other means become immigrants. We don't know if it was, by accident or agreement that most of the migrants were Kurds from Iraq.

At the same time, I did apply for the travel grant, without the problems of the migrants at the Polish border being that much on the eye of media, but my participation transformed to an online and virtual visit to the exhibitions. Even though I was part of the NOMUS exhibition as well. The fear that divides the world still has the biggest impact on how the rest of the world want to relocate to Europe for better living or to have dual citizenship to travel freely, our conception of globally living are human mindset at the same time it controls what we want and forces us to build a standard to act according to this standards. Some of the new migrants are not the families that escaping poverty, as Dipesh Chakrabarty claimed that: (the world never lived in such well-being condition) but rather escaping a cultural circumstance, or

rather escaping the future that is about to come, rather than the present they live in. For the pessimistic messages that spread in Kurdistan are destroying all the hopes and dreams of the future of individuals and their children. This is opposite to the big promises that come from the western world. Uncertain vision and rupture and shock after another in Kurdistan lead to individuals living at the present without any certain future and of course a history full of pain. In other words, escaping being oppressed and becoming on the oppressor's side of the world.

Sustainability is a key factor for museums and art collecting but to have the power to keep the differences without becoming under the influences of certain ideological policies. The decommunization in Ukraine in the speech by Oleksiy Radynski was another model but in a less extreme way than what we saw during the ISIS time, when the whole site of Nimrud has been destroyed, in a visit to the location with an artist Rozhgar Mustafa for performance and Sangar Abdullah for video and photo-documenting. I had to contact every person in the Iraqi authority to have a few hour visits to the site. Even we are Iraqi by citizenship but still, the access needed a huge amount of work, all official governmental efforts had a closed-end until we had to find some influential person inside Hashd Alshaby to arrange the visit. and we have to have three persons online with us checking our location rapidly. In this area, the original residents were Sunnis with ties to ISIS. The main idea is that we are living in an area that traveling between two cities of the same country does have a higher risk than travelling through Belarus to Poland cultures in Iraq are more in danger inside Iraq with all the complicities that brought to the area.

And that more the peoples are alienated to their home country and the more they forced to become part of dirty political games, the more this desire for immigrating will raise at least to relocate their Identity but none of them could erase their history

even they relocated geographically. During the Kurdish internal conflict of between 1994 to 1999 with the consciences extending until our day. Traveling from Sulaymaniyah to Erbil was much harder than traveling to Iran or even some time to the rest of the world.

Kurdish Internal struggles had a great force on reshaping cultural identity, many cultural figures became part of this ugly struggle between two parts of the fight. In a Facebook post during the conference, (I was translating some key ideas to Kurdish) in translating the Jaroslaw Suchan statement about culture in Poland how the accumulation of bad practice accepted over years resulted in the present situation, and some other key states about how cultural positions are treated as trophies and given to the supporters of the winning parties. I removed Poland from the statement deliberately and at the end, I wrote this is about Poland don't mix it with other places in the world. But most of my friends missed this last part of the announcement and congratulated me on my deep vision of culture in Kurdistan Iraq.

This mixture of not knowing which place the statement is about has a message: that with all the division that we are making to our world we still have many shared problems and struggles ahead of us and we have to deal with them together.

In the dialogue section with (Dipesh Chakrabarty), he gave notice to how more and more parts of the world are adopting western ways of living and course more and more participating in the destruction of our climate. My latest project is a six-month project (Are we Addicted?) supported by Goethe Institute in Iraq and the Culture Factory (the old cigarette factory) with many other art projects in or about the pace. the question was more about our modern ways of living how we become accustomed to certain ways of living, habits that are killing our Creativity the relation is more like an addiction rather than normal human behaviors. The project ended with an Exhibition (Maps of

Control) the exhibition was an insight into different layers of control operating on cities and urban living, starting with occupying of the hills and domination of the mosques to the works of Hito Steyerl how not to be seen. Another global controlling machine is through pixels. The aim of my contribution to the Culture factory project was to raise a critical view during the transformation process. And how the place not becoming a platform for nationalistic, racist, dictator forms of art and culture to build what Irrit Rogoff call embedded criticality. Because this place will become the biggest cultural project in the city and maybe in Iraq as well. The question of representation has to be a central point in its strategy. And how to be aware of (crisis of democratic institutions. Post-representational politics) from the speech of T. J. Demos.

Other ways of living are interrupted so rapidly that there is no way to escape the unhealthy transition toward western ways of living. Even the global that we share and must contain differences, but homogenization with its danger is destroying the other possible ways of living and cultures. Every time different societies try to depend on their local recourses and establish different models on the global map, they will cause a rupture intrudes that manipulates the efforts. We as cultural workers are building hopes around institutions to build trust around human thoughts and to enforce the values that are precious to our being and identity.



Giancarlo Hannud, Curator, São Paulo, Brazil

As we all know, the past two years have been a time of deep unrest and uncertainty due to the global pandemic of COVID-19, particularly amongst museum professionals. Forced to shut down institutions and search for new and exciting ways of reaching their public, museums have had to rethink their practices and strategies deeply. With CIMAM and its Annual Conference, things could not be different. This year's event took place both virtually and in presence. I attended the conference virtually. I must say that having attended previous conferences and despite the significant benefits gained from virtual events, the ability to converse with my peers and create meaningful and mutually beneficial relationships with like-minded people was sadly lost, despite the networking possibilities that were made available to us.

Nevertheless, listening to the keynote speeches and case studies and the discussions centered on what might be the new world of museums after the traumatic experiences of the pandemic was to me highly fruitful intellectually. It gave me a somewhat more positive outlook on the future possibilities, despite the harshness of the facts presented. Dipesh Chakrabarty's contribution to the conference was particularly relevant in this respect, the calmness of his delivery highlighted by the harshness of the facts laid before us. If previously museum

discussions were centered on questions of sustainability, context, and accessibility, now the questions seem to be of an entirely different order and urgent in entirely different ways. This does not make the previous issues irrelevant but instead places them in other contexts, and in this, Chakrabarty's viewpoint seemed intensely relevant, especially in highlighting the limitations of our field. It looks like significant change will not come from museums but rather from other spheres of power. The best museums can do is push these continually unwilling spheres of influence into action.

The opportunity to participate in this year's CIMAM conference and play a role, albeit a minor one, in the international dialogue about the future of our field was a unique opportunity to develop my immersion in the museum field further. I will carry very fond memories of this year's discussions and the impassioned tone of so much that was said.



Lilit Hovhannisyan, Art
historian, Curator,
Nikolay Nikoghosyan,
Cultural Foundation,
Yerevan, Armenia

It was a great honor for me to participate in the CIMAM 2021 Annual Conference "Under Pressure. Museums in Times of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency" this year. First of all, I would like to thank you for organizing everything at a high level, inviting exciting speakers, and raising such essential

questions. Personally, all the speakers' presentations were very interesting for me, but I especially want to single out a few.

First of all, I was pretty impressed by visual artist Otobang Nkanga's presentation. It showed how art could voice serious environmental issues and make your message more influential and heart-touching through performance. The speeches of professor Dipesh Chakrabarty, T. J. Demos, visual artist Alex Baczynski-Jenkins, curator Joanna Sokolowska contain crucial statements. It was precious to communicate with other conference participants online, make new contacts, listen to the opinions of other experts.

It is indescribable how important it was for my professional career to participate in this conference, to address the issues under discussion more seriously and in-depth. It became more evident to me that the challenges that the climate emergency creates also provides opportunities, for instance, to deal with inequalities and build healthier, more resilient communities, to address intergenerational and global injustices associated with the emergency, to change current levels of consumerism and excessive use of resources. We need to decide what vision of the future we hold in our society. Can we find ways of living that protect both the planet and our health? It is necessary to bring to the consciousness of state institutions that art is one way of articulating and processing problems with xenophobia and climate emergency and sharing envisaged solutions. In my museum activities, I will try to increase the number of educational programs on environmental issues and tolerance, help the young generation understand the impact of global warming today, and increase "climate literacy" among them.

It's worth mentioning that Armenia has faced xenophobia and environmental problems during the 44-day war in September this year. There is ample evidence that Azerbaijan

used phosphorus and incendiary munitions to start large forest fires in Armenian-controlled areas in Karabakh. Videos of the use of white phosphorous started appearing on social media outlets in early November. From time to time, xenophobic statements are made by the country leader about the removal of Armenians from the face of the earth. I have to confess that when it comes to awareness of severe environmental and xenophobic issues, public support of the international community can be pretty essential. I realized during this conference that only by uniting our efforts and supporting each other can we meet the global challenges we all face.



Remy Jarry, Lecturer,
Researcher, Ph.D.,
Chulalongkorn
University, Bangkok,
Thailand

*From Temple to Forum:
Albertinum Museum as Social
Space*

Hilke Wagner's

contribution to Albertinum Museum in Dresden is unprecedented. As the Director of the public art museum since 2014, she has curated thought-provoking exhibitions to unveil the driving forces of the contemporary art world. Yet, those groundbreaking shows have faced the virulent opposition of a part of the public, led by extreme-right activists.

The tension was such that she became the target of virtual and physical harassment. Yet, she decided to respond with

dialogue whereas her own team advised her to avoid such a move. Her thoughtful approach had led to the organisation of a forum in November 2017 entitled '*Wir Müssen Redden (We Need to Talk)*', where all Dresden residents were invited to discuss the museum, its collection, and orientations. Interestingly, the art of Andreas Angelidakis was at its epicentre: epitomising the destruction that the city has undergone in the past, his work *Demos* (2016) created the ideal arena for everyone to sit together. The event has ultimately revealed latent frustrations, such as the feeling of the disarray of older generations from former East Germany.

Hilke Wagner's collective action and social healing remain a promising step to decipher the contemporary role of the museum: a shift from the 'museum-temple' inherited from the 19th century to a 'museum-forum' rooted in the past but looking at the future through a participative agenda. Located at the core of the society and committed to its harmony, the museum is on its way to becoming an official actor of social change and cohesion. Temple of muses as the etymology of the word museum itself reminds us, the Albertinum is not only one of the greatest art collections in Europe, but also an agora, a public space mirroring and tackling the social and political challenges through a non-partisan agenda.

This experience contributes to ICOM's ongoing consultation for an updated definition of the museum while echoing the first part of the previous proposal (1) submitted in 2019. Whatever the outcome of ICOM's consultation will be, Hilke Wagner's forum still outlines a compelling function of the museum besides its inaugural attributions (2).

(1) "Museums are democratising, inclusive and polyphonic spaces for critical dialogue about the pasts and the futures.

Acknowledging and addressing the conflicts and challenges of the present, they hold artefacts and specimens in trust for society, safeguard diverse memories for future generations and guarantee equal rights and equal access to heritage for all people. [...]"

(2) Collect, conserve, research, educate, and exhibit.



Malgorzata
Kaczmarek, Art
Director, Chief Curator,
Associate Professor,
Ph.D. in Fine Arts, IMO
Gallery of
Contemporary Art in
Stary Sacz, Kraków,
Poland

Participation in the CiMAM 2021 Annual Conference was a significant experience for me. As the artistic director and chief curator of a new public institution located in a small town, I am faced with a considerable challenge. We have an ambitious contemporary art program. Therefore, it is helpful to learn from the experiences of outstanding institutions and be able to consult with and get support from the best.

As a first-time participant in the CiMAM Conference and a Grant Beneficiary, I appreciate the opportunities created by the organizers to make all participants feel welcome and get to know each other. Starting with an informal meeting with Mami Kataoka (President of CiMAM) and several other members of the CiMAM Board representatives and employees of the organization who

contacted us before the conference and organized our stay. During the meeting, I met a lot of great professionals who were willing to share their observations; and I hope and believe that these contacts will be lasting and fruitful. The organizers did much to develop these through networking sessions and discussion workshops. It was not without significance that we saw the exhibitions in Lodz and Gdansk in smaller subgroups, which naturally sparked interest in specific issues and initiated exciting conversations. The atmosphere of the conference was positive, warm, and open.

The presentations by the speakers at the congress concerned current and relevant issues related to the functioning of institutions that present art and their social function, especially regarding the issues of conflicts, crises, and the politics of growth, climate, and commonality. During the conference, some speakers made bold diagnoses of our times and formulated recommendations for the future. An example is an uncompromising sentence (one of many) uttered by Maristell Svampa: "We live in a world of the Global Super-Rich, on a planet that is ecologically collapsing."

I remember some of these reflections as crucial, and I intend to manage my institution in such a way that the production of exhibitions is sustainable, make the best effort to appropriately reward people of culture associated with the creation of shows, and carefully arrange exhibitions and the functioning of the institution towards zero waste. It is certainly not easy, but apart from specific solutions, I have obtained some moral support reassuring me that this is the right way.

Among the speakers, I was most impressed with the statement by Hilke Wagner (Director Albertinum, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden), because she frankly described the problematic experience of being a director between other museum employees and innovative ideas for the functioning of

the institution and illustrated examples of developing relations between her institution and the public, which inspired me a lot.

As part of building the program of congress presentations, I appreciate that efforts were made to discuss the issues from the perspective of various actors and stakeholders who were among the participants, i.e., museum directors, independent curators, academics–researchers, artists. But, unfortunately, I missed the Asian and African perspectives among the speakers at the conference. Fortunately, representatives of African cultural institutions were among the Grant Beneficiaries. Therefore it was possible to know their opinion in the behind-the-scenes talks.

I consider it an excellent practice to present the summary of CiMAM's operation as an organization during the CiMAM General Assembly. Transparency in the process of the organization is key to building trust and partnership.

The commitment of CiMAM board members to the best possible management of the organization and genuine involvement in the issues related to the functioning and role of institutions presenting art is evident.

I highly appreciate the whole event.



Anna Karpenko, Curator, Minsk, Belarus

Nothing is There

In 1998, Belarusian philosopher Valiancin Akudovič published one of his program texts, "I Don't Exist. Reflections on the Ruins of Humanity", which formalizes the intellectual, cultural and

existential nature of living in the space called Belarus. In the 2000s, artist Aliaksiej Lunioŭ (Alexey Lunev) creates the frequently quoted now work "Nothing is There", which passes a sentence on the Belarusian space of the early noughties. If for Akudovič the metaphor of absence has something to do with the attempt to overcome the binarity of the national identity modes built on the opposition between East (Russia) and West (Europe), for Aliaksiej Lunioŭ this total emptiness of the Belarusian cultural space, in which it is not only impossible to express oneself, but literally nowhere to do so, is an epitaph on the plate of the local art field.

Marginality and "exclusivity" in the sense of the Belarusian contemporary art being excluded from the visible public context have been associated for decades primarily with the impossibility for contemporary artists to be displayed in state institutions. The only institution in Belarus formally connected with the field of contemporary art, the National Centre for Contemporary Arts, represents a classic hierarchical state organisation subordinate to the Ministry of Culture that actively employs censorship. For example, during the exhibition "Everything was Different"

(curated by Mikhail Gulin and Taciana Kandracienka), the artwork of Maryna Saboŭskaja (Marina Sobovskaya) was censored and removed from the exhibition in 2006. In 2016, Aliaksiej Talstoŭ (Alexey Tolstov) finds himself in the NCCA storerooms, and after examining the purchase list, wonders who, how and at what cost acquires artworks for the Centre for Contemporary Art collections. The rhetorical question results in a legal battle between the artist and the institution. It turns out that the purchasing is classified and cannot be disclosed or made public, despite the fact that the institution is a state organisation and exists on taxpayers' money. The artist loses the trial to the system.



Photo by Andrei Liankevich.

In 2009, a Gallery of Contemporary Art “Ź” opens in Minsk, scaled up from a small but influential gallery “Podzemka” run by Valiancina Kisialiova (Valentina Kiseleva) and Hanna

Čystasierdava (Anna Chistoserdova). For more than 12 years, the gallery has been one of the main institutions for contemporary art in Belarus. In the summer of 2020, one of its founders, businessman and philanthropist Aliaksandr Vasilievič was detained as he and a dozen others line up in front of the KGB building to stand surety for Viktor Babaryka (detained and later convicted to 14 years in a colony with a reinforced regime; one of the presidential candidates in the 2020 elections). A month and a half later, Aliaksandr Vasilievič was detained again and placed in the KGB pre-trial detention centre, where he has been awaiting trial for over a year (i.e. he has not yet been charged). In November 2020, the gallery “Ÿ” in Minsk closes down. Its art directors are leaving Belarus for security reasons.

On 30 June 2021, Belarusian authorities compel the Goethe Institute in Minsk and the DAAD: German Academic Exchange Service to shut down their activities in Belarus within two weeks (1). Since 1993, Germany's cultural Goethe Institute in Minsk has been one of the few Western European cultural organisations with an official representative office in Belarus that has been actively involved in the formation and development of the local art scene.

During the collapse of the USSR, when the first Western cultural projects of perestroika were introduced in the former Soviet Union, Belarus remained the only country where the Soros Foundation, known for its cultural projects, including in the field of contemporary art, did not open its Centre for Contemporary Art. In Ukraine, for example, there were two such centres, in Kyiv and Odessa. Why was it important? Because during the transformation of the Soviet system, the Soros Centers for Contemporary Art in the post-Soviet countries, given all the ambiguity of their agenda, were often the only window and

bridge between the local art scene and the global world. Certainly, they can be considered a typical colonial project that used art as a political instrument, but the very physical existence of such a centre as an institution provided a basis for the development of contemporary art structures in many post-Soviet countries.

This was not the case in Belarus. The same was with the representative offices of major international institutions such as the British Council or Pro Helvetia, and many others. The few projects that these institutions supported in Belarus were part of the projects of their Russian initiatives. This once again reinforced the institutional and intellectual burden we have been trying to free ourselves from for the last 30 years – positioning Belarus as part of the Russian cultural region.

The Goethe Institute in Minsk was one of the few European institutions that viewed Belarus as an independent space. And this provided an opportunity to fill the voids of the late nineties and early noughties. This included a policy of distancing ourselves from the regional division into cultural entities based on the political proximity of the regimes in Belarus and Russia. After the brutal crackdown on the most massive peaceful protests in the history of Belarus against once again rigged presidential elections, when Lukashenka seized power for the sixth time, the Belarusian cultural space has experienced another existential death and a new round of the dialectic of emptiness. There are neither institutions of art, nor its actors in Belarus now. There are no more people who can preserve and develop this field. Over the past year, according to unofficial estimates, some 40,000 people have left the country. Not all of them worked in the field of culture, but most are an active, well-educated part of

the society, who have braved forced political and economic migration to Ukraine, Lithuania, Poland, Germany. More than 4,000 people are under arrest for political reasons or recognized as political prisoners. Among them are artists (Ales Pushkin), musicians, students of the Belarusian Academy of Arts and other colleges, writers, businessmen, lawyers and journalists.

Some of the cultural workers forced to leave Belarus have moved their projects to a new place of residence. Gallery “Ź” plans its activities in Poland and Germany, Andrei Liankevich, director of the only Belarusian Photography Month in Minsk is running a festival in Poland. Expelled from its own premises, the oldest Belarusian theatre "Kupalaŭski" partly moved to Warsaw and switched to the virtual space, becoming a youtube theatre. We seem to still be there, but in our own space we 'don't exist'.



Photo by Andrei Liankevich.

The archaic cyclicity in which you find yourself in Belarus turns out to be a succession of alternating events in perpetual repetition; it seems as if everything has already happened and it is impossible to cut the noose of time around your neck. In 2010, there was yet another so-called election. There was another "Plošča" (the peaceful protests on the square in front of the Government House), which was brutally dispersed by internal troops and OMON (riot police). There were mass arrests of all presidential candidates; criminal cases against NGOs, human rights defenders, activists, independent cultural organizations; bargaining with the European Union to get rid of sanctions in return for the release of political prisoners. In 2020, it all happened again with renewed vigor.

In 2011, Contemporary Art Centre in Vilnius and then Zachęta National Gallery of Art in Warsaw hosted an exhibition "Opening the Doors? Belarusian Art Today." The question raised by the project curator Kęstutis Kūzinis – whether the doors to that space called "Belarusian contemporary art", unknown even to the neighboring countries Lithuania and Poland, are really opening – has not lost its relevance. Then, in 2011, it was actually the first large-scale group exhibition of contemporary Belarusian art in Vilnius.

The city is only 170 km away from Minsk, but there is such a huge wall between Lithuania's aspirations towards Western world, and the total deafness of official Minsk to any kind of contact with European countries.

Most of the artworks displayed at "Opening the Doors? Belarusian Art Today" could not have been shown in Belarus then or now in any of the official art institutions, due to the political

context of the works on the one hand, and the censorship of the institutions on the other. More than half of the participants in that exhibition had no longer lived in Belarus at that time, having fled to European countries as they couldn't realize their professional potential in their home land.



Photo by Andrei Liankevich.

Exactly 10 years later, Kyiv's Mystetskyi Arsenal is hosting a major exhibition dedicated to the art of the Belarusian protest movement "Kożny dzień (Every Day)" (curated by Aliaksiej Barysionak, Marina Naprushkina, Antanina Stebur, Sergey Shabohin, Andrej Durejka and Maxim Tyminko), featuring artworks by 90 artists from Belarus, some of whom were forced out of the country during the repressions of 2020–2021. When we talk about contemporary Belarusian art and its form of existence over the past two years, we have to keep asking ourselves: are we still there or are we already gone? And if we

are still there, where are we exactly? Where do we belong? One of the popular and frequently used slogans during the 2020 peace marches was "This is our city! [1]" And this was not just an attempt to reclaim the public space that had not belonged to the Belarusians since 1994. It was an assertive statement of the unchanging fact of our existence in this place for the authorities. We do actually exist, we are here, and this is our city. Now, almost all independent initiatives in this city have been closed down or eliminated (Gender Route, Radzislava centre for victims of domestic violence (Olga Gorbunova, its permanent leader, is in jail at the moment); more than 20 journalists are in prison, independent media and cultural spaces have been eliminated). Some are in prison, some have fled, some have stayed and are struggling to survive in the face of the ongoing repressions, insecurity and humanitarian gloom.



Collage by Andrei Liankevich.

In November 2021, I was lucky enough to attend one of the few offline events at the CIMAM-2021 conference, “Under Pressure. Museums in Time of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency” (2) held in Lodz and Gdansk (Poland). Distinguished representatives of European, American institutions and independent curators discussed the problems and tensions that museums face today in a situation of increasing right-wing politics in European countries, and dealing with the consequences of colonial strategies and post-capitalist imbalances in the distribution of natural resources. We were listening to the reports about the protests against the MoMA in New York, looking into the case of the Swiss Kunsthalle where a person of colour joined the team for the first time, discussing the particularities of the adaptation of migrant communities in Germany through museums, while a humanitarian disaster was unfolding 300 km away at the Belarus-Poland border (3). And 600 km away in Minsk, 20 people were sitting in a prison cell designed for 8, without toilet paper, mattresses, parcels, letters and medical care.

This is my institutional reality, my museum Under Pressure in a space that does not exist for New York MoMA publications on Central and Eastern European art (4).

We don't exist. But we are still there.

Written by Anna Karpenko, the text was commissioned and originally published by [Dwutygodnik](#) magazine as part of the project "Amplifier of Shout - Belarusian Art in Times of Protest", financed by the Foundation for Polish-German Cooperation with funds from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany. Partners of the project are the Goethe Institut and the Belarusian House Foundation in Warsaw.



Anastasiia
Kharitonova, Curator
of Museum Education,
The State Hermitage
Museum, Saint-
Petersburg, Russia

During the conference, I attended all the speakers, and absolutely every one of them seemed essential and

valuable. Some museums are already reflecting on the themes of xenophobia and climate change, but not everyone has begun to implement practices to counter these phenomena in their daily activities.

I found the workshops most valuable, as we worked in small groups and had the opportunity to get to know our colleagues from different countries and their viewpoints. For example, during the workshop by Agustín Pérez Rubio, we talked about museum practices that can prevent xenophobia. During the workshop by Malgorzata Ludwisiak, we talked about what museums can do about global warming and ecological disasters. These two workshops are probably the most valuable events of the conference.

The other most important part of the conference was also networking, both during the designated time and just between presentations and during the day. I met many foreign colleagues, some of whom I very much hope will keep professional contacts and do joint projects with in the future.

As a museum educator, it was vital for me to see the collections of Polish museums. The Museum of Art in Lodz was a

great discovery. I knew about many of the works in its collection before coming to Poland, but I had no idea they were localized in Lodz. These are indeed some of the key works representing Polish art. For example, the graduation work by Miroslaw Balka, one of the most famous contemporary Polish sculptors, is located in this very museum, although he graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. Or, for example, the sculptural figure from Tadeusz Kantor's play "The Dead Class" premiered in Krakow in 1975. And another: the museum holds an archive of several hundred of Beuys' works and documents, which the artist himself donated. These and many other works have made the museum an incredible and extensive collection of modern art and have made Lodz an exciting and essential locale on the Polish cultural map.

From now on, in my work, I will definitely use the experience I gained at the conference, both from theoretical knowledge and from my understanding of Polish art and the contacts I made during my stay in Poland. I consider the conference an important step towards international museums and more comprehensive cultural cooperation. For several days specialists from all over the world gather in one country and discuss important issues. One can only hope that Russia will soon become a host country for the conference and unite museum professionals in its museums. See you soon, and I hope to continue our cooperation.



Valentinas
Klimašauskas, Curator,
writer, Vilnius, Lithuania

The times are alarming as I write this report as they were when the conference took place and as they will be when you are going to read this text. And the title of the conference – “Under Pressure. Museums in

Times of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency” – perfectly touches upon this urgency.

As someone coming from Central and Eastern Europe, from Lithuania, to be exact, I felt personally obliged to attend the conference and its various programs (workshops and tours) so I could finally understand the situation in the museum sector of Poland where the radical right is taking a stronger position than ever before. The exhibition we saw at Zamok Ujazdowsky Centre for Contemporary Art in Warsaw titled “Political Art” and showing pro-nazi, antisemitic, antimuslim, and other disturbing work, reminded us how culture and contemporary art could be used as a weapon of propaganda and ongoing cultural war.

In this context, meeting local and international museum workers who come from various problematic regions of the world and discussing the issues of xenophobia, propaganda, and ecology helped to understand how we are all connected and what threats surround us and our colleagues. Ecology discussions helped me to rethink the projects I work on and also how to reorganise the future institutions so we all reduce the carbon footprint and become more sustainable than ever.

The multiple meetings and discussions we had were more than relevant in shaping my future curatorial practice in regional museums and beyond. Think of the recent Afghanistan situation, the so-called Belarussian migrant crisis at the Belarussian, Lithuanian and Polish borders, the state of democracy in Belarus, Russia, Poland, or Hungary but also how society is polarized regarding issues of gender, nationalism, or even vaccination. Therefore, the take on the region engages with its composite constitution, highlighting transnational connections but also having global issues that do not stop at ecology and xenophobia.

The other reason to attend the conference also is connected to the curatorial research - professionally I only visited Warsaw in 2015 while the whole Polish artistic scene is very interesting, dynamically changing, and motivating to work together.

And lastly, the conference helped me to meet people I admire and also to get connected with new colleagues and partners.



Tatiana Kochubinska, Curator, Kyiv, Ukraine

I am very thankful for the generous support of the V-A-C Foundation for giving me an opportunity to visit the annual CiMAM conference after two years of lockdown and isolation. It was very important and urgent exactly now to experience

professional networking with curators, artists, and researchers from all around the world. I found this year's conference topic "Under Pressure. Museums in Times of Xenophobia and Climate

Emergency” significant especially in the context of Poland with the protests regarding the abortion, the situation on the border with refugees, etc.

In the first place, the conference was very fruitful and important in terms of networking, establishing, and re-establishing new contacts with international art professionals that might result in future collaboration and joint exchange programs. One of the threads that had penetrated the whole conference (both on the level of the keynote speeches and discussions as well as through the in-between talks) was the question of decolonization: what it means, how and whether it might be realized or it is just a new title to continue the colonial politics? During one of the workshops, we had a very interesting discussion about diversity, and the participants asked a lot of valuable and sharp questions regarding the topic bringing more critical thought to the table. After the conference, I visited several museums that in their display and positioning are in line with the discourse proposed by the conference.

During the conference, I mostly enjoyed the speech by Joanna Sokolowska, who also mentioned today's political urgency in Poland, and her talk touched upon the real social and political issues and how they could be seen through the exhibition practice.

In this special conference and special city of Lodz, it was highly important to visit the wonderful Muzeum Sztuki with its unique history and collection. Being on-site made me want to return and explore this collection more precisely and devote more time to it.

Last but not least, I would mention the perfect conference kit with the book “The Museum: A Real Utopia” and some practical things, while the whole program of the conference was available online with the respective application.



Inga Lace, C-MAP
Central and Eastern
Europe Fellow,
Museum of Modern Art,
New York, Riga, Latvia

During the rich and stimulating days of the conference, it was impossible to ignore the context we were gathering at – the one that

Polish cultural workers were enduring from day to day – that being the ever-closer grip of the far-right conservative government over local matters, cultural institutions including. A recent replacement of the director of Warsaw's Zacheta National Gallery of Art was announced recently and sparked significant protests,[1] and more are to follow, slowly eroding the critical fabric of the thriving art ecosystem.

Consequently, I felt a moment of gratitude when Ukrainian artist and filmmaker Oleksiy Radinsky started his talk by expressing solidarity to Polish cultural workers during the second day of the conference. This left me thinking—how can we support each other in dire times across the national borders when a lot of the cultural infrastructure is still based on national funding systems and dependent on ideologies and political situations in each country.

Radinsky started his talk with the Polish Ujazdowski Castle that has mounted its first openly fascist exhibition and continued Ukrainian locale, the importance to reconsider the role of museums, monuments, and public space in the face of ever more profound erosion of possibility of debate between the left-liberals and right conservatives.

“Why don’t we switch from the conflict between liberalism and fascism, where liberalism, unfortunately, tends to lose, towards that of socialism and capitalism?” he proposed. Capitalism excels at pitting excluded groups against each other, keeping a solid ground for continuing its extractive logic that we all suffer from. Thus, we should be referring back to socialism as an ontologically different model of society.

One of the ways to experience that socialism, according to Radinsky, is the provincial non-art museums. We all recognize those, and many of us find it curiosity or simply irrelevant in the contemporary world, often acutely under-financed and undervalued. The examples Radinsky gives start with a Soviet sculptor Ivan Shadr “Stone Is a Weapon of the Proletariat” (1927). The next step in his presentation is the Maidan which took place in 2014 in front of the National Art Museum of Ukraine, led by the Ukrainian citizens. Radinsky noted that one could say that this artwork was reenacted in front of this museum until the regime finally fell. The proletariat used the stone and won.

At the same time, Ukraine’s rising nationalism is characterized by decommunization, which involves getting rid of communist heritage in public space. That also means making private what was once public. If it’s a public space that is to be decommunized, the situation is clear—that includes monuments, mosaics, etc., but the problems arise if a whole museum should be decommunized. The previously mentioned provincial museums are museums of regional history, natural history, or local lore. Together with other artists, Radinsky is trying to reimagine those museums as community centers, spaces for artistic contributions, and dialogue. Those spaces and the radically rethought socialist remnants that they carried can serve as a future-oriented socially ecological plan for our planetary co-habitation, a yearning that was in one way or another echoed in many other talks.

(1) <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/poland-replaces-zacheta-director-2043595?fbclid=IwAR3mced8NrnHmarAwgmrXHaAu3--FV19hxTA88iUh1Sqz1CkC-Y6dopxjU>



Victoria Machipisa,
Student, University of
Cape Town, Cape
Town, South Africa

My expectations were to get a worldwide view of the curatorial perspective of international curators and artists. To see different forms of art and art spaces which I was able to view because of the CIMAM 2021 world conference which has a perspective of the European art spaces and the types of artworks. The different types of medium and styles of art available in Europe and the issues being addressed in Europe. To be able to have a holistic approach to contemporary art as in African contemporary art the colors they use, and the mediums used are very different and the schools of art are different showcasing the diversity of art.

To be able to see what is currently trending in Europe and the title of CIMAM 2021 “Under Pressure: Museums in times of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency”. The selection of speakers addressed the topic very well highlighting new aspects to the topics they addressed. The speakers were knowledgeable, and I will do more research on each of them because I am interested in their research topics and publication on the topics they presented and the exhibitions they have curated and set up in the different galleries and museums they represent including the different universities and institutions they represent.

There was a diverse panel of speakers from the humanities to the sciences. Giving details that were clear and detailed in the times we live in and the emergency to change the way we do business in the different organizations we represent and from the networking sessions, we discussed ways of changing our ways of doing business to reduce our carbon footprint.

To be able to share and improve the ways we are currently running the art spaces we operate in and also to highlight the times we are in to educate other curators, researchers, and cultural heritage professionals of the effects and also the downside of doing business with organizations with a huge input to the carbon footprint and also to create campaigns and active citizenship to change the way we do business and be conscious of how we can start changing the way we do things daily.

To be able to change and improve including our own personal daily usages of electricity, printing, wasting water and products we use to become more conscious to purchase and to promote an organization that is environmentally friendly and also to do CSR that assists us to educate our communities to practice environmentally friendly practices in their daily lives and also to promote artists who are environmentally friendly to also educate other artists to in cooperate and to also educate them of the effects of the Greenhouse effect and the chemicals we use and use less toxic paint and materials and to promote recycling in galleries spaces.

I would have liked it if the discussions sessions were longer so we could give more input. I would also have liked if there was an opportunity to check up on participants if they have implemented what they have learnt and also to give further reading for people before the conference of the speaker so that before the conference individuals will be aware of who is presenting and which topic and will have questions prepared in

advance for the speakers and also give the speakers time to then answer the questions in an email for all the participants to also learn from.

The sessions were engaging and there was the need for participants to receive their funds early because for me I was unable to revise a lot of the sessions and would like to receive my funds to be able to do a proper report that is wholistic and will give further information and notes on certain aspects that could have been done differently including there was a need for subtitles. I will watch again the conference sessions and take detailed notes because I applied to be able to use the information I got from the conference to work on my research topic challenges of born-digital collection in art spaces in a number of art spaces which from the conference I received a lot of information and data which I would like to access and use in my minor dissertation I am working on and from the networking I got

I will be able to go further and get detailed input from art spaces that use born-digital collection which consists of photography, videos, and audio and other forms of visual art. I would like to write a 1200-word report which will be detailed with all aspects of the conference and also details of my research.



**Ana-Maria
Maciuca-Pufu, Curator,
Bucharest Municipality
Museum, Bucharest,
Romania**

First of all, I would like to thank the CIMAM Board and the Getty Foundation for supporting my virtual

participation at the CiMAM Annual Conference “Under Pressure. Museums in Times of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency”. The conference Keynote speakers and relevant case-study presentations showed me how institutions, artists, and intellectuals working together could provide practical laboratories concerning these emerging issues.

I was impressed by T.J Demo's presentation regarding neoliberal recognition and radical futurity. The given examples and the alternative proposals for future justice were very enlightening. The case study presented by Hilke Wagner on how art organizations can win over a hostile public was most impressive.

I found the workshops to be very educating because I met new people from different countries, especially Endri Dani, Artist and Researcher, ZETA Contemporary Art Center, Tirana, and Ana Škegro, Curator, Head of Experimental and Research Department, Museum of Contemporary Art Zagreb. They come from countries with a cultural situation close to my country, Romania.

Because in Romania, the challenge is to educate the public in diversity and accepting minorities, I was curious to find out from my colleagues how they dealt with these situations, what ways they found to educate the public, and what solutions they took in presenting an environment that also attracts minorities. I showed them an exhibition I curated about women artists in Romania but how I also wish to present artists that belong to the LGBTQ community, considering that the general public is reserved to this aspect in Romania. I received much new information that I intend to apply in my future projects and present them to the museum where I work, hoping they will consider them.

I also appreciated the presentation of the Avant-garde Museum. At the beginning of the 20th century, the avant-garde movement was really powerful in Romania, and we do not yet have a museum dedicated to these artists. Therefore, I curated in 2018 an exhibition dedicated to this artistic movement.

Once again, I would like to thank the organizers for this opportunity and extend my congratulations for this successful conference, keeping hope that I can participate in person next year in Spain.



Martina, Millà, Head of Exhibitions, Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona, Spain

Attending the CiMAM Conference during the COVID pandemic was a privilege for three main reasons. It was a very special opportunity:

1. Meet and mingle with colleagues worldwide, some of whom I had last seen at the 2018 CiMAM Conference in Stockholm,
2. Listen to outstanding speakers, and
3. Get to know an institutional context unfamiliar to me, which exemplifies some of the most pressing questions addressed during the conference.

Perhaps as a result of my curiosity regarding the Polish context, I was very impressed by Jaroslaw Lubiak's paper on Day 1, which introduced Jem Bendell's deep adaptation agenda's four moments: resilience, relinquishment, restoration, and

reconciliation, which the results of the pandemic and extreme weather phenomena have brought home for all Earth dwellers. Most important, in the context of model institutional narratives, where there is little room to discuss error, toxic complicities, and challenging learning curves openly, to refer to “our own ignorance,” as well as to processes of mourning, seemed particularly relevant and humbling.

Cognitive dissonance was a term that repeatedly came to mind during the conference. This aspect of our professional practice was something I shared with fellow conference attendee Martin Germann in short but poignant conversations.

Also, my condition as a grantee in the conference made me keenly aware of the financial straits that many museums and art centers are going through as a result of temporary closures and drops in visitor numbers, which have resulted not only in furloughs and dramatic redundancies against a backdrop of complex political and humanitarian crisis but also in different levels of professional performance and/or privilege.

As far as fruitful professional encounters went, I would like to highlight my conversations with South African curator Riason Naidoo and Polish colleague Malgorzata Kaczmarska. On the other hand, as a direct outcome of the conference, I was happy to welcome Alex Baczynski-Jenkins to the Fundació Miró this past weekend and get him in touch with dance professionals from the Barcelona scene as well as other local artists.

I would like to add that at one of the network session brief encounters with Polish colleagues, we exchanged the names of the authors we were reading at the moment. I recommended María Zambrano’s *Claros del bosque* (1977), and Anna Lazar (Muzeum Sztuki, Lodz) recommended Jolanta Brach-Czaina, whose writings I would love to read, especially *The Cracks in Existence*, which seems to be the only one translated into English.

From María Zambrano's late essay, I would like to quote, in closing, the following words (p. 117 of the original Spanish version), which I find very apropos about the CIMAM conference in Poland:

Mientras dura un ciclo histórico, hay palabras que permanecen en una determinada visibilidad y que corren de boca en boca; son los tópicos de esos siglos. Sus sentencias, por lo tanto, son condenatorias por lo general. Y hay también palabras escritas, y que, como escritas, se repiten, apaciguadoras y sabias, que marcan el límite; un cerco viene a formar todas ellas que muy pocas gentes trascienden. Pues que la inspiración que llega no se detiene; la inspiración que trasciende el cerco sólo rara vez arrastra consigo, o tras de sí, a quienes ha visitado, dejándolos, eso sí, perplejos en los mejores casos, cabizbajos por lo común, y disponiéndose con ahínco a volver a ver todas las cosas como si la visita de la inspiración no hubiera llegado, empadronándose conscientemente como habitantes del cerco y hasta alzándose vigilantes, por si acaso.

Beware of our own blind spots and comfortable echo chambers.



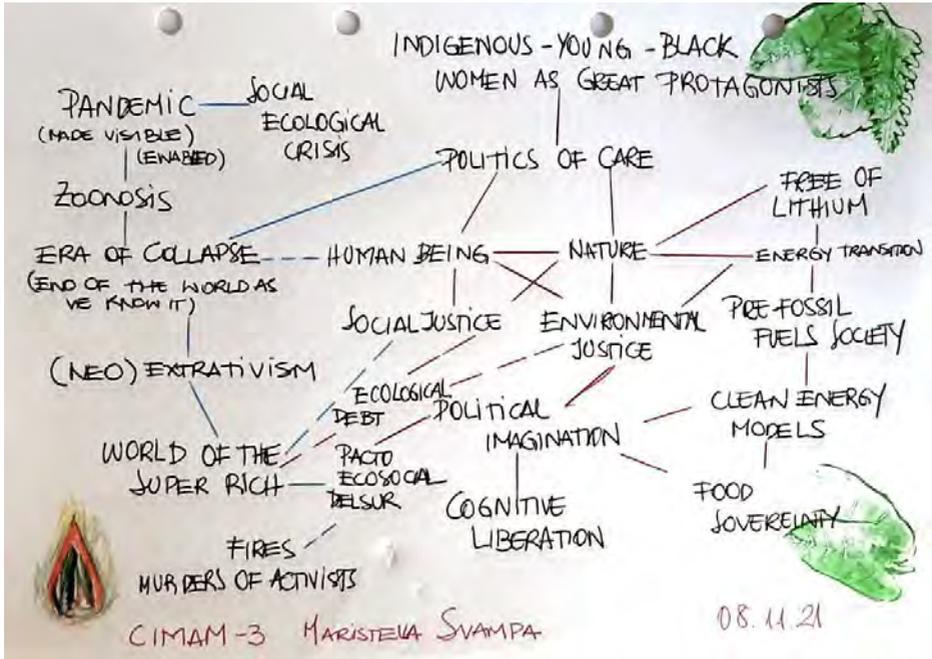
Sabrina Moura de Araujo, Curator, Vasto/ University of Campinas, Santana de Parnaíba, Brazil

Why have the humanities taken so much time to acknowledge climate change? asked historian Dipesh Chakrabarty — author of *The Climate of History in a Planetary Age* (2021) — in his opening lecture at the CIMAM Annual Conference, held in Lodz (Poland).

While arguing for a distinction between the globe and the planet — “as categories for two narratives of globalization and global warming” — Chakrabarty called for a connected perspective between both, as human and planetary-centric constructions.

As the conference developed, the debates unfolded into the specifics of museums in the agendas of climate and ecology. How can museums evolve into a planetary-encompassing program? What steps should be taken? How can museums further embrace the politics of care that became even more necessary with the pandemic?

This set of fundamental questions triggered discussions that positioned the museum as a site for political and ecological imagination and speculative practices in response to societal needs. This perspective was reinforced by many speakers who asked for the reevaluation of institutional alliances, the redistribution of resources, the reduction/reuse/recycling of materials used in exhibitions, ultimately leading to the rethinking of curatorial practice and collections management.



Mind Map of Day 3 at 2021 CIMAM, Sabrina Moura

Such demands point to more profound structural changes, and acknowledge the acute relations between *social crisis* and *climate crisis*, *social justice* and *environmental justice*.

While global warming denial gains breath, the engagement in such discussions unveils tensions among opposing communities. In this sense, dialogue remains both a challenge and a necessity. During the conference, one of the most poignant examples of such an effort came from Hilke Wagner — director at the Albertinum Museum in Dresden (Germany). In her talk, Wagner recounted how, soon after assuming the director role at the Albertinum, the city of Dresden was at the peak of anti-migration demonstrations and far-right extremism. After facing threats and protests from the AfD (Alternative für Deutschland) party against the inclusive and multicultural programming being implemented, Wagner decided

to host a dialogue series entitled “We need to talk” (2017) at the museum’s atrium. Even if, in her words, the conversations were extremely difficult, Wagner’s effort to debate with reactionary voices challenges simplistic narratives on political polarization.

After being at the 2019 CIMAM Conference, taking part in these debates in Poland gave me a sense of continuity, which reinforces one of the most important lessons taken from Australia. If we are to foster a vision of the museum as a place of knowledge production, we must advance nuanced and contextualized approaches to our programs. This includes, undoubtedly, careful thoughts on how to foster the museum as a space of political and ecological imagination, prepared to deal with the pressing issues of climate emergency and xenophobia that gave name to the 2021 conference.



Riason Naidoo,
Curator, Cape Town,
South Africa

It was my first time in Eastern Europe when I arrived at Warsaw Chopin airport on Thursday, 4 November for this year’s CIMAM conference. I had previously attended the conference in Rio de Janeiro in

2013 and Singapore in 2017 so I was familiar with the intensity of the programme as well as the rewards of bonding with a group of art museum professionals and local hosts over a few days.

This time was different though because the organizers were making us work: three cities in three days: Warsaw, Lodz, Gdansk. We had to make our own arrangements to get to the city of Lodz, some 130km away from Warsaw, which added some anxiety but also a sense of adventure.

The CiMAM conference is always memorable for its presentations, its opportunity to make new contacts and reacquaint with colleagues, and for its tours to the city's art museums and spaces.

It was truly a delight to hear Dipesh Chakrabarty open the conference proceedings with a deep philosophical interpretation of the complex politics of climate change delivered in simple terms. T. J. Demos's presentation on the relations between contemporary global activist movements and socially engaged art following the Black Lives Matter movement in the United States in 2013 and the Fees Must Fall protests in South Africa in 2015 was informative and engaging. Otobong Nkanga's highly original practice was inspiring.

We visited the Sztuki museum in Lodz—one of the world's first museums of modern art—that had some gems such as 'Real' (2006) by Robert Maciejuk, the pop art photo composition 'Consumer Art' (1972-74) by Natalia LL and the poster 'We are the Revolution' (1971) by Joseph Beuys. I was pleasantly surprised to discover 'Last year in Antananarivo' (2016)—an artwork drawing on photo archives—by Joël Andrianomearisoa from Madagascar/ France, which gave a hint of the diversity of the collection.

The Wilhelm Sasnal exhibition, curated by Adam Szymczyk, at the Polin Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw, while celebrating painting, was another grim reminder of Germany's annexation of Poland and its persecution of Jews. Russia's intervention in the country and victory over Germany

during World War II—recalled in the socialist realist painting ‘January, 1945’ (1949) by Wojciech Fangor at the Sztuki museum—was followed by a lengthy period of communism, seen as another form of annexation, that involved Poland in Cold War politics. Joseph Stalin’s gift to Poland—the Palace of Culture and Science that has dominated the Warsaw skyline since 1955—is an ambiguous symbol of the USSR’s victory on the one hand and its authority over Poland ever since. In more recent times there have been calls to demolish the building because of these associations. Poland’s economic policies have shifted westward since 1989 that has seen dramatic growth in its art market, while its museums push for more independence from state interference. I suspect that the conference was held in Poland this year to highlight this concern.

I was advised by local curators to opt for the Edward Krasiński studio visit in Warsaw and I was not disappointed. Krasiński and his close friend Henryk Stazewski were important protagonists in the Polish art scene in the 1960s and 70s and helped found the Foksal Gallery in Warsaw, which we also had the pleasure to visit. Krasiński was known for his irony, often working in an ephemeral way. His trademark was a blue scotch tape at the height of 130cm. “I don’t know if this is art. I know that it’s a blue Scotch tape, width 19mm, length unknown,” he is quoted as saying. It was a pleasant surprise to discover that the studio windows were painted by celebrated French artist Daniel Buren, a close friend of the two artists, who often visited them from Paris.

I took the opportunity to extend my stay in Warsaw for a few days and visited the Museum of Warsaw in Old Town, which is a very well-curated permanent exhibition narrating the history of the city via art and objects. My host Ula Kropiwiiec—who translated Frantz Fanon’s classic text ‘Black Skin, White Masks’ and Achille Mbembe’s ‘Necropolitics/ Politics of Enmity’ into

Polish—also introduced me to some local spots that included lunch at Pyzy Flaki Gorące, situated across the Vistula River, accompanied with local vodka, which is not to be missed.



Varda Nisar, Ph.D.
Candidate/Researcher,
Concordia University,
Montreal, Canada

CIMAM 2021, with its theme of "Under Pressure. Museums in Times of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency", promised to shed light on one of the most

important questions currently occupying cultural and art institutions: How to stay relevant for its publics at a time of social reckoning? Equally important has been the question for museums themselves: how important are they in our Covid context?

The difficulty of answering these questions was apparent in the programming and the myriad ways the speakers tried to tackle the theme. The keynote address by Dipesh Chakrabarty established the framework of Global versus Planetary, where the planetary approach requires us to start thinking with definite timelines in mind and make institutional change a priority. Following this logic, Jaroslaw Lubiak's perspective becomes inherently important, which centers on Resilience, Relinquishment, Restoration, and Reconciliation agenda.

For my research, the most critical paper of this conference that reflected directly on this conference's theme was the keynote address by T.J. Demos. By connecting the museum's

inside and the outside world, he placed the museum within a planetary dimension. Therefore, it is hardly shocking that the DEI Complex – a global effort in our current socio-political environment - would constitute itself to counter those planetary efforts that call for diversification within our institutions. As pointed out by Demos, the purpose remains to manage diversity without any specific commitment towards the work that needs to be done, so much so that DEI work continues to function with the world as is, without imagining a radically different future. The example of Strike MOMA then was a concrete example of challenges to a capitalist ideology that has long been provided a façade by a cultural institution.

The other significant case study of this conference was by Hilke Wagner. The notion of reaching across to people who disagree and bringing them together to a table quite literally showcased the possibility that museums can still hold. This case study tells the story of how a museum can successfully get together people from two opposite poles for a dialogue without leaving anyone behind.

As a person belonging to the Global South, I question whether the theme of this conference would apply to museums from my part of the world? If museums are indeed a reflection of the world outside their walls, then the lack of concern for art and culture — a result of the more practical needs of one's life — is indeed reflected within the four walls as well. It is apparent in the lack of interest shown towards the community by the museums and engagement by the community. As if both, the public and the museums, have given up on each other. The museums then are nothing more than an ornament to those global requirements demanded from developing nations to gain their legitimate place in the civilized world. The museums then are not under pressure, so the bigger question is, how to make these museums feel that pressure that is so rightly being expressed against them the

world over? Or is their lack of relevance itself a tale of caution for the rest of the world?



Gabi Ngcobo,
Curatorial Director,
Javett Art Centre at
UP, Johannesburg,
South Africa



Marie Helene Pereira,
Director of Programs,
RAW Material
Company, Dakar,
Senegal

Working under pressure is a day-to-day reality for a “small-scale” art institution like RAW Material Company, operating from Senegal on the

African continent. We are in a constant, never-ending survival mode. Thus, we perpetuate the quest for sustainability for ourselves, our institutions, and our ecosystems.

Having heard from CIMAM for years and have followed from afar how it constitutes a worldwide community of practitioners who take dedicated time for sharing present issues and tools to support artistic practices and institutions globally, I felt the need to be part of this journey of reflections and experience sharing around the theme proposed as “Under Pressure: Museums in Times of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency”.

It's been interesting to see how many have developed strategies of resistance to be able to face periods of crisis in different contexts. The current situation in Poland, paired with the dedication of its art practitioners and activists (Laznia art center, Joanna Sokolowska, to name a few...) reinforced my belief in the forces of art and its related practices.



*Solidarnosc, Laboratoire Agit'art. Issa Samb's courtyard, 17 Rue Jules Ferry
Dakar, Senegal*

Visiting the memorial of Solidarnosc was a highlight after seeing how artists from Senegal, especially the Laboratoire Agit'art with its central figure Issa Samb a.k.a Joe Ouakam, portrayed their solidarity to the movement in different manners. I'm sharing this one attached to give an example.

The conference was a breathing moment from which one would be more equipped to continue dealing with the ongoing pressure that we feel as art institutions and practitioners in our daily routines and mission.

Day 3 was particularly touching as it allows practitioners who convene the effect to take part in the conference and create an emotional communion between us all who shared the room at that particular moment.

Under Pressure, it's essential for us to feel and move together to heal mental and emotional pressure. When artist Otobong Nkanga read her poem took us in real harmony in the now.

I left the conference keeping this sentence of Binna Choi in mind: How can we do what we do in a different way that encompasses as many realities as possible? Or maybe how can we do it differently to integrate the commons better?

I want to express my gratitude to Mercedes Villardel and the whole CIMAM team for making my participation in the conference possible and extending a call for more speakers from the African continent in future editions.



Nicole Rafiki, Artist, and Curator, Oslo, Norway

Firstly, I would like to thank the organizing committee for this amazing opportunity. Overall, I had an enriching experience at the CIMAM conference. But what touched me the most was the amazing people I interacted with. This was my first physical gathering with colleagues in months. It reminded me of the importance of togetherness for our mental health, emotional stability, and professional growth as we adapt to a different life under pressure. I specifically enjoyed meeting my mentor Malgorzata Ludwisiak in real life for the first time. Meeting colleagues from different continents, of different age groups, and various institutions motivated me to endure my journey. Thank you for your efforts to include more curators from the African continent and its diaspora in the CIMAM conference.

As I explored during my CIMAM's *StayHome Curatorial Online Residency*, our communities need to create a new set of patterns for an effective and sustainable cohabitation of diverse communities with multiple, complex issues at hand. One step towards that is understanding the complexity of the challenges we face. One thing I expanded my understanding of is Xenophobia. I became aware that xenophobia can have different connotations in different communities in this conference. Initially, my understanding of it was rooted in the historical, political, and financial environment in South Africa. At the conference, I gained more knowledge of the Polish adaptation of the word and its complexities.

Learning about women such as Anna Smoleńska and Helena Bohle-Szacka resonated with me a lot. I find it quite striking that people who go through similar experiences, such as war, have a connection that transcends time and space. Somehow, I felt seen and heard through these women's stories even though their experiences are connected to WWII in Europe, while mine is linked to the "African World War" of DR Congo in our recent past. I truly enjoyed the variations between lectures, social interactions, and museum visits.

The combined methods of interaction and learning in an interactive environment benefited my growth as a curator and community organizer. Through the interactive sessions, I connected with my colleagues in a fun and engaging way. In my experience, people shared wholeheartedly and honestly. There was little room for professional noncompliance or distance. Although the topic of climate change sometimes can lead to a certain fear of an apocalyptic end, I experienced a light-hearted and optimistic community of people working together towards multiple solutions to common challenges.

I am truly grateful and happy that I could participate in the CIMAM 2021 conference in Lodz and Gdansk.



Fernanda Ramos,
Curatorial Assistant
and Curator, Museo de
Arte Moderno, Mexico
City, Mexico

Last month, I prepared myself to follow the CIMAM Annual Conference program from home. All the bustle, laughter, and bodies of my

colleagues on-site, perceived remotely through the live stream, made a working arrangement that has been normalized and exponentiated by the COVID-19 pandemic even more evident. A strange sensation of invisible presence lurked behind the screen.

What follows is a free-form recount of the perspectives triggered by the diverse perspectives, conversations, and exchange of ideas with my colleagues through our online interactions during this year's program.

The opening keynote was a potent wake-up call. Dispeh Chakrabarty centered his reflection around the historical context of climate change. A set of charts demonstrated how the untethered population growth of the megalopolis had impacted fossil energies, paper production, and water consumption since the 1950s. According to Chakrabarty, humankind had never thrived this way despite looming social injustice. However, the astounding lack of an ecological conscience reflected on the assumed superiority of human beings over other non-human beings has placed us on the track of an impending massive extinction triggered by our very own species.

Against this bleak picture, socially and environmentally speaking, a question arises: how can we generate a collective consciousness about the imperative need for change in a polarized world, further complexified by violence, extractivism, and socio-political and environmental inequity? What Chakrabarty calls "Planet" defines a starting point for an alternative history of the Earth as a system and, for me, reveals a glimmer of hope. Moreover, it leads me to imagine a story that can be told from plurality: an interconnected context that unhierarchizes a dominant human-centered hegemony, enabling substitutive distributive economies.

Throughout the course of three days, all of the addresses kept on opening key question marks: What is the role of museums amidst the crisis? Do we need to create contents that can be problematized beyond the framework of traditional aesthetics? How can we structure our collections to appeal to critical and reflexive thought pertinent to the current conversation? I can't begin to approach any preemptive solutions while I peruse now and again the notes I made in my notebook about Johanna Sokolowska's presentation: "the exhibition as a space of imagination." I reinterpret this as the agency of art to harbor a discourse that destabilizes cultural hegemony, breaking with patriarchy and transforming museums into communal spaces geared towards an open conviviality.

The historical institutional background of the museum is not passive regarding ideological constructs. They represent spaces of privilege that have instrumentalized colonial dominion and extractivist logic; by working towards the visibility of this violence, we can address open wounds that may give way to resilience, affections and empower silenced histories. Institutional culture must generate programming that engages with public agenda, fostering inclusive and diverse spaces. However, public museums also have to respond to a set of state-

sanctioned cultural policies that have to meet a quota of commemorative occasions, replicate a monolithic narrative, and formalize culture in the State's service.

Following T.J. Demos' argumentation about the MoMA strike, I think that celebrating these milestones can shift the discourse in favor of public policies instead of engaging in social struggle and adapting to "the world as it is and not the world as we want it to be". What does this responsibility mean in the face of symbolic value being instrumentalized as statecraft officiality?

Believing that hope is possible is already a strategy to generate resistance; the act of imagination can further radicality and change. Museums are indeed in the face of an open challenge and must heed this call of transformation in our current crisis context: maybe this urgent process of adaptability lies in what T.J. Demos puts forward as "the future beyond the museum".

I'd like to acknowledge my gratitude towards The Getty Foundation and the Selection Committee at CIMAM for granting me the opportunity to participate in the 2021 Annual Conference remotely. As a curator currently associated with a public institution and primarily interested in art and its engagement with social movements, gender, and sexuality, this edition renewed my interest in opening up my professional practice to complex discussions that intersect with social justice.



Marcela Romer,
Cultural director,
National Historic Flag
Monument, Rosario,
Argentina

The possibility of participating at CIMAM's Annual Conference in Poland online is a precious initiative that must remain in the time

since it gives the opportunity, to many people who cannot travel or do not have the economic means, to be present in a different way.

This year I participated in that way, which was very interesting and helpful. I have been to many conferences worldwide, and I also participated in their organizations when I represented my country on the international committee. This year it was a huge challenge to meet in person, and I congratulate the entire organizing committee for achieving it, considering the stress it must have produced, not knowing if it would be performed until the last moment.

Regarding the conferences, I highlighted Otobong Nkanga, mainly for her final comment that showed that she knows where museums stand today and some of their specific needs.

Alex Baczynski-Jenkins showed great sensitivity to his profession. He made several very accurate comments regarding the institutions he has developed his projects. Demos de TJ was the most exciting conference as far as I am concerned. It was concrete in his proposals, and he responded very intelligently to the critical questions at the time of the questions.

Maristella Svampa exceeded herself too much, with her time allocated, and although she was tremendously talkative, her lecture expressed only one point of view of reality in Argentina. There are other modern ways of seeing reality.

I am immensely grateful to the Getty Foundation for giving me this possibility of international participation. Without you, it would have been impossible.



Marcela Sastre,
director, Fine Arts
Museum Lola Mora,
Salta, Argentina

Dipesh Chakrabarty led me to a community example, microhistory and pre-Hispanic belief systems, which could facilitate dialogue with Chakrabarty ideas.

He defines Global-human-made human-centric as a category where planetary is a human construct defined by but decentered by humans. Global is only a 500-year-old concept, but the geobiological history of the earth system is many thousands years-old. Therefore, global is a human uniquely idea immerse into planetary, a comparativist system.

The Pachamama is a ritual we celebrate every 1st of august in the north of Argentina close to Los Andes. Carlos Luis Garcia Bes found with Elsa Salfity the School of Arts in Salta with an original idea that revalued handcrafts as Textiles and the Pre Incas-Pottery, which dated more than 1000 years old in the valley. The global concept of Arts categories devalued local

production to souvenirs. Garcia Bes y Salfity in the 70's traced a line to the textile practices and the ceramics also revisiting pre-Columbian believing systems as Pachamama, which goddess where the Sun and the Moon, who were contemplated and venerated; the Andean cultures had advanced knowledge of the planetary system that involved us and gave us life.

La Sol y Luna- Sun and the moon – Textile from Garcia Bes.
1973

Sustainability belongs to human-centric, but the planetary is about habitability. Global is about humans dominating order of life, but the planetary reminds us we are a minority form of life. The globe, the earth, and the world are about mutuality between humans and earth. Pachamama cultures considered nature as part of it, taking from her “Madre tierra” and giving and thanking her abundance. There is no human concept here as a unity because we belong to Pachamama. She is above us: were spiritual-living creatures into her spiritual-living system. The ritual is about smoking every corner and cleaning deeply into the invisible bond we have with nature.



Rogerio Victor Satil
Neves, Museologist and
Master Student,
Brazil/Budapest

First, I would like to express my gratitude for being a beneficiary of the CIMAM 2021 travel Grant Program as well as thanking the Getty Foundation for the grant that made possible

this magnificent experience.

My participation at CIMAM 2021 Annual Conference *Under Pressure: Museums in Times of Xenophobia* was online. This experience made me re-think the role of the modern art museum in the contemporary world. As a museologist and researcher, I believe that museums are democratic spaces that are constantly changing and, therefore, these museum spaces should open their doors for debate and new forms of representation. Hence, this type of conference plays a fundamental role in the deconstruction of the idea of a museum as a neutral space, concerning just the preservation and the materiality of the object. In other words, museums nowadays should attempt to go beyond their wall and use their collection as a medium of social change.

The conference's three-day program included inspiring presentations. It illustrates the concern with social and climate change that the museum should embrace. Among all the speeches I was fascinated by Joanna Sokolowska's presentation. She exposed two cases about curating practices that I believe are determining to amplify certain voices as well as to re-think the curatorship process of a museum. She demonstrates how we can use artworks to convey different narratives about the world and create a discourse that is not structured into a patriarchal point of view.

As an online participant, I found the networking session a great tool to be involved in the conference and to know the participant's background. It was the first time that I have participated in the CIMAM conference and I am delighted by this opportunity which I could learn about diverse perspectives.



Alice Scope, Art Curator, Kyiv, Ukraine

I would love to review the speech by artist and choreographer Alex Baczynski-Jenkins, "On intimacy and emergence".

In the speech, Alex shared his experience

co-founding Kem School, a Warsaw-based queer feminist collective focused on choreography, performance, and sound at the interface with social practice.

Alex explained that 'choreography' is not only related to dance. Social choreography can blur the boundaries between art, curating, education, activism, clubbing, and community-making practices.

"How to touch the movement?" is also the title of a 6-week long educational program with the idea of Queer feminism as world-making. How can we create the world we all would love to live in? What tools do we need to develop? And who does "WE" refer to?

One week before the CiMAM Annual Conference, I got a chance to see Alex's performance "The tremble" in person during *Disappearing Berlin*. "The tremble" is the first episode of the four-part work *The tremble, the symptom, the swell and the hole together* (2017), a choreographic mediation on the relationships between touch, intimacy, loss, and collectivity.

The dancers' (four artists of different ages, races, and gender) fragmented yet interconnected movements open up a dialogue across queer politics of desire and intimacy and across the space they temporarily occupy.

Why is it important to develop collective working modes through experiments and reflections on social choreography and queer feminist methodologies? Simply because we need radical demands through art. The artworld is still listening to the hierarchized social narrative. Many institutions adhere to the lowest ethical standards; they continue to ignore systematic racism and plan exhibitions two years in advance instead of responding to current political events. To make a shift, we need a radical systematic approach. And as digital citizens, we can expand in any direction.

How can we build a culture that loves us? I think we can start with an experimental approach rooted in collective responsibility. We must try to push things forward and be open to adjustments to see what can work. Let's strengthen anti-racist artistic practices and discourses. Who better to support artists than artists themselves?



Seda Shekoyan,
Curator and
Researcher, Aliq Media
Armenia, Yerevan,
Armenia

One of the months of this year, November, became a good and proper time to talk and rethink emerging issues and challenges surrounding art institutions, modern art museums, and their collections. The main reason was the CiMAM 2021 Annual Conference titled *Under Pressure: Museums in Times of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency* held in Lodz and Gdansk (Muzeum Sztuki in Lodz and the NOMUS New Art Museum/Branch of the National Museum in Gdansk, Poland), in cities with a rich artistic past and a living field of contemporary art. It was an absolute honor and pleasure to be one of the 50 grantees, beneficiaries, curators, and online attendees of the CiMAM Annual Conference with a title and statement echoing the words of the popular song "Under Pressure" by the British band "Queen" and singer David Bowie. This year's forum offered a unique hybrid format with the programs adapted to physical and virtual scenarios, with plenty of functionalities, a range of tools, and resources to facilitate access and attendance for all CiMAM audiences. This hybrid format also allowed me to interact with other on-site attendees in networking sessions for possible collaborations and gave me the opportunity to virtually attend the most important exhibitions in Poland included in the program through the clips.

By going beyond disciplinary thinking in addressing the responsibility of art institutions and museums in times of climate emergency, the CiMAM conference makes it possible to

recognize the best ideas, approaches, practices, and institutions from a social, economic, and environmental point of view by making the public of curators and other professionals more attentive and responsible. I appreciated the principal topical areas of the conference with respective keynotes, perspectives, and workshops that facilitated small-group conversations on emerging themes and topical areas by raising awareness of the diversity of contexts and perspectives of the conference's online and offline attendees. It was nice to see colleagues from different countries and continents and have a chance to rethink art institutions and museums as spaces for recognizing differences, incorporate the complex understanding of climate emergency and commonality into their work, search and find the possible ways and methodological tools to address these issues at the level of institutional programming.

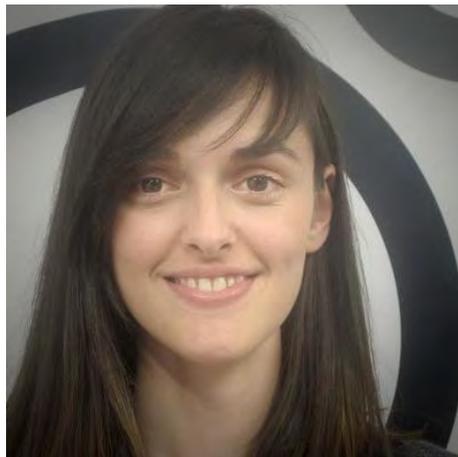
This year's CIMAM conference gave me a more complex and deeper understanding of climate emergencies and growing climate migration that has become more pertinent than ever before when humans, with their technological capabilities, are acting as a geological force affecting the planet's climate system as a whole. The various talks of the forum discussed climate emergency's direct relation to human rights, the distinctions between global and planetary (Dipesh Chakrabarty), the hidden and unexplored interrelations between climate emergency and xenophobia, their commonalities as two different outcomes of one process (extractivist capitalism), and the most recent institutional and curatorial responses to them (Hilke Wagner, Oleksiy Radynski), and the role of the museum through the introduction of the Levinasian category of the "face of the other" and "foreign face," where otherness is welcomed (Rita Segato), the idea of deep adaptation as an accurate response to the environmental destruction (Jarosław Lubiak, Poland).

Not in all parts of the world do the museums and art institutions have a space or opportunity to play a crucial role in addressing the various conflicts and policies, humanitarian crises, climate emergencies, promoting inclusion, curiosity and care, supporting post-pandemic strategies, disseminating scientific information, and protecting cultural heritage. In this sense, I would like to mention and emphasize the case study presentation by curator Hilke Wagner (Albertinum, Dresden, East Germany) about practices of museum and art organizations, and their possible ways to win over a hostile public, the criticism of anti-Islam, far-right protest movements, ethnoreligious nationalism, and ordinary xenophobia, and museum's cautious fight towards the discriminatory, nationalistic tendencies and xenophobic sentiments in the local context.

Many presentations and speakers of the conference questioned the credibility of the museums, addressed the power and limitations of art institutions and exhibition display as a medium of exercising an ecological imagination, real care, empathy, and curiosity, expressed the skepticism towards the idea of "museum as an agent of change" by stressing the importance and need of humbleness, introducing the concept and notion of "sisterhood" and planetary citizenship (Joanna Sokolowska, Poland). Another talk by art historian T. J. Demos centered on the radical futurity, institutional pessimism, and the criticism of neoliberal politics of recognition that celebrates difference without practicing real equity for inclusion and participation (T. J. Demos). Filmmaker Oleksiy Radynski took the era of Soviet Communism in the context of climate emergency as a time capsule of knowledge that may be beneficial in times of climate emergency (Oleksiy Radynski, Kyiv), and Otobong Nkanga tells about her long-term research platform and project "Carved to Flow" envisaged as a structure for care, repair and real impact on lived reality (Otobong Nkanga, Nigeria &

Antwerp, Belgium), with alternative proposals from the global South (Maristella Svampa, Argentina).

As a CIMAM Grantee and Beneficiary, I would like to express my enormous and heartfelt gratitude to all founding patrons, board members, and organizers of the CIMAM International Committee for Museums and Collections of Modern Art and CIMAM 2021 Annual Conference, as well as online/offline attendees and everyone who contributed towards the realization of three days of impressive and inspiring talks and lively discussions moderated by museum director Bart de Baere (Antwerpen, Belgium) and others. My sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art in Moscow for allowing me to virtually attend the CIMAM conference, as well as to other foundations and organizations for their vital support and belief in CIMAM, the president of CIMAM Mami Kataoka, director at Mori Art Museum (Tokyo, Japan). The intellectually stimulating atmosphere of the CIMAM conference was ideal in giving me possibilities to experience great horizons of professional interests by bringing me fresh ideas, a vibrant imagination to my practice and will have a positive impact on my future professional career.



Ana Škegro, Curator,
Head of Experimental
and Research
Department, Museum
of Contemporary Art
Zagreb, Zagreb,
Croatia

Being able to participate
at the CIMAM's annual

conference entitled "Under Pressure. Museums in Times of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency", which took place in Lodz and Gdansk from 5th to 7th November 2021, opened up some new perspectives on current important issues. Even though my participation was online, making the networking part of the conference a bit harder, it was still an excellent learning opportunity to listen to so many exciting and inspiring lectures during the three days of the program.

During the three days of the conference, I was most interested in hearing more about "Day 3: New Perspectives on Climate and Commonality", since it is most closely related to the projects I am working on. Perspectives and case studies from speakers such as Pelin Tan, Binna Choi, Otobong Nkanga, and Maristella Svampa were highly educational, thought-provoking, and inspiring. There is much to take away from the previous actions and results that Pelin Tan and Otobong Nkanga talked about. For example, while learning more about some ongoing projects and initiatives, such as those of the Casco Art Institute presented by Choi, gives inspiration and hope that there is still room and time for some positive changes that will hopefully impact our future as well. Being the final Keynote speaker, Svampa emphasized some socio-political situations connected to

climate change and the need for concrete actions. During "Day 1: Conflicts, Crises, and the Politics of Growth", I particularly liked the first Keynote by Dipesh Chakrabarty, which was a very informative introduction to the conference. It was interesting to listen to and think about some of the facts presented during the first keynote, such as the fact that most humans never lived so well as they have in the last 50 or so years, which is part of many global problems we are facing today and is especially connected to the climate challenge. During "Day 2: Museums as Spaces for Recognizing Differences", I was especially interested in hearing the presentation by Hilke Wagner, since her Perspective was most relatable to my local context, and therefore most inspiring – she showed us that museums could and should be places where opposing sides gather and communicate in peaceful dialogue, and eventually areas where new ideas and solutions can easily arise.

Overall, I learned a lot about the topic of climate change and the many specific, local variations of the problem. I am particularly interested in researching this topic more and developing different exhibition models to bring awareness about the issue locally, and hopefully also through networking globally. I am currently working on the exhibition "Forest To Go", which deals with deforestation and the lack of responsibility for it, or reaction to it, from the local community. Some of the presentations at this conference helped me better understand important ecological and climate issues related to the projects I am currently undertaking, allowing me to approach these issues with a higher level of awareness.



Inger Emilie Solheim,
Artist, Writer, Curator,
Tromsø, Norway

*The revealing effect of the
pandemic*

Thoughts on privileges
and a post-capitalist strategy,
inspired by the speech of the
Argentine sociologist Maristella
Svampa during the CIMAM

conference 2021 in Lodz and Gdansk, Poland.

by Inger Emilie Solheim

Covid-19 does not discriminate between who it hits. A virus is like a robot, without its own will, only controlled by a genetic code. It does not become desperate if it is fought, nor satisfied if it manages to spread. Despite the indiscriminate conduct of the coronavirus, the pandemic has uncovered structures in society. The virus first spread where rich globetrotters roam. But where prosperous countries were soon able to offer vaccines and proper health care to their citizens, people with poor access to health services suffered serious damage. Covid-19 acted as a contrast bag, and the differences between privileged and less privileged people became more visible.

The connection between the corona crisis and the climate crisis is easy to spot. People in poorer areas, who barely have carbon footprints, have to pay for the Western world's hectic consumption. The structures that make up society are built on decades of neoliberalism and capitalism. This foundation makes us ill-equipped for global crises that require consideration and care, not only for all people, but also for other species. As

Maristella Svampa mentions in her talk, deforestation is a global problem. According to "Store Norske Leksikon" (<https://snl.no/avskoging>), it is estimated that a third of the world's forests are gone, and the biggest problem is in tropical forests in continents such as South America and Africa. Both of these continents have a history of colonization. In contrast, the western country, United States, is a pioneer in forest conservation and a pioneer in the establishment of national parks.

Contemporary artists and thinkers have long talked about the post-anthropocene condition, an expanded state of consciousness. This sustainable notion can be the solution to a more secure future for ours and other species. Through a brain gymnastic exercise, a Copernican turn, man is no longer imagined as the most intelligent species that exists in "gaia". As an example, researchers have discovered that some dolphin and octopus species possess a level of creative intelligence and intuition that we have a hard time understanding. Another example is the ability of trees and plants to communicate with large groups through their roots.

Maristella Svampa mentions recognition of other groups' way of communicating as a cornerstone in further nature management. She talks about incorporating the ideas of indigenous peoples and their ecological worldview. Last but not least, she emphasizes care, as a key word in establishing a sustainable system for the future.



Yuliya Sorokina,
Curator, Tutor, Ph.D.,
Asia Art+ Public
Foundation, Almaty,
Kazakhstan

This is my third time attending CIMAM conferences. And I must say that the organization of conferences is always very thoughtful and full

of interesting reports and discussions. Each time, however, the conference has its special character – colored by the context of the place in which it is held.

This time, unfortunately, I watched the conference online, so I could not fully appreciate the peculiarity of the conference in Lodz and Gdansk. But I was wondering how the online program was organized. I liked that online participation was possible in broadcast mode and TV mode. This allowed me to revise a few speakers that interested me most of all. It is very important for my creative career to be informed about the problems and conceptual issues of the art world. The CIMAM conference, as always, provides such an opportunity.

I would like to note that both the general theme of the conference and the themes of each of the three days were very precisely formulated, in tune with the challenges of the time and the problems of human civilization, culture, and cultural institutions.

I agree with professor Dipesh Chakrabarty from the University of Chicago – it's very correct, that the CIMAM put the word “time” in the plural and the title of the conference “Under Pressure: Museums in times of Xenophobia and Climate

Emergency”. Museums and all cultural institutions are living in different TIMES. That means - in different political, economic, and cultural times. The common thing that unites all of us is one planet. Therefore, the thesis put forward by professor Chakrabarty – very accurately sets off the problems posed by the conference.

I followed his theses for “Museums and the Chronopolitics of the Anthropocene” with great interest, especially the following questions:

- Why did people so late take the climate questions seriously?
- “Great acceleration”;
- Socio-economic trends (everything grows after 1950);
- What should we do for civilization to survive?
- The issue of the Geobiological history of the Earth system...
- The issue of One planet.

The next speaker that piked my interest is Oleksiy Radinski, Filmmaker and Writer, Visual Culture Research Center, Kyiv, Ukraine

His message on the critic of museum's action within difference – a difference of economy, difference of identity etc. accurately reflects the mood among cultural figures of the post-Soviet space. His point of view is interesting in the context of de-colonialism as a de-communization.

I also became interested in the practice of Binna Choi, Director, Casco Art Institute. Her theses Working for the Commons. «Commons dot art» reflected for me important aspects of contemporary art-making - joint making or common making. I also appreciate one of the main questions Binna requested: “What does it mean for the art economy if the paradigm is shifted towards maintenance, instead of show business?”. I also appreciate Open call for providing toolkits that support the maintenance process.

To summarize, we can say that the conference turned out to be very interesting and topical, raising questions following the main challenges of our time. Of course, it's a shame that it was impossible to personally join the conference and cultural program in Lodz and Gdansk. But the level of the conference gives hope for subsequent meetings with colleagues in other cities and countries.

I would like to express my gratitude to all the professionals involved in organizing the conference and logistics with grantees. Thanks, everyone!



Alexandra Stock,
Creative director,
ARCHiNOS
Architecture &
Heritage Preservation,
Cairo, Egypt

The CiMAM 2021 Annual Conference took place both online and in-person at the Muzeum Sztuki in Lodz and the NOMUS New Art Museum Branch of the National Museum in Gdansk, Poland, from 5–7 November. This 53rd edition of the event brought to light the mounting pressure "affecting modern and contemporary art museums in the context of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency."

Filmmaker and writer Oleksiy Radynski made a point to link the two themes of the conference early in his talk on Day 2 by saying that xenophobia and climate emergency are two different outcomes of a single process, namely the "destructive force of capitalism that pits various groups against each other to

be able to go on with its assault of the planet." This was a point also well made on Day 3 by Senior Researcher at the Center for Arts, Design and Social Research in Boston, Pelin Tan, who said that climate emergency is directly connected to rights and spatial justice, not only of humans but also to the rights of the flora, the water, and soil that is going extinct.

Dr. Dipesh Chakrabarty's opening keynote speech on Day 1 under the theme "Conflicts, Crises, and the Politics of Growth" also offered a wide-reaching perspective, one that encompasses everything that would be said throughout the conference and everything that has and will be both displayed and done by anyone, perhaps ever. Referencing the image of the "Blue Marble," the famous picture of the Earth set against the perceived blackness of outer space that was taken by the Apollo 17 crew in 1972, Chakrabarty called this the way of seeing ourselves "the planetary," which is different from "the global." And consciously distinguishing between the two could help us orient ourselves in our current time of disorientation while facing the reality of an impending climate emergency.

The planetary is a deep history and "intentionally de-centers the human," whereas the global covers the last 500 years and is a construct humans came up with that positions us at the center of the world. The latter is not an easy mode of thinking to challenge when everything from capitalism to Abrahamic religions tells us that the Earth and its bounties exist for us alone. Chakrabarty calls this the "given-ness of the world," when in fact the opposite is the case, Earth is "the condition for our existence": Things we consider inferior forms of life—bacteria, fungi, phytoplankton, plants—were making oxygen for millions of years before we were around. It is us that need the Earth, not the other way around. Even the COVID-19 microbe that we complain about for interrupting our lives belongs to the majority form of life on the planet.

Chakrabarty praised the use of the word "times" plural in the title of this year's conference and explained that the "time of climate emergency is the planetary time, whereas the times of xenophobia is our global times." He illustrated other urgent global concerns, for example how quickly our constructed worlds disintegrate at the slightest environmental imbalance; floods, fires, earthquakes rapidly turn human politics into the politics of survival. But the injustices are also unsustainable on a daily basis; the land the global rich live on, for example, is not the land they live from, and not in small part thanks to Indian environmental activists Agarwal and Narain, we now question who is responsible for global warming instead of letting institutions deflect blame back at humanity in general.

Then, a fair question is why trust science when other modes of framing our existence can stake their claim at defining what the world is and can be? Chakrabarty defends its objectivity, "whereas all other conceptions of the planet found in all cultures are related to the human experience of the planet." Tying all this together, Chakrabarty says that we are all connected by a single planet, but there are many worlds, and therein lies the tension, how to recognize these global differences and yet unite it all as one planet.

Dr. Jarosław Lubiak set the tone for his talk by quoting Inger Anderson, the Executive Director of UNEP, who said, "Climate change is no longer a future problem: it is a 'now' problem." This somber plea for urgency is echoed in the transdisciplinary study of "Collapology" that lays out the two options we as a human species have left: either we insist on saving our industrial civilization and kill the planet and ourselves in the process, or we choose to preserve the biosphere through an "intentional social and economic collapse." Any way you spin it, things will not continue as they have, either by choice or force.

Jem Bandell's concept "Deep Adaptation" sees even fewer than these two choices because the pace and scale of climate change and eco degradation are speeding up so rapidly that the option of reforming capitalism or even modern society is off the table. He sees us heading toward an "inevitable collapse, probable catastrophe, and possible extinction." Bandell's "post-sustainability" agenda, which shifts from forecasting to assessing probability, is relevant for museums in the 21st century because it focuses on resilience (What do we value the most and want to keep?), relinquishment (What do we need to let go of now not to make matters worse?), restoration (What could be brought back?), and reconciliation (With what and whom shall we make peace with our mutual morality?).

For curator Joanna Sokołowska (formerly of hosting institution Muzeum Sztuki), the conference's focus was also highly personal. Speaking with a mix of intense urgency and utter fatigue, she beautifully articulated how Poland, the host country of this year's conference, continues to be affected by violent rightwing policies and what she calls a "radical indifference" and a "lack of care and solidarity and support for any common, future-oriented, life sustaining ideas for the future of the earth." Nevertheless, Sokolowska tries to resist the fear, denial and paralyzes of the current moment by asking if the work we do with art and museums can offer hope or more life-affirming visions for the future that transcends the present hopeless moment. She links to her own work, curatorial projects based on ideas of sisterhood and planetary citizenship that, at their core, use the medium of the exhibition to work with the imagination, to trigger healing of the collective consciousness. As Sokolowska says, it is time for us to produce visions for the future and change the infrastructure, the economy, and the social credibility so that these visions we conjure won't be rejected by society.

With a nod to both Chakrabarty's talk and the COVID-19 pandemic, artist and choreographer Alex Baczyński-Jenkins spoke about the politics and urgency of touch and the ways of being together that are addressed in his work. He also talked about the relationship between the intimate and the planetary and how we scale from a micro situation to a macro.

Adapting performances to the format of a weeks-long exhibition or working collectively throughout a year-long artist residency also shaped his considerations of how "change unfolds over long durations and how we're sensitive to perceiving time over longer durations." Finally, he scaled this perspective to our institutional infrastructures by asking how museums can "engage in rehearsing proposals for communities of the future." In the meantime, Baczyński-Jenkins emphasized the importance of parties and celebration amongst our mourning, despite the losses that we're dealing with, which was mirrored in Lubiak's earlier talk, where he proposed to expand Bendell's Deep Adaptation to incorporate the framework of "Libidinal Ecology," which means considering the emotional relations between people, especially pleasure and enjoyment, as part of our resources.

TJ Demos began his keynote on Day 2 under the theme of "Museums as Spaces for Recognizing Differences" by laying out how museums, especially in the West, have become "zones of conflict" and demands to repatriate objects are mounting. While we cannot generalize the unique history and geo-political situation of every museum, we can avoid the dangers of engaging with harmful framings of issues that need to be addressed in this context, for example, the so-called Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) complex that has grown from demands placed on liberal institutions to de-colonialize, repatriate, and restructure themselves economically. Instead of helping, the DEI complex has become a billion-dollar industry that grew around

these demands and is more active in managing diversity and inclusion without committing to changing anything. As Demos says, in practice this often plays out in four stages: something happens to a marginalized community, then follows a statement of outrage, then and a listening session, and then it's dropped until the next awful thing happens. Above all else, however, the DEI complex ensures that the ruling order of dominant institutions is never actually challenged. Even if social moments develop, the DEI acts as a buffer that ensures the unbalanced class divisions remain intact. This and the crumbling of "ill-liberal institutions" that perpetuate "violent un-freedoms of the dispossessed"—for example MoMA with its "death-dealing oligarch" board of trustees who use art as an instrument of accumulating and shield for their violence—are eroding the social legitimacy of art institutions.

Like the urge for us to act both planetary and globally in the keynote speech from Day 1, Demos urged that we must connect the intersection of environmental action and social justice emergencies. Museums can and should participate in transforming class hierarchies, public-private conflicts, and social differences towards something that works for more people than it does now and transcend the empty gestures of "harm-based repair" like with the DEI complex. By knowing where we want to go and knowing what pitfalls to avoid, museums have the power to become platforms that acknowledge the current conditions and their historical roots and actively work to change the status quo for the better.

Hilke Wagner shifted the perspective back to Europe specifically by introducing the complexities of directing the Albertinum in Dresden, a museum in a city that saw a tumultuous 20th century, from the allied air raids in 1945 that destroyed 90% of the city to the trauma of the divide and reunification of East and West Germany. The complexities of the scars of history

are further exacerbated by the current political climate. Until now, the conference talks had spoken about integrating voices that are traditionally seen as more leftwing, but what when the push to be acknowledged comes from the far right? To this day, Dresden remains an extremely homogenous society. So the question posed to Wagner in her position on a daily basis is whether to engage with reactionary political voices like PEDİGA and risk normalizing their view or ignore at the risk of alienating and perhaps radicalizing the movements further. In 2017, the museum and its director found themselves in the crosshairs of a dominant right-wing political party, AFD that railed against any inkling of multiculturalism and took aim at the Albertinum. After the museum was flooded with hate mail and calls and Wagner started to get harassed in the street, she boldly called up every one of her harassers. Remarkably, each conversation turned into a constructive and even positive encounter.

Wagner figured that if the direct dialogue could interrupt the spiral of hate, then the same should be possible on a larger scale. (This sentiment is also reflected in Baczyński-Jenkins' earlier telling of how micro-gestures can scale to the size of institutions.) This thinking was the basis of launching the podium discussion "We Need To Talk." The first iteration took over three hours, saw 600 members of the public come to the Albertinum to speak directly with politicians and art professionals, and was based solely on questions from the audience. Due to the success and high demand of the idea, no less than twenty-four more iterations of the event followed, where people from opposing sides of nearly every issue participated; there were even encounters of former Stasi agents and artists who, prior to the reunification, had been prosecuted by the state security in the DDR. The success of this 1:1 approach initiated by Wagner also carried over into other projects at the Albertinum because it was seen as proof that working from this direct form of interaction is the best way to affect change on a larger scale.

As part of Day 3 under the theme of "New Perspectives on Climate and Commonality," Antwerp-based visual artist Otobong Nkanga opened her talk with a poem. What a change of pace. She then wove a beautiful tapestry of thought processes leading to a performance in a scarred landscape and then to her ongoing project in multiple stages called "Carved to Flow."

Driving through present-day Namibia in 2015, visited the "green hill" where there once was a mound of malachite because she wanted to see what it was the German colonizers had desired, but there was nothing left of the bright green semi-precious stone, only a gaping hole in the ground and ruins. She imagined the lives of these metals that were extracted from the grounds and were used in industry in Europe, places that were now decaying as well. Nkanga staged a performance at this Tsumeb Mine in northern Namibia to appease the wounded landscape and—considering that the site once had a combination of 260 types of minerals and crystals, she thought solemnly found in this location how this hole has made other places, in Europe, richer.

The artist read a second poem and segued into the question of how one can think of other ways of doing things. In Athens, Nkanga carried with her a sense of mourning and sadness at the thought of how colonizers and extractors stifled the potentials of the people and places they plundered, but also how damaged landscapes were left behind instead of repairing things so that something new could grow. In 2017, Nkanga pondered how a project could turn into the cycle, where something can go "from the material to the non-tangible things, to other things that will be able to support other things within that landscape," which expanded into the ongoing project "Carved to Flow," a "work surrounding the production of soap, gradually unfolding between Athens, Kassel, and Nigeria," that was "conceived as a support structure actively embedded in the

social sphere" (visibleproject.org) that was conceived for Documenta 14.

Binna Choi, director of Casco Art Institute, turned the focus on CIMAM itself as an institution and read out loud the original invitation extended to the CIMAM 2021 speakers nearly two years ago in early 2020. Choi called the event the COP26 in the field of art and asked if there was indeed a future beyond the Anthropocene and pondered why we can't let go of the kind of life we live. The latter question looped back several times to Chakrabarty's keynote on Day 1, where he said that warnings had been coming from the science community for decades, but at the same time, we had never lived so well, which made it easy to forget or to dismiss. But, as was also stressed by other speakers, this well-being (or the notion of "living well") came at the expense of all non-human beings on the planet but also other humans with different genders, races, countries, cultures, abilities, and pieces of knowledge. Per Choi, the relevance and potential of art in this context is that it offers different experiences and new perspectives on "living well," which can mean that while we are addicted to growth, art can also show us different ways of growing.

I sent off my application to attend the CIMAM Annual Conference from the Faiyum Oasis in Egypt, and when the event came around, I zoomed in from rainy Rotterdam. After the final talk ended, I closed my laptop and looked out the window, thinking about the burden and opportunity of accessing this immeasurable wealth of information. Of course, there was a lifetime of literature I wanted to look into and projects I wanted to read up on, but I was also struck with a taste of the "experience of the edge," a concept from process-oriented psychology that Joanna Sokolowska had mentioned in her talk, which is an odd cocktail of fear, denial, aggression, and paralysis. How can we

ever live up to the responsibility of our privileges, even the smallest ones? Most of the speakers generously suggested ways forward, but where to actually begin in our own practices and lives? The whole conference left me with much food for thought, so thank you foremost to all of the speakers for showing us something I cannot (and truly do not wish to) un-see.

I would also like to thank Inés Jover and Susana Carnicero, as well as Victoria Noorthoorn, Agustín Pérez Rubio, Eugene Tan, and Ernestine White-Mifetu, as well as the members of the board of CİMAM, and the CİMAM team onsite in Poland, especially the tech team that made the live feed run so smoothly. Last but certainly not least, I would like to thank The Getty Foundation for the much-appreciated support.



Krisztián Gábor Török,
Curator, Budapest,
Hungary

I would like to extend my gratitude to the Getty Foundation, CİMAM Travel Grant Committee, and the CİMAM Team for their trust and support, giving me the possibility of joining in person the CİMAM Annual Conference in Lodz and Gdansk (5-7 November 2021). As well, I would like to thank our hosts both in Gdansk and Lodz for organizing the event and taking care of us amidst the challenging circumstance that the Polish cultural scene is facing today.

For me, this year's CİMAM conference was an important moment of solidarity between cultural workers around the globe,

by being the first hybrid conference after the first three waves of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. The context of Poland brought an even greater urgency because of the country's deeply polarized public life in the past years, something I can relate to coming from Hungary, where the situation is quite similar. It was a great opportunity for me to gather with other cultural workers, to talk about polarisation and the ongoing climate crises, and how to imagine different modes of operation for the museums of the future. Alongside lectures, the round tables, and workshops, the conversations in the breaks, during meals, and after the event, felt therapeutic to process the past two years' events. The conference was a great opportunity for me to meet with directors, curators, administrators with far greater experience than mine and it allowed me to enrich my perspective on the role of museums and the challenges they face.

Although I am familiar with the Polish art scene because of its geographical closeness to Hungary, and its shared history and present conditions, it was my first time to visit Lodz and Gdansk. The conference's approach thrilled me to focus on cities outside of Warsaw, the capital of Poland. I am coming from a centralized country like Hungary; I find it necessary to seek alliances in major cities outside of capitals to better understand peripheral regions. The conference's program was well balanced between Eastern Europe and International contributors that allowed to contextualize the local conversation in wider narratives of global urgencies. Maristella Svampa's keynote lecture was a great example of this. Her main point was to connect small-scale local grassroots social movements to a wider network of international resistance networks. According to Svampa, COVID-19 escalated the necessity of doing this, as many topics that only concerned activists and specialists became part of public debates. As a curator who is actively thinking of the social potential of culture and involved with thinking through grass-roots approaches, her

views great entering point for me to think about the conference at large.

Binna Choi's talk on the need for the long-term sustainability of socially engaged art practices was important for my current curatorial work and research. The presentation proposed a future collaborative platform between institutions called COMMONS.ART. As a curator and director of Casco Art Institute in Utrecht, Binna Choi has been involved with several socially engaged art projects and collectives in the past decade. In relation to Svampa's proposition, Choi's platform proposes an international collaboration between different institutions to rethink the way they fund socially engaged art projects. She proposed a new platform based on the idea of the commons, where institutions interested in such practices can share, develop, rethink, and instigate new or existing alliances. Choi's view is that this is a necessary step towards rethinking the ecosystem of cultural productions to tackle and engage with our ongoing troubles.

The artist Oleksiy Radynski's presentation *Museum of Extraction* continues the focus on the necessity to engage and build alliances locally. Radynski presented various efforts to fight the so called "de-communization" in Ukraine, which is forgetting and dismissing the country's Soviet past. A ruling elite of the country instigates these actions to distract public opinion from polarising and extractivist policies under the banner of "cultural war". For me, the most interesting of these projects was the work of the Denede collective, who turned towards the forgotten regional museums in Ukraine which are primary targets of the de-communization process. These museums are not art museums, but a museum of regional or natural history or local war efforts, but they contain many unique monumental frescoes, mosaics, and monuments from the Soviet past. The Denede collective aims to reimagine these museums as community

centers and try to negotiate with the local officials as part of this process to save the museums and their history. I can read their work both as a fight against forgetting to challenge the current ruling class and a way of turning the leftovers of the state socialist past in Ukraine into monuments that can inspire future cultural workers.

I can link Radynski's contribution to Choi's and Svampa's lectures and summarise my thoughts and my takeaway from the conference. The existing undervalued or bound to be destroyed cultural infrastructure can bring unlikely alliances to contemporary art institutions that can bring social players outside of the contemporary art circuit into the play. If we want to build a wilder strategy between different museums around the world to fight against polarization and climate crisis, we should start by making institutions more embedded in their local. This can allow them to engage with more diverse audiences and co-producers. If we follow Svampa's call, after exploring these different axes of relations, we can push for a more international approach.



Zoe Yeh, Curator,
Honggah Museum,
Taipei, Taiwan

Every year in the summer, many museum workers from East Asia would participate in the CIMAM Annual Conference. So many friends of mine were amazed by the well-organized itinerary and inspiring thoughts from different speakers. And the network

built during the conference last until today. This year, though I can only participate virtually, I would like to give CiMAM team my big compliments for making this happen. I can imagine how hard it is to organize on-site and online events.

I find the perspective from Hilke Wagner on the second day very encouraging. Coming from a totally different culture and social context, yet there are many situations I can relate to. A few weeks after this year's CiMAM Conference, I was promoted to Honggah museum's director. Hilke's experiences provided an outspreading vision to me, focusing on community art projects in a local museum. She created solutions to make an almost impossible task possible, especially when communicating with those who don't understand or appreciate what you do. The courage and resilience she showed when facing challenges empowered me remotely. And I think the warmth went through all the listeners since the concept of caring and sharing is universal.

Working in an institute with collections, some perspectives from speakers also made me feel complicated. For example, on the third day, when artists Otobong Nkanga mentioned, many resources are spent on maintaining an institution than doing new projects. I agree that projects can be created with fluidity and flexibility without institutions, but I also feel the dilemma of being responsible for providing collections in a safe and sustainable environment. There are some debates left to me and will lead to further thinking. Next time, I hope to catch up with speakers during the coffee break and discuss with other colleagues.

Without the sense of gathering with friends worldwide, the conference is rather viewing and listening to me this year. But I can feel that CiMAM seems to be a safe and warm place for

museum colleagues/art professionals as they can show their hesitation and uncertainty even when presenting in front of hundreds of audiences. Under unstable circumstances globally, it's good to reveal vulnerability. The atmosphere CiMAM creates for all participants is treasurable.



Summary of the Evaluation Report by Participants

After every conference, CIMAM sent an anonymous online evaluation survey to all the delegates who attended the conference in person and virtually. We received 89 completed evaluation forms and we have prepared a summary for you.

One expression was constantly repeated this year: "to meet again in person". Not only were CIMAM members able to see each other face to face since 2019, but we were also able to expand participation by launching the CIMAM virtual platform for the first time.

It should be highlighted the number of positive comments about the quality of the conference contents and the speaker presentations, as well as the relaxed atmosphere that made possible sincere conversations and knowledge exchange.

Regarding overall satisfaction with CIMAM's 2021 Annual Conference, the majority of attendees agreed that the conference fulfilled their expectations, and all of them would recommend the experience to other professionals.

The main reasons for attending the conference were professional development, networking, and content. We also received positive feedback regarding the organization, and the exhibitions visited.

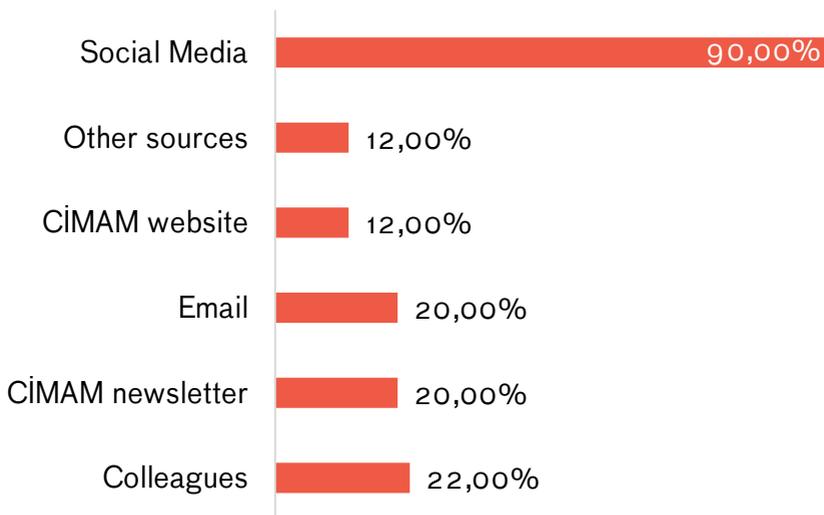
Most of the participants agree that there were plenty of opportunities for discussions and networking during the conference sessions and breaks in between.

Attendees were happy with the hybrid event and remarked that the online technical setup by the organizers was outstanding. Attendees estimated to make between 10 and 20 interesting contacts during the conference.

From the CIMAM Executive Office, we much appreciate the feedback on the 2021 conference organization and will work hard on the forthcoming CIMAM conference. Below is a short overview of the evaluation survey.

→ The completed Evaluation Report is available upon request.

How did you hear or learn about this conference?



What is the main reason for attending this conference?

"To update my knowledge, meet new colleagues, and exchange views on what is happening in museums worldwide."

"Broaden my views on museum work and learn through the experiences of other institutions."

"To learn about the Polish situation, meeting colleagues, and looking from a global perspective by being together in the space."

"Intellectual stimulation. To learn about innovative and best-practice approaches to curating and museum programming in an international context. Hearing from fellow artists and curators worldwide who are facing similar global challenges related to climate change and xenophobia and how they affect art museums and practice."

"Taking responsibility for museums in today's society is essential. Hence, new frameworks of meaning are generated for our lines of action. For this reason, spaces such as the CIMAM congress are crucial. They are also places to share experiences and conflicts from different contexts."

"Meet people who think about art and cultural heritage. Be in touch with the global problems of museums and the challenges we face today. To actively participate in developing a cultural policy that supports innovation."

"I wanted to participate in current debates and hear reflections from the field on pressing issues."

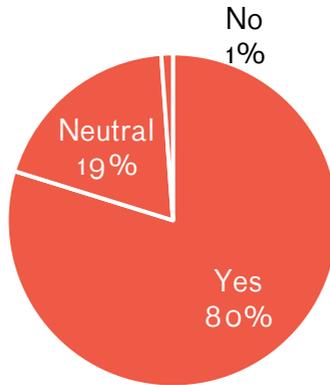
"Attending CIMAM is an excellent opportunity to interact with museum professionals from different parts of the world, practice critical thinking, and discover the artistic ecosystem of the conference venue."

"To reconnect in person with colleagues in the art museum sector, listen to and discuss with experts in the field, and discover the Polish art scene."

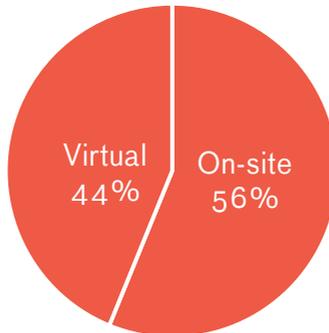
"Having heard about CIMAM for years and having followed how it constitutes a community of professionals from all over the world sharing current topics and tools, I felt the need to be part of this journey of reflections and exchange of

experiences. Moreover, it was an opportunity to participate in a moment of respite from which I would be more equipped to continue to deal with the continuous pressure we feel as art institutions and professionals in our daily routines and mission."

Did the conference fulfill your expectations?



How did you attend the conference, virtually or on-site?



What did you particularly like about the conference?

Speaker and Contents

“It was well prepared and it offered many insights to the environmental crisis and xenophobia from different parts of the world. It was also an important act of support to Polish art scene that is doing amazing work in very difficult conditions”.

“The precision of the interventions and the frankness of the speakers”.

“The sessions were carefully selected to tackle issues of concern that are shared among museums on a global level”.

“Some of the keynote speakers were particularly noteworthy, as well as the discussions after the case studies which opened up plenty of possibilities in my mind”.

“I liked that the days had their sub-topics starting from the "crises" that have a negative connotation and the conference evolved in a way that it could inspire hope, solidarity, and desire for change at the end of all discussions”.

“The speakers were deeply impressive and highly inspiring. The framework that CIMAM created this year expanded my horizon and gave a lot of food for thought and made me consider issues and connections that I had not considered prior. Also, the technical setup by the organizers (I was online) was outstanding”.

“I liked its radicality; the fact that it was relevant to the current climate of #metoo, racism and climate change”.

“Some presentations were amazing and very powerful. I had lots of informative and good discussions with colleagues around the world on issues of how museums can change in order to be more sustainable in their practice”.

“I think this is a great platform to bring together people from different countries, with different mindsets, to discuss global issues that concern the whole world”.

Together Again

“The energy of being together again, the understanding of a particular local situation through physical presence and exchange with colleagues”.

“Meet new museums curators”.

“The representativeness of the non-western territories”.

“The encounters with colleagues from different contexts”.

“Fantastic atmosphere and the possibility of unremarkable exchanges”.

“The possibility to meet again in person and discuss”.

“The networking sessions”.

“Meet personally with different curators and artists”.

“Exchange of experience during conversations”.

“I liked how diverse the program was presented – many issues were developed from the perspective of theorists and practitioners. I was very impressed with the organization, logistics, and production”.

Hybrid Format

“I liked the willingness to experiment with the hybrid format. Even "after Covid" (whenever that is) we should consider keeping this element, so people who can't travel can still join in”.

“I liked the hybrid format of this year's conference, availability of technical support and random networking sessions for striking up new connections and possible collaborations, as well as the availability of all presentations and sessions after the online conference”.

“The virtual exhibitions and the workshop sessions”.

“The PiNE platform worked well”.

“I really enjoyed the effort to translate the experience to virtual assistance”.

“User-friendly interface”.

Atmosphere and Organization

“The atmosphere was very nice”.

“Familiar atmosphere and a bit of informality of approach, despite its being a formal, high-brow event”.

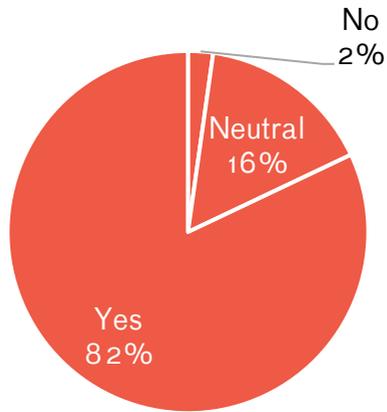
“Visits of museums in Lodz and Gdansk”.

“Dedication to content, great organization”.

“Excellent organization”.

“Quality of organization by the CIMAM team”.

You gained a new insight on the topics discussed:





Daniel Muzyczuk, Head of the Modern Art Department of the Muzeum Sztuki in Lodz and member of CIMAM's Annual Conference Content Committee, reflected:

“The themes chosen for this edition of the conference proved to be relevant and incited many meaningful discussions. We are all under pressure primarily from the politics of growth and economy, both xenophobia and climate emergency are byproducts or instruments of these tendencies. There were many moments of sharing experiences of dealing with these issues. These exchanges are the basis for mutual support, resilience, and hope in the future of museums.”



Communication and Visibility

Registration to the conference started on 15 July 2021. The CIMAM 2021 Annual Conference received international exposure before, during, and after the conference.

Announcements and communications about the CIMAM Annual Conference and Travel Grant Program were distributed through CIMAM's mailing list, posted on CIMAM's website, and CIMAM's social media accounts.

The names and logos of conference partners, funders, and travel grant funders as well as CIMAM patrons were projected at the auditorium screens where the conference was taking place during the three days.

The acknowledgments will also be included in the conference proceedings (CIMAM's Annual Publication) that will be distributed online and posted at cimam.org.

The communication strategy designed to publicize CIMAM's Annual Conference is based on three channels:

- Press
- Social Media
- Email Marketing (CIMAM Newsletter + e-flux)

We have achieved good results in terms of reach and interaction with the content offered in social networks, perhaps, because the event was held in a hybrid format, with 40% of the attendees participating digitally.

The results are:

Press: 57 articles. dedicated exclusively or with mentions to the CIMAM Congress. The publications are in national and international art magazines and general media of various nationalities.

Social Networks: with this year's campaign, we have reached 60,057 people in the four social networks we work with: Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, interacting with our contents of 5,383 actions in the posts dedicated to the conference.

Newsletter: To announce the Annual Conference and the call for the Travel Grants program, CIMAM has delivered 9 Newsletters since April 2021, with an average of 1,817 recipients in each mailing (35% more than the current number of CIMAM members and all with a professional profile of directors and curators of modern and contemporary art museums), and an interaction rate of 45% with the contents offered.

Press and Media:

1. 10 times (2)
2. All Events
3. Ars Baltica
4. Art Connect
5. Art Portal
6. Arte Informado
7. Arts Hub Australia
8. Arts Management
9. Biennial Foundation
10. Call for Curators
11. Clarin
12. CM Asiae
13. Contemporary Lynx
14. Creative Feel
15. Creatives Unite
16. Culture 360
17. Culture and Partnership
18. Culture Connect
19. Curadores Perú
20. Curators Space

21. De Balears
22. Diario de Mallorca
23. Dwutygodnik
24. e-flux (2)
25. El Diario Alerta
26. El Noticiero
27. Europapress
28. Grupo la provincia
29. Happening next
30. Hipermedula
31. Infobae
32. Inside UCR
33. Jing & culture (2)
34. Kuntsforum
35. Le national
36. Magazyn Szum
37. Mallorca Zeitung
38. News fr-24
39. OCAD University Graduate Studies
40. On the move
41. Polityka
42. Reddit
43. Rytm Poland
44. Stay happening
45. Telam
46. The Art Newspaper
47. Última hora
48. Vansa
49. Vogue Poland
50. Wyborcza (4)



CiMAM TV – Watch again the speaker presentations!

After each CiMAM Annual Conference, the proceedings are edited and published online with the aim to make the contents – both as key contributions, and as reference material for the research and production of contemporary art knowledge – available to anyone through the CiMAM website.

The Annual Publication is a sustainable project that takes into consideration the importance of documenting and making knowledge accessible in the long term to modern and contemporary art professionals worldwide. As a result, the publication is a compendium that puts together the knowledge and the discussions that have been developed throughout the CiMAM Annual Conference as a result of the proposed annual theme.

Moreover, by being accessible online, it makes it easier and faster to distribute and share with anyone interested in contributing positively to interconnecting professionals worldwide with the latest contemporary art museums' research.

The video-recorded presentations of the invited speakers to the CiMAM 2021 Annual Conference are available on the CiMAM TV channel. At our Vimeo channel, everyone interested can watch the presentations for free.

Both the Annual Publication and the video recordings are archived at the CiMAM website without an expiration date.

CIMAM TV

Lodz&Gdansk 2021



Under Pressure. Museums in Times of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency took place 5-7 November hosted by Muzeum Sztuki in Lodz and the NOMUS New Art Museum/ Branch of the National Museum in Gdansk, Poland.

Sydney 2019



The 21st Century Art Museums: Is Context Everything? took place 15-17 November in Sydney hosted by the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia.

Stockholm 2018



The Museum in Transition was held in Stockholm, Sweden on 2 – 4 November, hosted jointly by Moderna Museet, Bonnier Konsthall and Magasin III Museum & Foundation for Contemporary Art.

Singapore 2017



The Roles and Responsibilities of Museums in Civil Society. National Gallery Singapore, 10 – 12 November 2017.

Barcelona 2016



The Museum and Its Responsibilities. Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA), CaixaForum, Cultural Center of "la Caixa" Foundation, the Fundació Joan Miró and the

Tokyo 2015



How Global Can Museums Be? National Art Center, Tokyo and the Mori Art Museum, 7–9 November 2015.

CIMAM's TV Channel at cimam.org



Acknowledgments

As a largely volunteer-driven organization, our achievements would not be possible without the generous contribution of individuals and organizations who support CIMAM year after year.

Their support is essential to the ongoing success of CIMAM. We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to our patrons for their loyalty, their belief in CIMAM, and their continued support.

In 2021, we presented a new series of articles about our beloved patrons. We encourage you to read them and learn about our patrons' relationship with contemporary art and their motivations to support it. The articles are available through this link and on the CIMAM website.

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CIMAM 2021 Annual Conference, Lodz and Gdansk

Under Pressure. Museums in Times of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency

Co-presented by

Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź

National Museum in Gdańsk

CIMAM

Hosted by

Muzeum Sztuki in Lodz

National Museum in Gdansk

Reception Hosts

Andel's Hotel

ECS European Solidarity Centre in Gdańsk

Offsite Visits

Centrail Museum of Textile

Signum Gallery

Wschodnia Gallery

NOMUS New Art Museum/Branch of the National Museum
in Gdansk

ECS European Solidarity Centre in Gdańsk

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Post-Conference Tour: Warsaw, November 8–9, 2021

Organized by

Zacheta – National Gallery of Art

Reception Hosts

Starak Family Foundation

Offsite Visits

Zacheta – National Gallery of Art

Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw

Centre for Contemporary Art

Museum of Warsaw

POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews

Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art

Warsaw Historical Studios: Wanda Czełkowska's Studio

Edward Krasiński's Studio

Private galleries: BWA Warszawa, Exhibitions Bureau,
Monopol, Raster, Foksal Gallery Foundation

Starak Family Foundation | Spectra Art Space

Members of the CIMAM 2021 Contents Committee

This CIMAM Annual Conference has been conceived by members of the board of CIMAM and both hosting museums:

From the CIMAM board:

Malgorzata Ludwisiak (chair), Chief curator, Department of Modern Art National Museum in Gdansk

Saskia Bos, independent curator and critic, Amsterdam

Victoria Noorthoorn, director, Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires

Agustín Pérez-Rubio, independent curator, Madrid

Eugene Tan, director, National Gallery Singapore and The Singapore Art Museum, Singapore

From the hosting museums in Lodz and Gdansk:

Daniel Muzyczuk, head of the modern art department, Muzeum Sztuki, Lodz

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Suzanne Cotter, *secretary-treasurer of CiMAM*, director at Mudam Luxembourg – Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean (Luxembourg).

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Victoria Noorthoorn, director of Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires (Buenos Aires).

Ann-Sofi Noring, Vice-Chancellor / Chairman Royal Academy / Swedish Arts Grants Committee (Sweden).

Agustín Pérez-Rubio, Independent Curator (Madrid).

Suhanya Raffel, Director of M+ (Hong Kong).

Eugene Tan, Director of the National Gallery Singapore and the Singapore Art Museum (Singapore).

Ernestine White-Mifetu, Curator and Artist (Kimberly).

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