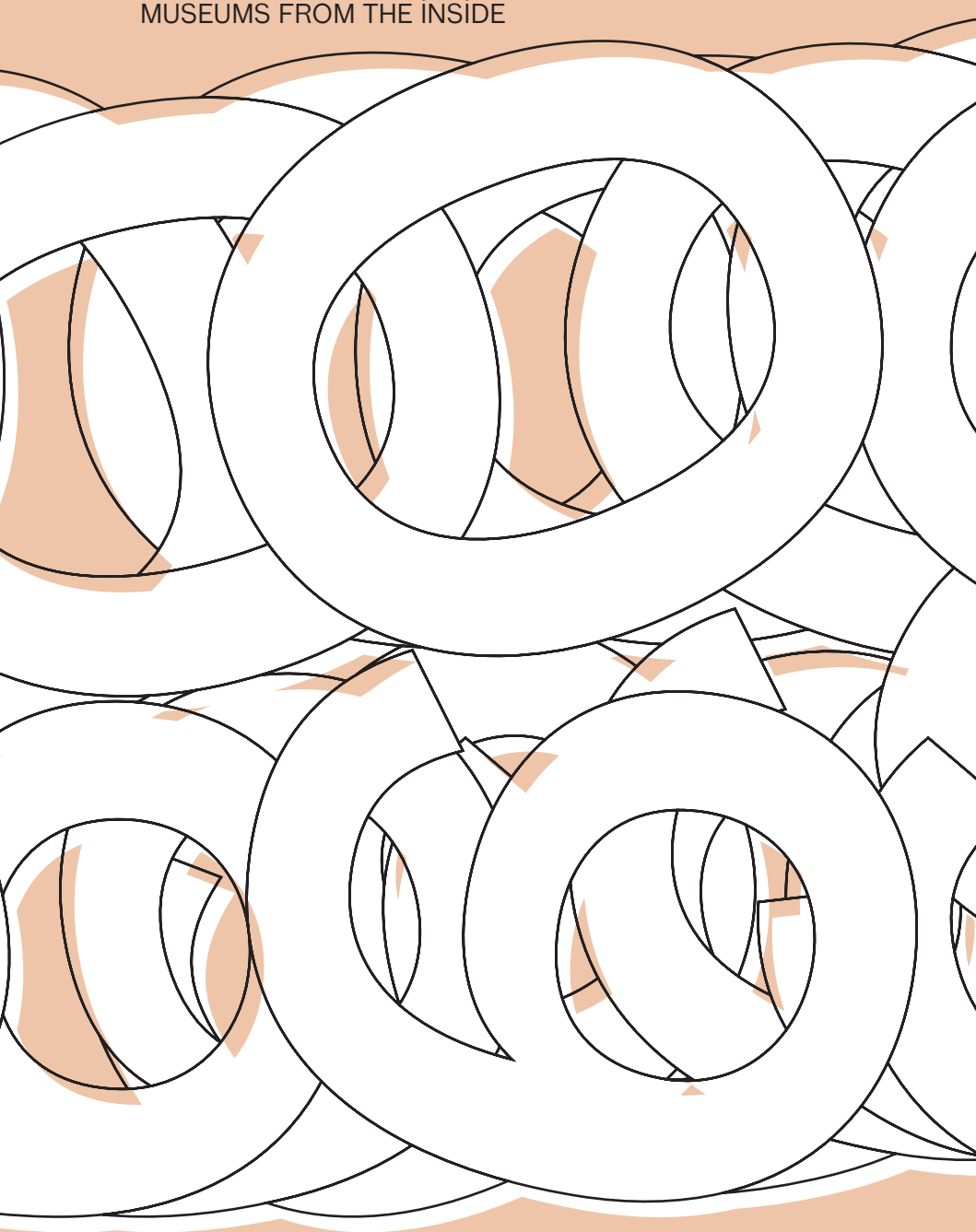
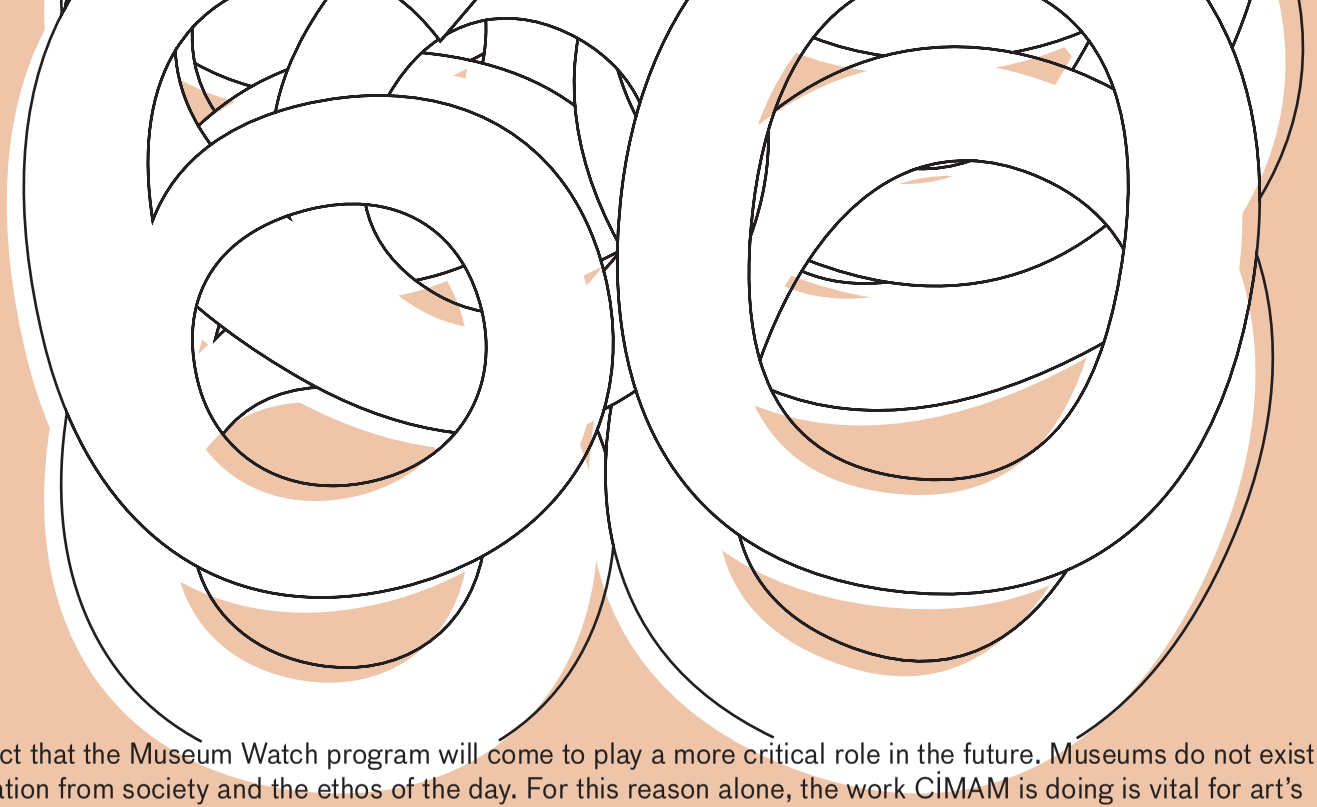
MUSEUMS FROM THE İNSİDE



60 YEARS OF CİMAM

HATJE CANTZ

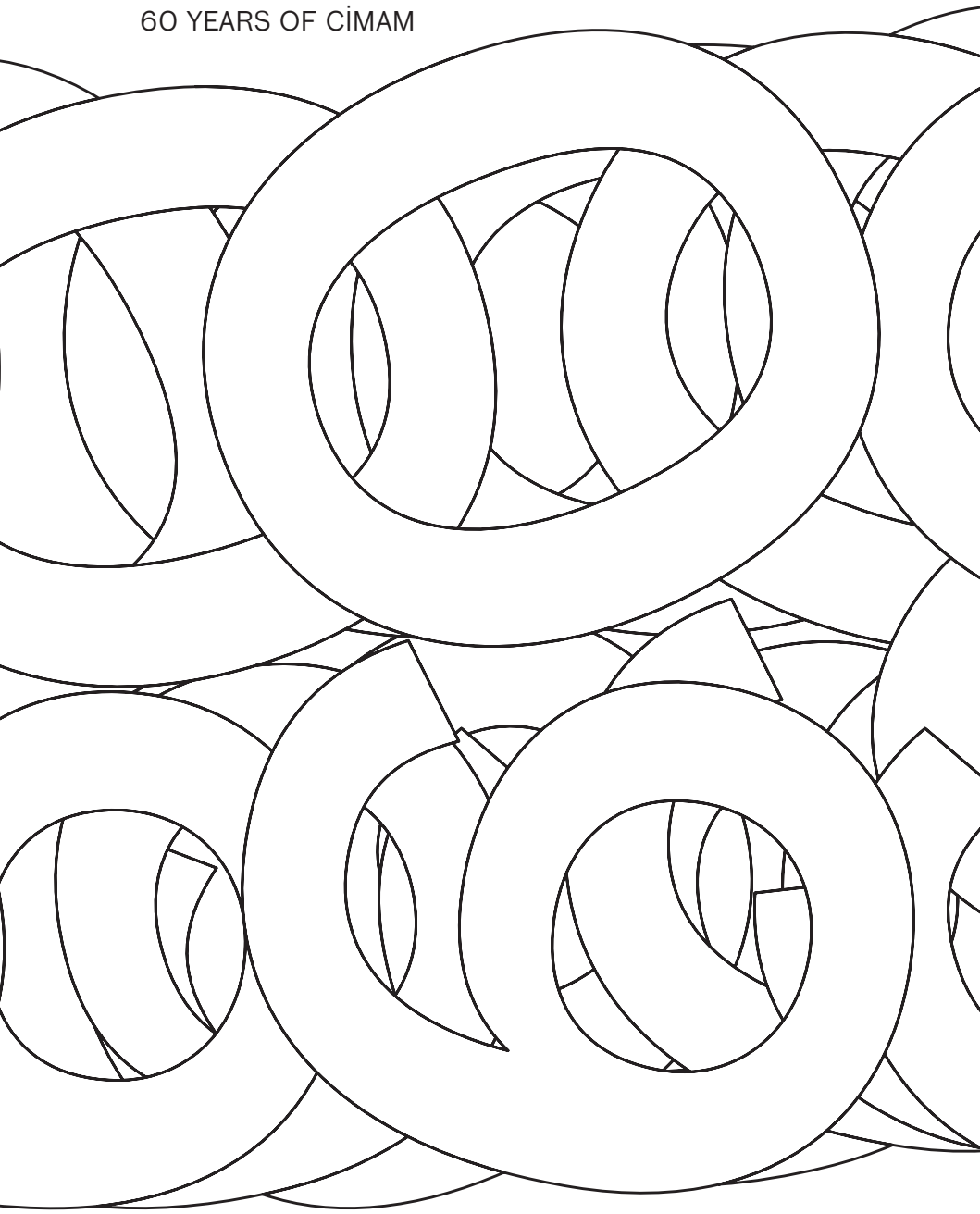


“İ predict that the Museum Watch program will come to play a more critical role in the future. Museums do not exist in isolation from society and the ethos of the day. For this reason alone, the work CİMAM is doing is vital for art’s survival and freedom, as well as for preserving our cultural heritage.” —Tuula Arkio

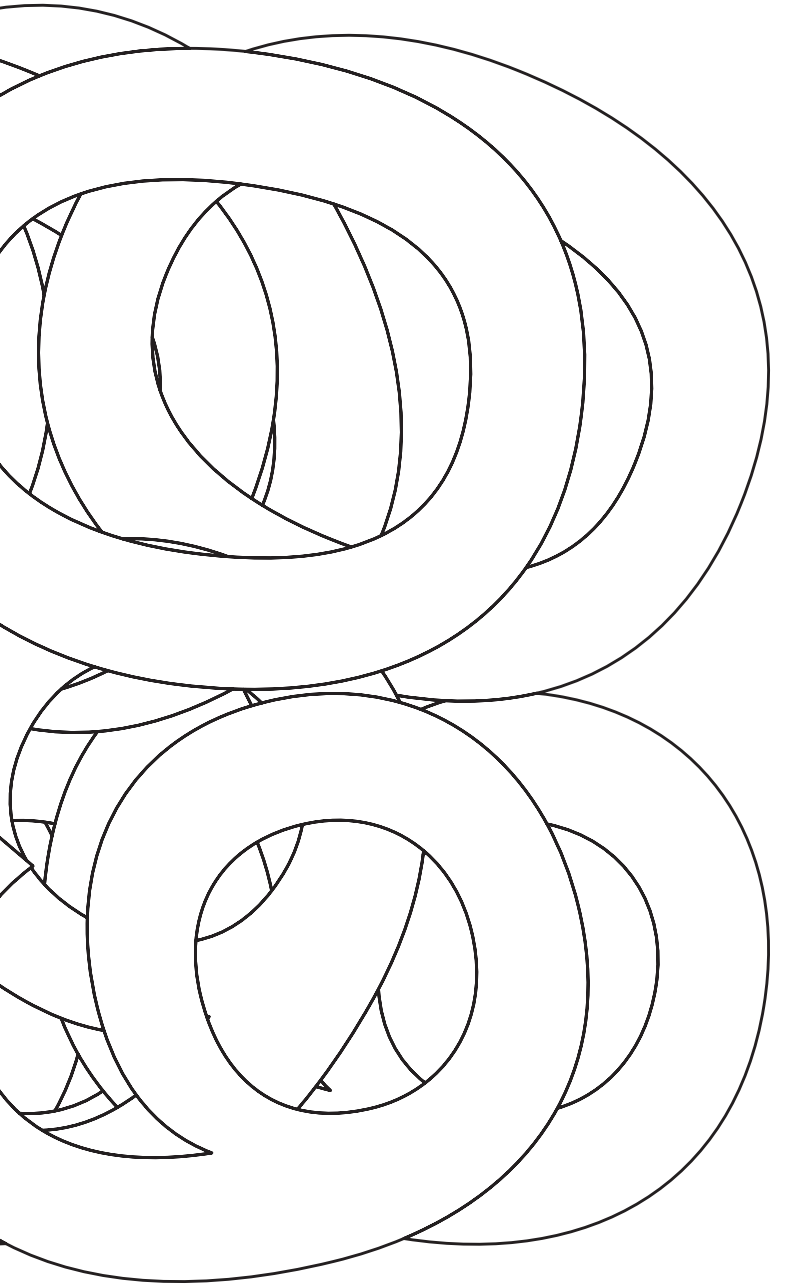


MUSEUMS FROM THE İNSİDE

60 YEARS OF CİMAM



HATJE
CANTZ



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The first CIMAM (International Committee for Museums and Collections of Modern Art) Annual Conference took place on July 5, 1962 in The Hague, The Netherlands, as one of the international committees of ICOM (the International Council of Museums). Since then, the Committee has held over 50 conferences that have been celebrated in over 30 different cities around the globe. CIMAM's Annual Conference has become an important meeting point for modern and contemporary art professionals, and an essential resource for the collaboration between museums, visual art professionals, artists, and other institutions concerned with modern and contemporary art. During the past 60 years, CIMAM has grown to become a truly global membership organization, and we are expecting more than 700 members from 84 countries at the end of the 2020–22 term.

This publication *Museums from the Inside: 60 Years of* CIMAM was produced to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the organization with everyone who has been a part of its history and existence, while going beyond a celebration in order to share our history with new members and envisioning the coming years. CIMAM now stands on the accumulated visions and energy of so many museum directors and professionals over generations who had come together to exchange ideas, and to discuss with other members the urgent issues of the day within the changing museum environment. I am extremely gratified to see its development over the years. In 2015, CIMAM's status changed from being an ICOM International Committee to an Affiliated Organization. However, despite having gained independence in terms of finance and organizational management, which I believe is a more sustainable model, our activities continue to follow ICOM's Code of Ethics and we share urgent global issues concerning museums with other ICOM committees.

For this publication, we have invited 13 former Chairs and Secretary-Treasurers of CIMAM to share the experiences and arguments of their time. We have also invited our most generous sponsors, formerly part of the Board and more recent sponsors as well as travel grant funders who have made it possible to bring diverse groups of members from afar that could not otherwise have attended our annual conferences. Here, too, you will find the voices of various artists who have always been instrumental to our discussions, together with the diverse perspectives of scholars, historians, and philosophers who have broadened our views of the world in terms of time and space. I would like to express my heartful appreciation to

everyone who has contributed to this publication—including those CIMAM members who shared with us their photographic archives.

Despite the unprecedented pandemic, wars, and rapid climate changes of recent years, CIMAM has increased its membership by 16%. This demonstrates the extent to which, while living in a time when the role of Museums of Modern and Contemporary Art in our society is being questioned more than ever, there exists both a need and a desire to listen to other voices, to discuss together, and to learn from each other. By reading through the history of CIMAM, I hope we can also shed light on our path toward the future.

Lastly, I would like to express my deep gratitude to the members of the Board for their commitment, particularly Saskia Bos who has led the 60th Anniversary Working Group together with Suhanya Raffel and Malgorzata Ludwisiak, as well as our Executive Office members, Inés Jover, as well as her predecessor Jenny Gil Schmitz, Susana Carnicero, and Mireia Azuara, whose engagement and research made this publication possible. Our sincere thanks also to la Caixa for their contribution to this book, their support of CIMAM started with María de Corral, former Head of Exhibitions at "la Caixa" Foundation.

Mami Kataoka, President CIMAM 2020–22

CİMAM'S HİSTORY

THE FİRST THİRTY YEARS

SASKİA BOS

In as early as 1962, CIMAM, the organization consisting of museum directors and chief curators worldwide, and made up of leaders of modern and contemporary art, was founded at the Gemeentemuseum in The Hague, The Netherlands. CIMAM is the originally-French acronym (Comité de l'ICOM pour les Musées d'Art Moderne) for ICOM *Committee for Museums and Collections of Modern Art*.

It started as a "club," as a group of committed people looking to further the role of modern art. While occasionally cozying-up to collectors and benefactors, CIMAM focused foremost on collecting museums and producers of exhibitions in order to come up with rules and regulations that were useful to its members. CIMAM back then was still a department of ICOM and the initially small group of members chose topics for their yearly conferences that were often close to the developments within the art world they represented.

What transpires after looking at topics discussed during its first thirty years is a mix of ambitious proposals, practical suggestions as well as conflicts and fierce debates.

After an initial phase, when the organizational structure still had to be articulated, from 1963 debates were held about ways of collecting, after which the position of the artist would turn into a key theme in 1972. Later,

in the seventies, the architecture of the modern museum became a main topic. "We need an Eiffel Tower of the twentieth century!" Werner Hofmann claimed in Paris in 1969 and Voilà! Less than 10 years later Pontus Hultén delivered Centre Georges Pompidou, also known as Beaubourg. Obviously CIMAM had become a useful and most inspiring association for many.

In the slipstream of those debates, a focus emerged on cities outside of the axis of Western Europe >< North America: a conference was realized in Mexico City in 1980 and in Buenos Aires in 1989. Rather late, considering the fact that some members had pleaded for more relations to South America since 1969.

Within Eastern Europe, CIMAM had held a conference in Poland (1972) and in the USSR (1977).[1] More time would be needed to reach Asia: only in 1994 was the first CIMAM conference held in Tokyo.

Naturally, discussions also focused on *inner-artistic topics*: the pluriformity of the arts, or interdisciplinarity, was a theme in 1972, modernity versus postmodernism was the topical theme in 1981, and the question poignantly asked by Rosalind Krauss in 1990, was if it could be the setting of the late-capitalist museum itself that created the work of art.

Early Years

In the early 1960s, Europe was partly still being rebuilt, while the United States more and more determined what was important in culture, and the so-called "iron curtain" (the term was already used by Churchill in 1946) and the Cuba crisis of 1962 had divided East and West. But CIMAM and ICOM managed to keep dialogues open, certainly throughout the 1970s. Within the museum walls, CIMAM mainly deliberated about how to follow up with developments in the world of modern art.

In 1963 in Paris, the freshly appointed—and first—director of what is now the MUMOK in Vienna, Werner Hofmann, gave one of two opening addresses of CIMAM conferences (the second one was delivered in 1969). Although known for his nineteenth-century expertise, Hofmann had been asked to define what modern art was and made bold and passionate statements, having built a 90-piece collection from scratch. Defining a chronological order of collections as having "a tendency to equalize"—quoting

1 CİMAM conference Leningrad 1977, on museums and cultural exchanges.

Delacroix's reference to the similarity of railway stations—he pleaded for more imaginative approaches. Hofmann had visited Amsterdam's Stedelijk museum in 1961, where he had seen an exhibition based on Nietzschean leitmotivs as "the Apollonian and the Dyonisian."

While offering many more options about how to go about the *mise en scène*, Hofmann argued for more diversity, demanding that the museum of modern art be a "*chantier vivant des artistes de son époque*" and ended his speech with three priorities to keep in mind: "the museum should be a place of provocation; it should inspire the past; and confront man with the anxieties of his existence."[2] Case in point: In 1963 the speaker had co-authored an exhibition called *Angst* (Fear) in Darmstadt, West Germany.[3]

Research into professional practices was next: the committee of CIMAM that had tackled "Problems of Modern Art" in Paris was now looking for more know-how and a trip to New York was planned. Two years later, the CIMAM Board with outgoing president Jean Cassou (Chief Curator of the Musée National d'Art Moderne in Paris) and incoming president Franz Meyer (Director of the Kunstmuseum Basel) were welcomed by, amongst others, MoMA's René d'Harnoncourt and Alfred Barr—still head of collections—and Thom Messer of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. Visits included the library and archives of MoMA, the Eastman House and its photography collection and Chase Manhattan Bank, which housed a large collection of what they were proud to call "modern and avant-garde works" on the walls of its 60-storey building by Skidmore, Owens and Merill. Working groups were set up, and the one focusing on the museum and its public included Knud Jensen of the Louisiana Museum in Denmark, Pontus Hultén of the Moderna Museet Stockholm and Edy de Wilde of the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam.

Recommendations involved a lot of homework for the participants: besides research of the visitors' profiles and the relation of the museum with its public, serious documentation of the activities was seen as key, as well as a need for creating an inventory (*un répertoire*) of museums of modern art and their collections. Especially recent developments in the U.S. were attracting much notice and in The Hague, Amsterdam and

2 From: W. Hofmann, *Le contenu du Musée d'Art Moderne*, réunion İCOM musées d'Art Moderne Paris, Oct 3–9, 1963.

3 Zeugnisse der *Angst in der Modernen Kunst*, Mathildenhöhe, Darmstadt, June 19 — September 1, 1963.

Stockholm museums were showing New Realists and American Pop art in 1964 and 1966, Minimal art in 1968. Quite some competition is palpable even in hindsight, as directors in Sweden, The Netherlands, Germany and France tried to keep pace with the various tendencies.[4]

The Role of the Artist

Yet by 1968, the world of art was transforming and artists both in the U.S. as well as in Europe were demanding attention for the social context of their work as part of a more general cultural transformation both in Europe and in the U.S.

May '68 in Paris shook up universities and factories, artists showed solidarity and in the U.S. people like Lucy R. Lippard, with her book *Six Years, the Dematerialization of the art object 1968 to 1972* and Seth Siegelaub, with his Art Workers' Coalition of 1969, had articulated the dematerialization of the artwork and were foundational for the rights of artists, in a period dominated by anti-war demonstrations.

It is somewhat ironic to realize, from a current perspective, how at almost the same time that the members of the 1969 Brussels CIMAM conference visited multiple collections, often focusing on art collections in banks, or admiring buildings by Horta, that same city also featured Marcel Broodthaers exhibiting his now famous empty crates. Notable exception: the director who had opened Broodthaers' *Musée d'Art Moderne*, *section du XIXième siècle* in 1968, Johannes Cladders, then the Director of the Städtisches Museum of Mönchengladbach, was a CIMAM member, showing that some of them were certainly not out of touch with the most contemporary debates.

Most discussions circled around the role of the museum and central to the 1969 meeting had been the polarity *Musée: temple ou chantier?*, for which the English translation then read: "Museum: temple or work in progress?"

Pierre Gaudibert, founding director of Paris' ARC (acronym for Art, Recherche, Confrontation, a new space for art on the top floor of the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris) was a proponent of the museum as

4 For the Stedelijk collection in Amsterdam, De Wilde bought works by De Kooning in '64 and '69, by Johns in '66, and Kelly, Newman, Stella in '67, while Hultén in Stockholm had bought Rauschenberg and Johns for the Moderna Museet in 1962. The collections of the Wallraf Richartz Museum in Cologne and those by collectors Peter Ludwig and Otto Hahn in Germany and Austria, as well as the collection of the Louisiana Museum in Humlebaek, Denmark, showed similar preferences for North American art at the time.

a living space, as the area of the artist with whom the public should be able to have a dialogue.

In 1971, during the preparation of the 1972 conference in Lodz, Poland, Gaudibert restated his position, saying he saw the museum as a space for expression and even for contestation. This was much to the dislike of Sir Norman Reid, then Director of the Tate Gallery, a staunch advocate for the museum as "temple," who was convinced that the so-called participation of the pubic during a Robert Morris exhibition "had led to its destruction," after which it was decided the show had to be closed.[5]

"Similar problems exist in America," Thom Messer of the Guggenheim followed up, complaining that "opposition to war, racism, and sexism are reasons for artists to contest and agitate against or within museums. (…) To whom does the museum belong?"

This key question had come to its culminating point when an exhibition by Hans Haacke—consisting of photographs of slums that showed the names of their landlords of whom many were Guggenheim Trustees—was canceled, as it, so Messer said, "would have led to driving the museum towards extra-artistic activities to which the Board of Directors would not subscribe, as these exceeded the limits inherent to a museum of art."[6]

Apparently to this director, "the *musée chantier*" or "work in progress" meant "exceeding the limits," while a safer choice for the "temple" implied sticking to collecting and conservation, without room for confrontation.

With just three artists present—amongst whom Günther Uecker pleading for a museum of the future that, using radio and television would divulge ideas instead of transporting objects—the conference of 1972 in Poland was dominated by two voices: that of Gaudibert who focused on the process of creation, and Lodz's passionate director Ryszard Stanislawski. The latter viewed the museum as a "critical instrument" that could show "the spiritual kinship between the visual arts, including theatre and film."[7]

Amongst the general recommendations made after the conference one can read that "museums have a double orientation, i.e., towards conservation and presentation of the collection, and on the other hand as a forum for experimental and innovative activities by artists-researchers." In order

5 CİMAM report Paris, August 1971, p. 8.
6 CİMAM report Paris, August 1971, p. 10.
7 İnterview with R. Stanizlawski, *Muzeum Sztuki w Lodzi*, Musée d'Art Contemporain (cat.), Lyon 1992, p. 243.

to achieve that, "museums should strive to transform artists into partners, as they change the character and role of the museum of modern art."[8]

The Temple and the Tower

While the recommendations of 1972 had been relatively positive for securing the artist's presence within the museum, in a workshop-like context, the "temple" in which this should all take place was much debated architecturally.

The other question that Werner Hofmann had asked in Brussels in 1969 was: how to confront bureaucracy while planning a museum within the urban context? "I dream not so much of integration, no big public sculptures, no decoration, but of an irritation of our banal, our mundane environment. The twentieth century does not have its own Eiffel Tower yet!"

It is probable that precisely this question was actively debated in the discussions that ensued, and it may have planted the seeds for the preparation of a newly built spectacular form of architecture such as that by Rogers and Piano for the Centre Beaubourg. For in 1976, only seven years after the conference that he had attended in his role as Director of the Moderna Museet in Stockholm, Pontus Hultén, having left the Swedish museum, would inaugurate "his" Centre Georges Pompidou, a construction that certainly had an impact comparable to the Eiffel tower in terms of technical innovation and spectacular sight. If the creation of the Centre Pompidou was in fact meant as a kind of twentieth-century Eiffel tower—and there should be many sources, yet to be explored, which could support this hypothesis—it shows how effective the connections and exchanges during CIMAM meetings could be in getting things done.

Architecturally, the design by Piano and Rogers, who as a team won the competition in 1971, was as radical as it could be: not a solemn temple for culture, but an easily accessible "exhibition machine" in the spirit of the counter-culture of 1968, producing with its steel beams, tension rods, and escalators, a kind of an "inside out building."[9]

Other new museums were planned and popping up everywhere in Europe. CIMAM's Board was insisting that "Very many museums must be built, enlarged or replanned without delay. For example: Vienna, Cologne,

8 See: Protocol and Recommendations Lodz conference 1972, archives City of Lodz, Poland.
9 B. Hulsman, in NRC, Amsterdam, 12–18–2021.

Düsseldorf, Stuttgart, Aix, Eindhoven, London, Basel, Stockholm, Zürich, Ottawa, Humlebaek, etc."[10]

The deliberations were focused on what was considered the "controversial character" of the theme "museum architecture," as, according to the minutes, "so few museologists are qualified to translate in terms of space and therefore architecture, specifically (for) museological problems. On the other hand, architects are totally unaware of the museum's specific problems."[11]

The question called for a lot of debates to be held, and especially for the Paris conference of 1979 in honor of the recently inaugurated Centre Georges Pompidou, the Board had planned to tackle the following binary pairs: Architect/Curator, Temple/Forum, Work of Art/Works of art. Practically, this resulted in presentations of remodeled or recently expanded museums in Otterlo, The Netherlands (Kröller Müller Museum), Denmark (Louisiana Museum), London's Tate Gallery and presentations about the planning stages of the Ludwig Museum in Cologne, the National Painting Gallery in Moscow, and about what was seen as "major recent achievements": the East Wing of the National Gallery in Washington by I.M. Pei and the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris.

This focus on and need for architecture was a consequence of the ever-expanding collections of the art museums and led to intense debates within the field of architecture, where Charles Jencks had been articulating approaches that he saw as different to the modernist era, effectively labeling the new era as postmodern with his book of 1977 *The language of Post-Modern Architecture*, in which he proposed the combination of historical and contemporary elements as a new necessity.

Formally, postmodern architecture allowed for great pluriformity, which went hand in hand with an emerging globalization. The worlds of art and architecture grew closer together, and the concept of tourism started playing a strong role in the financing of new museums that could embody forms of "city pride."

A Developing World

In that light it is not surprising that Hultén, as President of CIMAM, suggested as theme for the 1980 conference "Museums and their Responsibility

10 Minutes CİMAM Executive Committee. Madrid, November 30, 1978, p. 1.
11 *op. cit.*, p. 2.

towards World Patrimony," and that the topic "Post-Modern or Contemporary? Modernity in the 20th Century" was introduced for the meeting in Düsseldorf a year later.[12]

The preparatory discussion's minutes[13] show a certain bewilderment at what was happening. "Which criteria should be adopted if we reject that of innovation?" and "abandoning these criteria totally is an easy way out and leads to 'anything goes'." Recommendations were formulated around personal commitment and risk-taking by the curator, reliance on theorists to show that directors are not alone in establishing criteria, and by suggesting an opening-up to what was still mostly called the "Third World": introducing political criteria, national heritage, and identity, together with the problems that building a "national art" would entail.

At the conference of 1981 in Düsseldorf: "Post-Modern or Contemporary?," the Kunsthalle's director Jürgen Harten set the stage for fierce debates between Benjamin Buchloh and Rudi Fuchs, while other participants including Harald Szeemann from Ticino, Switzerland, focused on exhibitions like *Monte Verità*, and Jean Leering talked about a need to shake-up Amsterdam's Tropenmuseum (Museum of the Tropics) by juxtaposing anthropological objects with contemporary art works.

It was David Elliott, then director at Oxford's Museum of Modern Art, who chose an active verb rather than a static adjective for the title of the London meetings at the Barbican Centre: instead of talking about a Third (read: underdeveloped) World, he introduced developing, for the conference of 1983, which he called: "Tradition and Innovation: Interaction between Traditional and Contemporary Art in a Developing World."

Elliott spoke on behalf of two participants unable to join in from India and introduced the general thematics as "being essential to any consideration of art in developing countries that undergo Western influences."[14]

Only six years later, in 1989, we would see the Berlin Wall fall and Jean-Hubert Martin present his ground-breaking exhibition *Magiciens de la Terre* with many artists and artisans unknown to Western audiences; the same year that other hopes were crushed on Beijing's Tiananmen Square.

Was Los Angeles in 1990 too far removed from those events to connect? The topics of that year's conference were "The museum in late

12 Working sessions report, June 1981, Düsseldorf.
13 Minutes CİMAM meeting, October 28, 1980, Mexico City, p. 6.
14 CİMAM working meeting, July 26, 1983, Barbican Centre, London.

capitalist society," as well as "deaccessioning," where Rosalind Krauss analyzed the influence of Minimalism and industrial production on the museum as becoming a "hyperspace." Krauss: "We were having this crucial experience not in front of what could be called art, but in the midst of an oddly emptied grandiloquent space of which the Museum itself—as a building—was somehow the subject."

It was again Elliott who spoke of art in and from Africa and about the fact that other cultures "have other systems of judging quality: based on the object itself or on the impressions of memories or relationships which the object may evoke."[15]

Clearly a more global view of art and its producers had taken hold, a view that had originated around 1980 at the conferences of Mexico and Düsseldorf with their debates about "world patrimony" and the ensuing debates about postmodernism in 1981, but it would take until 1994 for the conference and its members to get to Asia and hold a general meeting in Tokyo.

The So-Called "Club"

The group of members that came together in 1962 to form a committee of directors especially focused on modern art, had its lowest amount of members (around 23 people) in May 1973 and felt in a very weak situation, "*une situation très faible*" according to handwritten notes by Renilde Hammacher, Chief Curator of the Boijmans-van Beuningen Museum Rotterdam and then Secretary to the Board. Thanks to a reorganization, and a membership drive under CIMAM Chairman Thom Messer, Director of the Guggenheim in New York, and having subsequently interested collectors to join the Board: Panza di Biumo of Vicenza joined in 1977, as later did Toshio Hara, Director of his own private museum in Tokyo, Anthon and Annick Herbert from Ghent, Marc and Josée Gensollen from Marseille, and others. There was in fact a conscious policy put in place to be in permanent consultation with certain private collectors. Success got redefined in 1993, as the number of conference attendees in Brussels reached 75 persons, while a total of 212 persons were paying members that year.

In terms of an ethical code, or code of conduct, the first time this seems to have been articulated is in the minutes of the Quebec/Montreal

15 CİMAM Congress minutes, 1990, Los Angeles, for both quotes.

conference of 1992 "to arrive at a common framework of principles (…) and behaviour as regards moral/ethical issues" and in "a need for an ethical code, as many museums undergo a very subtle, financial or intellectual pressure."[16] Most of it now sounds like museum directors carefully trying to preserve artistic autonomy, but there was no word yet of introspection, nor any urge for transparency.

So, was the early CIMAM an old boys' club? In terms of gender, as in: no women or other signs of empowerment? Only if one looks at the top job. Margit Rowell from the U.S. was the first woman president in 1991–92, thirty years after CIMAM was founded. Number two was Zdenka Badovinac between 2011–13, number three Elizabeth McGregor 2017–19, and number four Mami Kataoka from 2020 through 2022.

But we should not forget the hard work of those who were just as important as presidents, by being secretary-general and/or treasurer: looking through the early 30 years (and the interviews in this publication) all pages are full of women's names, like Renilde Hammacher, Suzanne Pagé, Eugenia Georgievskaya, and many others. Even more so: without them CIMAM would have ceased to exist.

It would seem, then, that both in terms of Euro-centrism and male-white domination, CIMAM between 1962 and 1993 knew to adapt—albeit slowly—to the world surrounding it, to a more diverse world of makers, with committed presenters, "embedded" collectors, and ever-widening audiences.

Saskia Bos is an art historian, critic, and independent curator of contemporary art, living in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Board member of CIMAM since 2017, former director of De Appel, Amsterdam; founding Director of Curatorial Program De Appel (1994). Dean of the School of Art at The Cooper Union, New York, between 2005 and 2016. President of İKT between 1999 and 2002.

16 Rudi Fuchs on Rivoli Museum Turin, Cimam minutes 10–19–1993, Antwerp, p. 2.

İN SEARCH OF A COMMON GROUND FOR MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUMS

THE LATTER THİRTY YEARS

MAMİ KATAOKA

The latter 30 years of the 60-year history of the International Committee for Museums and Collections of Modern Art (CIMAM) was a time when globalization permeated the world's diverse economic and industrial sectors, and multiculturalism spread throughout the art world. At the same time, under the new political and economic balance of power of the post-Cold War era, art museums were founded one after another, mainly in emerging economies. In addition to art museums, international art festivals and art fairs were also established in many parts of the world. At the same time, the role of modern and contemporary art museums continued to be questioned amid a rapidly changing global situation characterized by inequality, division, terrorism, civil unrest, wars, and epidemics.

CIMAM, which began as a "club" in 1962, was naturally called upon to organize itself formally as its membership grew. The transition of CIMAM from one of the ICOM International Committees to an ICOM Affiliated Organization in 2015 was inevitable. The need for transformation in CIMAM during the 1990s can be seen in the following comment made by CIMAM President Rudi Fuchs in 1993. "In the sixties, CIMAM came into existence. In those days, museums of modern art did not have their own place within the art section of ICOM. It was important to create such a space, as modern art is a

field of its own within the entire art section."[1] And again: "CIMAM was mainly confined to Europe and North America. Now we have members all over the world; the Far East Asia & Japan, Latin America and there is growing interest in Eastern Europe to become part of our organization."[2]

From "Club" to Global Organization

The globalization of the modern and contemporary art world was already being discussed in CIMAM since the 1980s,[3] with Annual Conferences[4] held in places such as South America, Eastern Europe, and Scandinavia. Commenting on the growth in membership during the 1990s, Fuchs said at the time that "CIMAM is becoming bigger and bigger, and therefore more diffuse." He also expressed some concern over the fact that "therefore, CIMAM should not try to attract more members as a goal on its own, but should try to invite and organize specific individuals who are important for the contemporary art situation."[5]

In 1994, the first CIMAM Annual Conference in Asia was held in Tokyo, with 68 participants from 22 countries, plus Asian experts as observers. More than 300 people from the Japanese art world also participated in this large-scale event. This conference also marked the beginning of an increase in non-Western members and the addition of new patron-members from Korea and Japan. In order to cope with this expansion and globalization, the main challenges for CIMAM since the 1990s have been its independence or autonomy from ICOM, its Code of Conduct, and a secretariat that is not dependent on volunteers working for the CIMAM President or Secretary-Treasurer.

In terms of CIMAM's relationship with ICOM, the fact that ICOM members were free to choose the International Committee had long troubled CIMAM. According to Maria de Corral, in 1992, under the presidency of Magrit Rowell, decisions on applications for membership in CIMAM that

1 Rudi Fuchs, President, CİMAM, "İntroduction," CİMAM Meeting, Friday, October 22, 1993, Antwerp.
2 Rudi Fuchs, President, Opening of the CİMAM Annual Conference, Monday, October 18, 1993, Antwerp Hilton.
3 See Saskia Bos's "İntroduction (1962–93)," included in the present volume.
4 At the time, this event was called the General Meeting as opposed to the Board Meeting, but as it is unclear when it came to be called the Annual Conference, this latter term has been adopted throughout this essay.
5 Rudi Fuchs, President, CİMAM, Minutes of the CİMAM Board, Jerusalem, March 1993.

had up until then been approved by ICOM could now be made by CIMAM itself.[6] In 1997, CIMAM attempted to become fully independent from ICOM, but this did not change the requirement for CIMAM members to also be members of ICOM. There were also separate membership lists—the one that came from ICOM, and CIMAM's own list—and various other confusions and ambiguities related to voting rights and the non-payment of dues were still being discussed as early as 1998.[7]

David Elliott, who became President in 1999, proceeded to update the Rules and Regulations of CIMAM, which were registered with ICOM in 1983 under the Model Rules for International Committees of ICOM. This is the basis for today's CIMAM bylaws. In addition to strengthening membership in the non-Western world, the Institutional Membership category was created to allow young curators affiliated with museums to participate. Elliott also created the Co-Opted Member category, which allowed independent curators and others without a museum affiliation to join. Elliott discussed the continued globalization of the organization based on a discussion paper that pointed out, among other things, that "some major museums are heavily represented, others not at all. New museums of modern art in the Developing World (for example in South East Asia or the whole of Africa) are not represented nor encouraged to participate."[8] In October 1999, the Board of Directors agreed to hire staff for the CIMAM Secretariat. In addition, it was announced at the 2000 Board meeting that the category of Non-Voting Member (members of ICOM who were voting members of another ICOM group and did not pay the specific CIMAM fee) was to be abolished after 2002. The Annual Conference in Berlin in 2002 was attended by 130 people, the largest number to date, and the group expanded from the traditional exclusive gathering of museum directors to include a wider range of people, both geographically and generationally, showing that the policy of "larger and better" was starting to take shape. At the same Board meeting, the need to hire an administrative staff for CIMAM was reiterated, and in 2005, during the presidency of Manuel Borja-Villel, a permanent administrative office was established for the first time within MACBA in Barcelona, where he served as director.[9]

6 Refer to the interview with Maria de Corral, included in the present volume.
7 Minutes of the CİMAM Board Meeting, October 14, 1998, Sydney.
8 Letter from David Elliott to all Board members of CİMAM, March 4, 1999.
9 The founding CİMAM Coordinator/Executive Director was Pilar Cortada.

In 2003, Elliott discussed the independence of CIMAM at an ICOM Executive Board meeting, but the outcome was that "ICOM International Committees should accept all interested ICOM members [of good standing] as members. CIMAM continues to insist that members are actively involved in the field which relates to it as only this ensures a focused discussion of issues of central concern to our profession."[10] After more than a decade of further discussion, CIMAM, as an ICOM International Committee, finally achieved organizational autonomy.

During the presidency of Zdenka Badovinac, significant progress was made on this long-standing issue, and at the 2015 ICOM General Assembly in Paris, it was agreed that CIMAM would cease to be an ICOM International Committee, becoming instead an Affiliated Organization with a greater degree of operational autonomy. An MoU was signed between ICOM and CIMAM (President: Bartomeu Marí), stating that both parties would continue to work together towards common goals.[11] This transition gave CIMAM legal status as a non-profit cultural institution in Spain with its own bank account, allowing it to also hire full-time employees.[12] This transition was explained to members at the General Assembly in Tokyo in 2015. The CIMAM Annual Conference used to be held at the same location as the ICOM General Conference once every three years, when both conferences would be hosted by the same city (whereas CIMAM could choose any other city in years when the triennial ICOM General Conference was not being held). The 2013 ICOM Rio de Janeiro General Conference became the last time that the CIMAM Annual Conference was held as part of the ICOM Conference. While its organizational autonomy seems to have temporarily diluted its relationship with ICOM, signs that this relationship was recovering even as CIMAM was maintaining its operational autonomy could be seen in the CIMAM session at the ICOM Prague General Conference in 2022, and collaborative projects with ICOM-INTERCOM, for instance.

10 Minutes of the Board Meeting, February 1–3, 2003, Athens.

11 İCOM was registered as a French organization in 1901. The MoU contains clauses designed to maintain relationships, such as the attendance of the İCOM President at the CİMAM Annual Conference and the attendance of the CİMAM President at the İCOM General Assembly. The İCOM President attended the 2005 CİMAM São Paulo Annual Conference for the first time.

12 For more details, see the interview with Patricia Sloane, included in the present volume.

Museums in a Globalized Art World

CIMAM has persistently posed the question "what is a modern and contemporary art museum?" Since 1993, in a reflection of global changes such as globalization and multiculturalism, the main theme of many of the Annual Conferences has been the current role of modern and contemporary art museums.

The host city for the CIMAM Annual Conference has been selected from regions where modern and contemporary art is rapidly developing against a backdrop of economic development. By holding the Annual Conferences in various parts of the world, existing members are able to encounter modern and contemporary art museums, collections, artistic practices, and the history, economy, society, and culture behind them that have developed in regions unfamiliar to Western audiences. Although some have pointed out that discussions at the conference were limited to the introduction of new museums in each region, it was certainly an opportunity to come together to ponder the meaning of globalization from a variety of perspectives in each region.

Toshio Hara, Director of the Hara Museum of Contemporary Art who served as CIMAM Vice President at the time of the Annual Conference in Tokyo in 1994, observed that "a common ground has been created to discuss contemporary art. The Western-centric view of art has shifted to a more universal concept. A new perception of Asia has emerged."[13] Hara also noted that "Asian and Japanese observers were able to talk about and discuss issues they had been facing in a common forum." The discussions at the conference clearly demonstrated that the perspective of multiculturalism was expanding to include the non-West in relation to the West, the folk art that had been regarded as falling outside the domain of fine art, and modes of artistic expression from indigenous cultures. On the other hand, at the Annual Conference in Antwerp in 1993, the question was raised as to whether the lending of prominent Western works of art to "newly rich countries" such as Japan and Korea constituted a form of artistic or professional cooperation, or an economic rationale from which a hefty loan fee could be expected. Such new issues associated with globalization were also discussed.[14]

13 Toshio Hara, Vice President of CİMAM, Director, Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, "CİMAM Japan Meeting," official report, CİMAM Japan Meeting Organizing Committee, 1994, p. 9.

14 Minutes of CİMAM meeting, Friday October 22, 1993, Antwerp.

In 1995, "Dialects in Contemporary Art: The Norwegian Contemporary Art Situation" was held in Oslo and Stavanger, Norway, while in 1999, "Art in Divided Communities" was the theme of the Conference held in Israel, which included presentations on the state of art in Israel, Palestine, Ireland (divided into the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland), and Sarajevo among others. In Asia, "The Shifting Landscape of Contemporary Art and Asia" was a theme for the conference in Seoul, Korea in 2004, while "Common Ground for Museums in a Global Society" was the main theme in Shanghai during Expo 2010. In 2017, Singapore became the first venue in Southeast Asia, where the theme for the second day was "the multifarious cultural and artistic contexts of Southeast Asia."

In 2005 in São Paulo, Manuel Borja-Villel, Secretary-Treasurer, stated the following regarding the theme "Museums: Intersections in a Global Scene": "The process of globalization is today more evident than ever. More than any other period in history the flows of capital have acquired a global dimension, conditioning our perception of the world and our organization in it.(….) The *mondialisation* of the end of the twentieth century is after all a continuation of the colonialisms of the nineteenth century or before."[15] In 2015, after some 20 years, the Annual Conference returned to Tokyo with the theme "How Global Can Museums Be?" Addressed at this particular conference were issues regarding the increasingly complex and pluralistic environment of modern and contemporary art museums, such as the question "how can museums negotiate a radical, innovative position within cultural tolerance/sensitivity, within the dominating conventions of service to the public, or within the dichotomy of public interests/private resources?"[16]

Museums and the Economy, Public and Private, Patronage for CİMAM

Museum activities over the past 30 years have also been affected by regional and global political and economic crises, such as the Asian currency crisis of 1997, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 in the U.S., the collapse of Lehman Brothers in 2008, and the pandemic of 2020

15 https://cimam.org/documents/53/cimam-2005-Annual-Conference-Museums-İntersections-in-a-Global-Scene.pdf

16 https://cimam.org/documents/6/How_Global_Can_Museums_Be_Abstract_2015.pdf

and beyond. On the other hand, the establishment of new museums and the development of art markets in the BRIC-countries, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia, which have experienced remarkable economic growth since the 2000s, were also evident at the annual conferences held in these regions. In particular, the spread of neoliberalism during the late 2000s has led to an expansion of the global art market, and many private art museums have been established based on the collections of newly wealthy individuals and corporations. In regions where public support for contemporary art was limited, while these privately funded museums played an important role in building international networks, they were also challenged by their new responsibilities and public nature as museums of modern and contemporary art. There is also a different relationship between museums and the economy in the European model, where the basic source of funding comes from public resources, and the U.S. model, where the majority of operations depend on donations and contributions from wealthy individuals. Alfred Pacquement, President of CIMAM 2005–07, also notes that "my presidency coincided with a turning point in terms of museums' roles and responsibilities, in those years following the trauma of 9/11 and preceding the greatest crisis in the economy since the 1930s."[17] The annual conferences that followed featured the following main themes: London in 2006, "Contemporary Institutions: Between Public and Private"; Vienna in 2007, "Museums and Universal Heritage: Contemporary Institutions as Producers in Late Capitalism"; Mexico City in 2009, "Fair Trade: The Institution of Art on the New Economy"; and Doha, Qatar in 2014, "Museums in Progress: Public Interest, Private Resources?"[18]

Initially, CIMAM's patron members were mainly European collectors who also served on the Board of Directors, but today CIMAM's activities are supported also by patrons from other regions of Asia, Europe, and Latin America, including the Fukutake Foundation and the Samsung Museum of Art, which have lent their continuous support since 2000.[19] The globalization of CIMAM has also revealed economic disparities between regions, and the Travel Grant, which was established for members who are unable to attend the Annual Conference for financial reasons, continues to be an

17 From the interview with Alfred Pacquement, included in the present volume.
18 A comprehensive archive of Annual Conferences since 2005 can be found at the following link: https://cimam.org/digital-resources/publications/
19 https://cimam.org/support-cimam/

extremely significant initiative to this day. For instance, the Travel Grant demonstrates what Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, concerned about the geographical distance between Latin America and the rest of the world, had hoped for in terms of connecting with CIMAM's international members, particularly professionals from Central America and the Caribbean. The role of Travel Grants targeting a wide range of countries and regions, such as those from the Getty Foundation, also have a significant role to play.

In view of these regional disparities, the CIMAM Board of Directors approved at a meeting in 2021 the decision to revise its annual membership fees according to the size of each museum's operating budget and corresponding region, starting in 2023.

Social Responsibility of the Museum and Museum Watch

As the geopolitical and economic situation of the world becomes more complex, the responsibilities of modern and contemporary art museums have become more diverse. At the same time, various issues have come to the fore regarding the position of professionals working in this industry. The CIMAM Board of Directors decided to launch "The Contemporary Art Museum Watch Program" at the March 2012 Board meeting, which was announced in the newsletter. Board members were encouraged to share important articles from their respective regions,[20] and the first contribution was "The Hungarian Museum System: On the Threshold of Chaos" by József Mélyi, President of the Hungarian AICA was uploaded on the website.[21] CIMAM President Zdenka Badovinac stated that CIMAM would become a truly contemporary institution by addressing important issues affecting the modern and contemporary art museum profession throughout the year. Since then, the Museum Watch Committee (as it is now called) has responded swiftly to issues as diverse as the crisis surrounding the continued autonomy of museums, the unfair and opaque appointments of museum directors and curators, the political restrictions faced by artists, and censorship both within and outside museums, and has to date issued nearly 60 official statements on various issues. On the other hand, at the

20 Minutes of the Board Meeting, March 5, 2012, Centre George Pompidou, Paris

21 https://cimam.org/museum-watch/museum-watch-actions/hungarian-museum-system-on-the-threshold-of-chaos/—Articles related to subsequent Museum Watches are available to view on the official CİMAM website.

Tokyo Annual Conference in November 2015, two Board members announced their resignation from the CIMAM Board of Directors due to their dissatisfaction with the way the censorship issue involving President Bartomeu Marí had been handled by the Board, while three other members also later resigned. On the last day of the conference, the transparency of the organization was also questioned, with some criticizing the Board's failure to share the incident with members.

The social responsibilities and obligations of museums have continued to be major themes at subsequent annual conferences, and were discussed in Barcelona in 2016, on the topic of "The Museum and Its Responsibilities," and in Singapore in 2017 under the theme "The Roles and Responsibilities of Museums in Civil Society," with artist Tiffany Chang pointing out the challenges that museums face in dealing with state censorship, for instance.

The New Role of CİMAM

The Covid-19 pandemic in the spring of 2020 dealt a tremendous blow to modern and contemporary art museums around the world for more than two years thereafter, due to closings, cancellations, and postponements of exhibitions, and a sharp drop in admissions. While the Annual Conference scheduled for 2020 in Poland was postponed until the following year, the CIMAM Board of Directors launched a new Rapid Response Webinars series, providing members with a forum to discuss pressing issues, including Covid-19 responses, on an almost monthly basis. The pandemic provided an opportunity for CIMAM to communicate more frequently with its members, and as a result, membership grew despite the cancellation of the Annual Conference.

The Annual Conference held in Poland in November 2021 was CIMAM's first hybrid event, allowing us to experiment with new ways of working as an international organization connecting modern and contemporary art museums around the world, even under severe travel restrictions in many countries. The topic discussed here was "Under Pressure: Museums in Times of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency." The Conference was held in Lodz and Gdańsk, the site of the founding of Solidarity, which was the catalyst for the democratization of Poland, reaffirming the importance of sites for the freedom of expression. The military invasion of

Ukraine by Russia a few months later, however, suggested that CIMAM's path would not be simple in the face of future political tensions in the international community. Meanwhile, in July 2021, prior to the Annual Conference of that year, the Working Group for Sustainability and Ecology in Museums chaired by Frances Morris released a "Toolkit on Environmental Sustainability in Museum Practice." Addressing one of the world's most pressing issues, the climate crisis, continues to be a major focus of CIMAM.

Founded 60 years ago, CIMAM has gradually expanded its organization globally, and expects to have more than 700 members from 74 countries during the three-year period from 2020 to 2022. The CIMAM Annual Conference has also been a large event with more than 200 participants since 2014. In order to manage all of these, the Secretariat in Barcelona is managed by an Executive Director, a Membership Officer, and a Public Relations Officer, and the 15 Board of Directors for the period 2020–22 have been involved in several Working Groups and projects to resolve various issues.[22] The Board meetings, which used to be held several times a year, have been conducted online more frequently.

While CIMAM has grown into a truly global network connecting professionals involved in modern and contemporary art museums around the world, it has not been easy to find a common ground for these institutions against a backdrop of unique regional cultures, histories, and museum governance models. Even so, it will be necessary to share the essence of modern and contemporary art museums while continuing to question their social significance, responsibilities, and obligations in their respective contexts, so that the understanding and respect for diverse cultures that CIMAM has worked to expand over the past 60 years will never be undone.

Mami Kataoka, President

Mami Kataoka joined the Mori Art Museum in 2003, taking on the role of Director in 2020. She also served as Co-Artistic Director for the 9th Gwangju Biennale (2012), Artistic Director for the 21st Biennale of Sydney (2018), and the Aichi Triennale 2022.

22 https://cimam.org/general-information/projects-and-working-groups/



1972 Warsaw, Lodz and Kraków, Poland — *The Museum of Modern Art and the Artist.* From left to right: Norman Pegden and Danièle Giraudy.



1972 Warsaw, Lodz and Kraków, Poland — *The Museum of Modern Art and the artist.*



1977 Moscow and Leningrad, former Soviet Union — *Museums and Cultural Exchange.* (Courtesy Flor and Lieve Bex)



1977 Moscow and Leningrad, former Soviet Union — *Museums and Cultural Exchange.* (Courtesy Flor and Lieve Bex)



1977 Moscow and Leningrad, former Soviet Union — *Museums and Cultural Exchange*. Conference banner.



1979 Paris, France — *Towards an Architecture for Modern Art Museums.*



1987 Dubrovnik, former Yugoslavia — *Being Between.* (Courtesy Flor and Lieve Bex)

1987 Dubrovnik, former Yugoslavia — *Being Between.* On the left: Želimir Koščević, seated: Pontus Hultén, on the right: Ad Petersen. (Courtesy Flor and Lieve Bex)





1990 Los Angeles, U.S.A. — *Perspectives on the State of Culture at the end of the 20th Century; Realities of the California Scene; Enlightened Sponsorship; Present Day Developments*. Jan Hoet entertains people on the bus. (Courtesy Flor and Lieve Bex)



1990 Los Angeles, U.S.A. — *Perspectives on the State of Culture at the end of the 20th Century; Realities of the California Scene; Enlightened Sponsorship; Present Day Developments*. Exhibition with Jean-Michel Basquiat and Keith Haring. (Courtesy Flor and Lieve Bex)



1991 Havana, Cuba — *First meeting on research about Art of the Third World.* In the middle: Maria de Corral, on the left: Olle Granath. (Courtesy Flor and Lieve Bex)



1991 Havana, Cuba — *First meeting on research about Art of the Third World*. (Courtesy Flor and Lieve Bex)



1991 Havana, Cuba — *First meeting on research about Art of the Third World*. From left to right: Rudi Fuchs, Olle Granath and Margit Rowell. (Courtesy Flor and Lieve Bex)



1991 Havana, Cuba — *First meeting on research about Art of the Third World*. (Courtesy Flor and Lieve Bex)



1994 Tokyo, Japan. *The Museum of the 21st Century — New Possibilities and Prospects.* Nam June Paik and Yayoi Kusama. (Courtesy Toshio Hara)





1994 Tokyo, Japan. *The Museum of the 21st Century — New Possibilities and Prospects.* Toshio Hara with Mrs. Schulhof. (Courtesy Toshio Hara)

SUZANNE PAGÉ TALKS TO SASKİA BOS

As Artistic Director at the Fondation Louis Vuitton, Susanne Pagé is happy to say she is "Still very positively active—with the same passion and full commitment—and stimulated by forthcoming major projects and shows, in this inspiring building conceived by Frank Gehry."

After a major retrospective devoted to Cindy Sherman, she and her team are preparing various shows from young emergent international artists to more classical retrospectives by Joan Mitchell, Rothko, and others coming up through 2023.

Saskia Bos: Would you mind reminiscing about your early days at CİMAM, to which you belonged for more than twenty years?

Suzanne Pagé: "*J'étais très gamine*, İ was just a young girl, and had done all kinds of studies, at La Sorbonne, the Ecole des Hautes Etudes, and Ecole du Louvre. Just after the competition İ got to know about Pierre Gaudibert's project, and İ had an immediate desire to work for him at the 'ARC'." *(Gaudibert had just started the Art Recherche Communication-center on the top floors of the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. S.B.)*

"İ had already done a lot of research in the ICOM archives when CİMAM came to my attention in 1969. İ think it was in Brussels, where the conference was taking place and Thom Messer, a very caring and diplomatic person, was President. İt was in 1977 that İ was asked to become Secretary to the Board of CİMAM. İ also became Treasurer and served the Board through 1995.

When Pontus Hultén—who was Director of the Centre Georges Pompidou—came in as President of CİMAM, he asked me to be his Secretary. My English was almost non-existent at the time, but İ knew CİMAM was where İ wanted to be, in the midst of international exchanges, and moreover: CİMAM has that fundamental role where you meet the key characters, very strong, different, and close to the artists.

The exchanges we had during the conferences opened up new ventures with people like Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum Director Edy De Wilde, Knud Jensen from Humlebaek in Denmark, or Ryszard Stanislawski from Lodz, or Richard Oldenburg from

New York. These people helped us to discover other parts of the world, and another way of 'thinking the world,' it was a very explosive moment for the Arts—and very experimental, which was important to share with others. This was the role of the CİMAM meetings. İt was all about the discussions we had, and although İ could not travel everywhere—curators were very badly paid at the time—we reflected on how we positioned ourselves."

💬 *Was that very different from more recent times, in your recollection?*

"Our colleagues were all recognized art historians, all of them were great adventurers of the spirit, willing to discover other worlds. Most people of this small group were very committed and had a sensitive relationship to art. Pontus, like Rudi Fuchs later on, had a direct contact with the works, a way to approach the works emotionally, able to relate to them. Fuchs was a breath of fresh air also. He had a very important role in CİMAM.

What İ remember most besides the many exciting conversations is the intellectual critique they shared about what was going on, in the artworld and the world at large, and the fact that CİMAM was 'above the fray' (*my translation of prendre de la hauteur. S.B.*)

CİMAM had a determining influence, first it was a great help for me to collaborate with colleagues with whom İ was intellectually, psychologically, and ethically 'complicit,' İ mean we had intellectual and even ethical conscience issues. İ did ask the question (to which İ came back later, at the opening of our Fondation Louis Vuitton): who writes the art history nowadays: museums, auctions, galleries? That is to say: curators, art critics or gallery owners?

What has changed considerably is the intrusion of money in art and CİMAM has greatly helped thinking about it with realism, but without compromise. İ think nowadays there is some confusion about that, but 'arrangements' are not to be tolerated. CİMAM needs to be 'above the fray,' give direction, and at the same time make everyone see the larger context."

💬 *Did you think CİMAM was a bit of a boys' club in the early days?*

"İ did not mind, it gave me opportunities. But once İ started directing a museum myself, İ had to work three times harder than the guys!"

💬 *Wasn't it also very much a "Western affair"?*

"Yes, the conception of art conveyed was still terribly Western."

İ confront her with a theme of the 1986 conference in Buenos Aires, titled "Museums and the Future of our Heritage." What was that about? But Pagé did not make it to Argentina, apparently. She acknowledges museum directors did not represent "the world of nations," so to speak. But a "sea change" comes to mind during our conversation, when in 1998 Okwui Enwezor was selected to become the curator for documenta 11 by a jury both she and İ were members of.

Pagé: "That was a sea change, yes, you could not have imagined such a choice ten or twenty years earlier."

💬 *Do you think CİMAM is well on its way towards its 60th anniversary in 2022?*

"Donner le cap, montrer que le Nord est là! Provide a sense of direction!" And she adds: "Think big! On all levels, that is what's exciting!" Seeing her exhibition and collection program, she clearly welcomes the many directions the wind can take her, but obviously, she does want to provide compass points.

Q AND A WİTH OLLE GRANATH BY EUGENE TAN

Eugene Tan: As Chair of the CİMAM Board from 1987–90, what were the most pressing issues CİMAM was looking to address?

Were there lessons from the Moderna Museet that guided your direction of the CİMAM Board?

İn your time, how did CİMAM make an impact on the international art ecosystem? What would you have changed about your time as its Chair?

What are some issues you see in the artworld today that CİMAM could lend its voice to now?

How do you think CİMAM's role has changed? Do you see its role changing in the future?

Olle Granath: During my first years as Chairman, we had a peculiar problem: İn ICOM's general assembly in Buenos Aires in 1987 there was a change in the bylaws making it possible for any member to apply for membership in any of the specialist committees. We struggled with this for a long time to get around it without being in open conflict with the General Assembly. CİMAM's interpretation of this decision was pure envy since our members, wherever we came on our meetings, were invited to see private collections during hospitable conditions. This was OK as long as there were 30–40 of us. When 300 wanted to enjoy the same privilege it became complicated for obvious reasons. We spent too much time and energy sorting this out. İ suppose and hope that this, today, is a nonexistent problem.

For the rest, our own meetings were a pleasure with the closeness to colleagues, the possibility to discuss exchange of exhibitions, obtain important loans, and so forth. İ am not sure to what extent we had an impact on "the international art ecosystem." İ do remember occasions when people from Hasenkamp and other transport agents did participate in our discussions. İn those days,

these companies expanded in a way, especially concerning tariffs, that could be felt as a threat to our profession. We could at least give air to our worries.

İt is a pleasure for me to realize that CİMAM today has a much broader global perspective, of course, important when we talk about impact, political and practical.

İt seems to me that the modern and contemporary art scene is under strong pressure from political, administrative, and, perhaps most important, financial pressure in a game where artists, museum directors, and curators need all possible support. There is no limit to how important a player as CİMAM could be in this game.

Q AND A WİTH MARGİT ROWELL BY EUGENE TAN

Eugene Tan: İn your time as Chair of CİMAM from 1989–92, you held various exhibitions and/or curatorial positions in the Fundació Joan Miro, Barcelona, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, and The Museum of Modern Art, New York. How did your experiences in these museums shape your role in and contributions to CİMAM?

Margit Rowell: İ became a member of CİMAM in 1975, a member of the Board in 1977, and Chair of the Board between 1989 and 1992. Looking back on that period, when İ was a young curator at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York, İ can say, with no reservations, that CİMAM was a determining factor in who İ became as a museum professional. CİMAM shaped my work as a curator and exhibition organizer more than the other way around. İt gave me an international and cosmopolitan relation to the world, opened my mind to new ideas and approaches concerning the profession, and familiarized me with institutions, colleagues, and cultural and social conditions in other parts of the world. İt provided access to vast resources (to collections and artworks that otherwise İ would not have known) for the conception and production of my

exhibitions. And with the broad professional network it provided, everything seemed possible!

💬 *What did you identify as the most pressing issues in the art world during your time as Chair of CİMAM? What do you think they are now?*

İ cannot say what were the most pressing issues at that time. However, the museum's definition and its responsibility to society were already on the table, formulated as: should the museum be a forum or a temple, open to the world and to all opinions, or else a special place for conserving unique works of art. İn the 1970s, there were artist strikes in New York, but, unlike the situation today, the artists concluded (naively or realistically?) that museums were necessary to society and in particular to their own growth, governing boards were necessary to financially keeping the institutions open, and museum professionals were necessary to do the job. Obviously, today, how to invent a balance between the democratization of the museum and the safeguarding of a cultural patrimony is one of the most crucial issues facing museums. Others, related, include introducing more collection and audience diversity. And finally, finding imaginative and sustainable solutions for addressing the climate crisis.

💬 *What was your experience of international collaborations?*

İn the 1980s and 1990s, international collaboration and exchange were part of the normal operating process. CİMAM was important because the international and collegial network it provided meant that you knew personally or indirectly the director, the curator, and the institution you were lending to, which facilitated negotiating loans. İ would like to hope that the same pertains today, even though the art world, the number of museums worldwide, and CİMAM's membership are infinitely larger than they were then.

💬 *İn what ways has CİMAM's role in the art ecosystem changed from your time as Chair?*

CİMAM's role in the art ecosystem has changed immensely over the past thirty years. İt is much more international, including members from South America, the Middle East, Asia, and Africa who provide insights into museum issues and problems all over the world. This geographical diversity reflects the changing political and cultural landscape; culture is no longer defined according to a Eurocentric vision, nor even a predominantly North American one. İt should also be mentioned that there are a lot more women's voices in CİMAM than there were in my time, due to the fact that more women are running museums these days. CİMAM has a permanent office and address, a site, a newsletter, such as we, as a cottage industry in the late twentieth century, could not manage. İt has a political watch capability that is infinitely important. All of these things contribute to the fact that CİMAM is taken more seriously and its voice is better heard.

💬 *As it commemorates its 60-year history, do you have a vision for CİMAM 60 years in the future?*

CİMAM will continue to change as the different balances of power—politically, and in society—and their priorities change. İt will change in its practices and operations because museum mentalities and objectives are going to change. A museum is a mirror of its society and CİMAM's fate is irremediably linked to the future of modern and contemporary museums. Nonetheless, İ would like to hope that the ideal of the museum—to support artists and art, to create a place for stimulation and contemplation, for questioning, understanding, and pleasure, removed from the routines of our daily existence—and the original ideal of CİMAM—as a place for dialogue and exchange, collegiality and solidarity—as CİMAM grows globally, will not be lost.

AGUSTİN PÉREZ RUBİO TALKS TO MARİA DE CORRAL

Agustin Pérez Rubio: Dear Maria, you have been one of the most important women in the art world, both in Spain and internationally. Together with Rosa Martinez, you were the first woman to curate a Venice Biennale, yet not everyone knows the importance of your long-standing relationship with CİMAM. How did you discover CİMAM, and why did you decide to join it as an individual member in 1986? What history and importance did it have that made you want to be part of it from Spain?

Maria de Corral: At the beginning of the eighties there were two international institutions that brought together the curators of exhibitions and curators of museums. The İKT made up of people and institutions that organized exhibitions and artistic activities but did not have a collection. The other organization was ICOM/CİMAM, which included museums and institutions with collections and whose members could be either institutional or individual.

İn 1983 İ was appointed a member of İKT for my work at the Fundación "la Caixa" and in 1986 İ was invited by the CİMAM Board to attend a meeting in Buenos Aires. At that meeting, İ was proposed as an individual member and was accepted.

My membership of CİMAM was important for me and also for the Fundación "la Caixa", which, under my direction, a year before had started its Collection, with important acquisitions. İn addition, it continued its program of exhibitions in Madrid and Barcelona and İ thus participated in its annual meetings dedicated mostly to the role of museums and the life of their art collections.

At the 1989 meeting in The Hague, Margit Rowell was elected President and İ was elected Secretary-Treasurer.

Your career was closely linked to CİMAM since you were on the Board as Secretary-Treasurer while you were Director of the Museo Nacional Reina Sofia. What do you remember from this 1990–92 triennium?

The triennium 1990–92 was complicated and hard from a bureaucratic and organizational point of view, but our three Congresses were enormously interesting at an intellectual level and in terms of the communication with the cities and countries where they were held.

Thanks to Margit's enormous efforts, we succeeded in making CİMAM independent from ICOM in terms of the selection of its membership and the administration of its finances. A very important achievement for the future of the organization.

The first meeting of the triennium in 1990 took place in Los Angeles under the title: "Perspectives on the State of Culture at the End of the 20th Century, Realities of the California Scene." Thanks to Lyn Kienholz, we got to know in-depth the museums, cultural institutions, architecture, private collectors and their collections, as well as numerous artists. One of my best memories was an emotional, poetic, and intelligent talk by Bill Viola about the reasons that led him to live in Los Angeles.

İn 1991, the Annual Meeting was held in Havana under the title: "First Research Meeting on Third World Art." The Centro Wifredo Lam, which welcomed us on the island, had been researching art in Latin America and Africa for many years, and this opened up new perspectives for the attendees. We also toured part of Cuba and had some very interesting meetings with artists at the Faculty of Fine Arts that allowed us to know first-hand the real situation of the country.

İn 1992 the ICOM/CİMAM General Meeting took place between Montreal and Quebec and subsequently traveled to Toronto and Vancouver. Under the title: "Defining the Territory of Art and of the Modern Art Museum."

Thanks to our hosts, we enjoyed their museums and cultural institutions, visiting magnificent exhibitions. Elections were held at this General Meeting and İ was appointed Vice-President.

💬 *You were appointed Vice-President in 1992. What were the challenges facing CİMAM at that time? What were its policies and actions, in addition to the important topics discussed in the different congresses? İ would like you to explain to us the*

different decision-making and perspectives that were adopted from '92 until your reelection in '99.

As of 1993, once the autonomy of CİMAM in relation to ICOM had been achieved, the most important mission of the Board, apart from the Annual Meetings, was to regain the participation of the North American museums and curators, fundamental during almost three decades, but which had gradually abandoned their commitment to CİMAM. İt was also very important and necessary to increase the number of members in the organization.

All annual meetings are of great interest as the topics are selected very carefully and always respond to the needs of museums and the needs of society with regard to museums. İt is difficult to make a selection, but İ will mention the most important ones: Tokyo in 1994, with the theme "The Museum of the 21st Century—New Possibilities and Prospects," where a concerted participation in lectures and attendees' discussions made us reflect on the current situation and the actions to be developed in the future. Our hosts went out of their way to make us understand and enjoy a country as fascinating as Japan.

İn 1996 Houston hosted the General Conference, with complex topics to debate: "Museums on the İnternet, Regionalism/Racism: Geography, Ethnicity, and the Museum Agenda." Besides the interest of the meetings, the organization allowed us to visit and enjoy museums such as The Menil Foundation, the Rothko Chapel, the Twombly Museum, and various private collections.

1997 was the year of Barcelona, whose widely developed theme of "Shifting Visions" was recorded in a publication, sponsored by the Fundación "la Caixa".

💬 *Finally, coming closer to the present, what has been your relationship with CİMAM in the 2000s, and what do you think should be the approach, the guide, the challenge for CİMAM in the 2020s, where we are now, but looking forward?*

Budapest, in 2000, was the first contact with Eastern Europe, where many of us had not been since the fall of the Berlin Wall,

with its changes and its cultural situation, highlighting the necessity of museums for the survival of contemporary art.

İn 2001, Barcelona again hosted the CİMAM Annual Conference sponsored by all its artistic institutions. Under the theme "The Role of the Museum & How it is Affected by Changes in the 21st Century," it had three working sessions. The first was attended by representatives of major museums: Kasper König (Ludwig Museum), Glenn Lowry (MoMA), Alfred Pacquement (Centre Pompidou), and Nick Serota (Tate Gallery). The second session featured small museums and alternative spaces: Dan Cameron (New Museum), Bartomeu Marí (Witte de With), İwona Blazwick (Whitechapel), and Katerina Gregos (Deste Foundation). İn the third session, chaired by Ute Meta Bauer, the artists Lisa Roberts, Santiago Sierra, Coco Fusco, and Marcelo Expósito held to question the structure of museums and artistic institutions, totally contradicting the conclusions of the participants in the two previous sessions.

At that meeting, the President announced that five members of the Board, including myself, had decided not to run for re-election. The Board made the decision to appoint Margit Rowell and me Honorary Members.

Since 2002, my relationship with CİMAM has been less active, due to my work and continuous traveling. İ have continued to attend General Meetings such as Berlin 2002, San Francisco 2003, Seoul 2004, São Paulo 2005, New York 2008, Shanghai 2010, Doha 2014, and Barcelona 2016.

İ am still convinced that the role of CİMAM is fundamental at this time of changes, questioning, and decision-making on the role of museums in the social context of their communities. The topics that are dealt with in each of the Annual Meetings always face the need to exchange opinions, and to learn about the conflicts and the solutions that can be offered regarding what museums want to be and about the actions that are consistent with their identity.

EXCERPTS FROM A CONVERSATİON BETWEEN RUDİ FUCHS AND SASKİA BOS

Rudi Fuchs: When İ had just started in Eindhoven as director of the van Abbemuseum, in 1975, İ understood you had to be member of CİMAM and it was Knud Jensen, the founding director of the Louisiana Museum in Denmark who asked me to join. He was a friend of Willem Sandberg, and of Pontus Hultén.

Only directors were members then, and some chief curators. A bit of a boys' club, certainly, but there had been Renilde Hammacher of the Boijmans museum in Rotterdam, and also Suzanne Pagé from the ARC in Paris was very active.

We were mainly Europeans, although there were Thom Messer of the Guggenheim in New York whom İ got to know, and Richard Oldenburg from MoMA, Claes' brother. İt was a time when all main art developments came out of the U.S., Pop art, Minimal art—and the dollar stood high. İ had never been to the U.S. by then. Nor had my colleague and friend Johannes Cladders of Mönchengladbach. So, the directors of museums of modern and contemporary art set the course, and that's also how they acted. There were no really big galleries here in Europe yet.

On the CİMAM Board there were also sponsors, because CİMAM had no money. Mr. and Mrs. Schulhof from the U.S., friends of Thom Messer, and later Panza di Biumo from İtaly, Anton and Annick Herbert from Belgium, Toshio Hara from Tokyo.

You ask if that was a problem? because of the advantages of foreknowledge? Not at all, some of them even helped pay for our hotel stays! Foreknowledge of where we thought art was going was the whole idea, and we shared that, at the time we were 15 to 20 people traveling. The idea was to get to know one another and see art from places you would not normally see, meet artists, visit studios sometimes. Or we would see the storage rooms. That's how in Denmark İ found Per Kirkeby's work, in the cellars, in 1977. And later on, İ showed his work in documenta.

The same thing happened many years later when İ was president of CİMAM and we went to the newly built Museum of Contemporary Art in Tokyo. İt was about to open, still empty, but they had the flyer

ready: it showed a work by Roy Lichtenstein as a great acquisition. But in the storage, İ saw work of Shiraga, a member of the Gutai group, and asked why they hadn't put that on the cover. So, İ gave an interview in a Japanese newspaper saying Americans are "jumping the queue" so to speak. And that gave some uproar and we made the Tokyo declaration—maybe you can still find it somewhere. İt meant the world was bigger now, and that Japan had its own contemporary art. And the Americans had somewhat "colonized" the art around the world. That was also what my documenta in 1982 was about.

Another example of that was in Canberra. When we were making a trip from Sydney to Melbourne in 1998, we stopped to see *Blue Poles* by Pollock, a piece that had been bought for a million dollars by the Australian Government in the early sixties. But nobody wanted to see the collection of local art. They did show some Aboriginal works, but no one paid attention to the national, the local. That's how İ discovered Sidney Nolan, his piece about the local hero Ned Kelly. No one else cared to give it a glance.
The conferences were all about seeing work and meeting people, İ was not so interested in themes for our conferences. But now that you mention it, yes, in Oslo we had a loose topic that must have come from me, indeed, "Dialects in Contemporary art." İ had been making shows about art like "From the North," where we wanted to show affinities between Munch, Jorn, and Kirkeby. İn some way it's always about "dialect."

So, within CİMAM it was important to share information, and about trust within a relatively small group. We would also inquire about each other's technical knowledge, like "what type of crates do you use?" We didn't discuss any governance issues yet. The U.S. would come with those kinds of ideas soon enough!

İ wonder if having 400 or 500 members at a CİMAM conference works in the same way, although İ understand the need for widening it globally and of opening up. We tried to do that in some way as well, by going to Havana, to Tokyo. But also to Dubrovnik!

Remember that in the early years, modern art was still emerging. İn the seventies, we wanted to *know*! We were eager to see a lot of unknown art and to travel to where it had originated.

TOSHİO HARA ANSWERS QUESTİONS BY MAMİ KATAOKA

Mami Kataoka: Do you remember when you first joined CİMAM? What was the motivation for joining?

Toshio Hara: İn the 1970s, İ felt uncomfortable with the fact that Japan was being introduced overseas with a bias towards antiques and traditional performing arts, and decided that a base was needed to promote international exchange through today's art. So, İ opened the Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, which specialized in contemporary art, a rarity in Japan at the time.

İ don't remember exactly how İ found out about CİMAM, but İ do remember when İ was planning my own museum, İ visited and interacted with many people involved in museums, including Knud Jansen, the founder of the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, as well as many artists. İn the process, İ became involved with CİMAM. At that time, İ participated in the activities of CİMAM as much as possible, which gave me a good opportunity to learn about international trends and to build relationships.

What was the major topic of discussion and concern within CİMAM when you brought CİMAM to Japan in 1994?

The task of introducing modern and contemporary Japanese art was one of the major topics of the CİMAM Annual Meeting. However, since it was the first meeting to be held in Asia, for the opening session we invited experts from Korea, Thailand, Taipei, and China (a Chinese critic based in France) who gave keynote speeches and took part in a panel discussion on the state of the art industry in East Asia as a whole.

Working sessions 1 and 2 on the topics of "Collecting the World and Collecting the West," respectively, were opened to the general art community, while an open symposium on the topic of "The Museum of the 21st Century: New Possibilities and Prospects" and open lectures on the topic of "New Visions for the Museum" attracted large audiences. The meeting concluded with the "Tokyo

Resolution," whose message İ believe remains relevant today. We, of course, also provided an opportunity for members to experience examples of Japan's historical culture such as the Kyoto İmperial Palace, which was greatly appreciated by the overseas participants.

What do you think has changed since that time within the museum of modern and contemporary art around the globe, and what remains the same?

As İ remember it, İ served as a Board Member longer than the term set by CİMAM, based on the idea that "there should be members selected from Asia." At that time, every year it seems participation and discussion were dominated by members based in Europe and America, and so CİMAM was inevitably a Western-centered organization. İn addition, the Association of Art Museum Directors in the U.S. at the time was derided as a "men's club," and while there were active female curators, the majority of the directorships were held by men. İ believe this characterized the situation of modern and contemporary art museums at the time. Your appointment, Mami, as President of CİMAM was an event that spoke eloquently of the changing situation, and İ was deeply moved by it. Although İ haven't attended any of the meetings recently, İ assume members from museums around the world with their different objectives and management styles have been gathering and engaged in discussions. İn the past, discussions often involved issues of museums of different sizes and backgrounds, and so there were many discussions that did not mesh well. İ suppose that will never change, and so İ think it is important to recognize and respect that diversity.

How do you think the museum of modern and contemporary would have to change for a sustainable future?

Does the museum have to change? There are many unique museums, all with their own unique purposes. İ believe it is also important for museums to stay true to their roots.

ENCOUNTERS WİTH CİMAM BY DAVİD ELLİOTT

İ was invited to become a member of CİMAM in 1983 when its annual conference in London coincided with the ICOM Plenary. Joanna Drew, Head of the Hayward Gallery, was organizing the sessions and wanted to extend the discussion beyond the conventional Western clique of artists, museums, and curators. As the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford, where İ was the director, had already started to do this in its exhibition program, Joanna asked me to organize three talks to occupy a morning. The artist K.G. Subramanyan, writer and critic, Geeta Kapur, and Ablade Glover, painter and founder of the Artists' Alliance Gallery in Accra, all accepted our invitation. As a CİMAM novice, İ was impressed by the enthusiasm and respect shown by the audience for the fascinating presentations these speakers gave.

Members of CİMAM reflected a wide range of the Western artworld: "stars," such as the Swede Pontus Hultén, first director of the Centre Georges Pompidou, as well as younger curators such as İrina Subotić, at the Museum of Modern Art in Belgrade; many of these have become life-long friends. At this time in the UK, contemporary art had not yet become fashionable, and working with it one could feel quite isolated; being part of an international network of CİMAM colleagues, many from less inhibited contexts and places, created excitement for new knowledge and sense of solidarity that, at times, kept me going.

But limited funding and pressure of time meant that İ had difficulty in attending the conferences, so İ was surprised, in Spring 1989, to receive a phone call from a CİMAM Board Meeting asking me if İ would agree to join the Board. İ was happy and flattered to do so, but the practical limitations of finance and time continued, and İ was not able to attend all the meetings. A feeling had then also developed that CİMAM had become an exclusive and self-serving "museum directors' club," not really interested in building up its membership; although my involvement was peripheral, İ felt partly responsible for this and was seriously considering resignation.

İn winter 1996, after İ had moved from Oxford to Moderna Museet in Stockholm, my thoughts focused on CİMAM. Matters came

to a head at the Barcelona Board meeting in 1997. The agenda was inscrutable, and members felt in the dark about what direction we were taking on nearly every issue. The plenary, with ICOM, and related elections would take place in Australia the next year, but there was no clear plan for the future. When we met again in Sydney, the situation was the same; no nominations had been requested, or made, for the presidential election.

This lack of transparency led to major friction and, after discussing this with other members, İ made it clear at our first meeting that İ would stand for election alongside whoever else was nominated. Privately, this met with some amusing abuse, as well as with encouragement, and, when the next day dawned and the full CİMAM meeting took place, only my name appeared on the election list. My Nordic colleague Tuula Arkio, Director of Kiasma in Helsinki, agreed to be nominated as Treasurer and she was duly voted in. We worked together for six years as a strong team, slowly building back the reputation of the organization as well as strengthening its policies and finances.

Part of the problem was that the Board had no secretariat, nor a budget to support one, so the administrative work fell on the President and Treasurer, and this was a significant reason why CİMAM's communication, both within its Board and to its membership, had broken down. İ decided that İ would act as both President and Secretary: drawing up agendas on the instruction of the Board, taking minutes, and circulating them for approval or comment in good time before each meeting. The creation of this paper trail was a vital first step in focusing discussion, formulating policy, and keeping people informed; two Board meetings took place each year to plan the annual conferences and deal with other business.

The first imperative was to grow and broaden the membership beyond the "developed" West, as well as to ensure that the Board itself reflected these changes. The İron Curtain had recently fallen, completely redrawing the map of Europe, and proactive contact was also initiated with colleagues further afield—in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. To facilitate this, the idea of "co-opted Members" strategically bypassed subscription fees (if necessary), and also allowed the participation of growing numbers of independent

curators, as well as those working in independent public museums, whom the rules had previously excluded. The idea of "supporting members" formalized the role of existing benefactors to help fund particular programs, as well as encourage others to support CİMAM in the future; as a result, the first Travel Grants Scheme was put into action. Having brought new professionals to the conferences, we implemented sessions at which they shared with us the stories of their work, contexts, and particular pet projects, but there was also much valuable information and friendship, exchanged outside the formal meetings.

İn a small way, CİMAM also began to flex its institutional muscles to help colleagues in difficult political or cultural circumstances, an important function that it fulfills much more widely and efficiently today. Lastly, after a period of frosty relations with ICOM, CİMAM's "parent" organization, İ restarted a dialogue that, long after my presidency, led to an amicable resolution, but, even before this time, CİMAM's official archive was deposited alongside that of ICOM in Paris.

At the Plenary in Seoul in 2004, it was with happiness and relief that İ relinquished the presidency, confident that the organization was on the right lines and that it was safe in the capable hands of Alfred Pacquement, the new President. Tuula Arkio and İ—with the Board and its supporters—had done as much as we could, but CİMAM still really needed a Secretary.

Q AND A WİTH TUULA ARKİO BY EUGENE TAN

Eugene Tan: Why did you join the CİMAM Board?

Tuula Arkio: İ was elected as the Secretary-Treasurer at our 1998 meeting in Australia when David Elliott took over as chair.

İ joined CİMAM in the late 1970s as a young museum professional. Being accepted as a member came to mean a great deal to my future career. Back then, the international museum field was quite narrow, and the members were mostly European museum professionals.

There were a few museum directors from the U.S.A., including Thomas Messer, who was one of the founders. Over the years, as CİMAM grew, İ forged ties with a steadily expanding circle of my international colleagues. This networking in the margins, outside the centers of the artworld, so to speak, turned out to be extremely important to me.

İn 1998 İ was honored to join the Board of an organization İ saw as playing a professionally significant role. As a Board member, İ was able to harness the knowledge İ had accrued about museums and the artworld, both the positive and less exemplary practices İ had witnessed in my career up to that point. By then, İ had been a member for many years, and İ had watched CİMAM evolve, though İ also recognized that we still had a long way to go. With David based in Stockholm and me in Helsinki, we were able to meet regularly (back then, in-person meetings were the norm!).

💬 *As Secretary-Treasurer of the CİMAM Board from 1998 to 2004, what were some of the major topics of discussion and concern during your time. Did you note a shift in the Board's priorities through the turn of the millennium?*

To begin with, İ was responsible for practical affairs such as organizing CİMAM's finances and accounting, as well as setting up a member register. From my predecessor İ inherited a couple of cardboard boxes full of disorganized folders. Luckily, the Board allowed me to hire an hourly-paid assistant, otherwise İ would never have pulled off the feat on my own. Slowly but surely, we got everything organized. These days İ cannot help but admire (with a smidgen of envy, İ confess,) the efficiency of CİMAM's Barcelona-based office and its Executive Team.

Expanding the member base was an important step. There were many contemporary art curators who practiced their profession without official museum tenure, so we decided to begin accepting freelancers as members. We also added meetings with local artists to the official visit program arranged in conjunction with our annual meetings in different countries. During those years we were involved in lengthy, energy-consuming discussions with ICOM concerning CİMAM's role in the parent organization. Luckily,

a satisfactory compromise was found later.

One of the core issues on our agenda was the overall advancement of museum practices. Here we benefited from the opportunity to exchange information and learn about each other's approaches. Constant renewal is vital, and CİMAM's current Outstanding Museum Practices offers an excellent tool for keeping our work relevant.

Some of the broader themes that became topical around the turn of the millennium were the increasing visibility of commercial operators, the changing relationship between galleries and museums, and the emergence of private, often profit-oriented museums formed from private collections. We had to ponder our policy on these commercial operators and where to draw the line between profit-oriented establishments and members that complied with ICOM's ethical codes.

💬 *How did your role as Director of Helsinki's Kiasma and the State Art Museum (now the Finnish National Gallery) guide your decisions on the Board of CİMAM?*

Kiasma opened in 1998, the year İ was elected as Secretary-Treasurer. The museum's strategy was born many years earlier thanks to my having had the opportunity to gain extensive insights into the international museum field. As a member of CİMAM, İ had gained first-hand experience of the benefits of international networking, and my extensive travels and visits to museums abroad had spurred me to think about the role of contemporary art museums, especially after the 1990 founding of Helsinki's contemporary art museum and the later construction of Kiasma. By then İ had learned a lot and seen some exemplary museum work, but also some less exemplary practices that spurred my critical thinking. Above all, during those years İ learned to appreciate the importance of daring to be critical and impartial, and trusting my own judgement.

When İ was placed in charge of the museum, İ already had a clear vision of the function of art museums—specifically contemporary art museums—and their role in society. The key themes

underlying my thinking and actions both in CİMAM and as the Director of Kiasma and later of the Finnish National Gallery were the importance of embracing an international outlook and fighting for the status of museums, especially championing art's freedom and its important social mandate.

💬 *With the composition of the CİMAM Board evolving every three years, what were some issues that benefitted from the change in perspectives?*

İ cannot recall when the current bylaws on the Board were introduced, but in my day, they were the same as they are today. İn any case, we all agreed that it would be important to regularly refresh the Board composition of an international organization such as CİMAM, but without replacing the entire Board all at once. İt is important to include diverse people from many countries and continents so that they can contribute their views and experiences and represent their respective cultural legacies.

💬 *How do you think CİMAM's role in the art ecosystem has changed, and what do you think it will be in the future?*

Over the past few years, CİMAM has been confronted with new, global, and ever more urgent challenges in our precarious, chaotic reality in which climate change threatens the very fundaments of our civilization.

CİMAM already has two important tools for dealing with these challenges. The Sustainability and Ecology in Museum Practice and the Museum Watch programs are critical with an eye to the future. Museums must find solutions to various issues, such as how to continue collaborating, how to deal with the problem of travel, how to find new approaches to the assembly and execution of exhibitions, and what role should be played by artists in all this. Museums must find ways to keep their doors open and ensure that the public can continue enjoying exhibitions. As everyone knows, online content and digital museums are no substitute for face-to-face encounters with real works of art.

İ predict that the Museum Watch program will come to play a more critical role in the future. Museums do not exist in isolation from society and the ethos of the day. For this reason alone, the work CİMAM is doing is vital for art's survival and freedom, as well as for preserving our shared cultural heritage. İ would like to hear more artists raise their voices around this topic.

Over the decades, CİMAM has evolved from being an elite "club" with a self-appointed, male-dominated Board—as which it was when İ joined—into what is today a respected, democratic, global organization. İts members are professionals with the knowledge and skill to safeguard the future of museums and take responsibility for the evolution of our art ecosystem.

İ believe that CİMAM can offer solutions to new challenges awaiting us in the future. You are on the right path—keep at it!

PATRİCİA PHELPS DE CİSNEROS TALKS TO VİCTORİA NOORTHOORN

Victoria Noorthoorn: How did you first get involved with CİMAM and what were your dreams and ideals at the moment?

Patricia Phelps de Cisneros: İ had known about and admired CİMAM for many years, but İ got formally involved in 2005 when we created a partnership between the Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros (CPPC) and CİMAM to give a series of travel grants so that curators and museum professionals from Latin America could attend the annual conferences. Unfortunately, many really important museums in Latin America don't always have the discretional funding to be able to travel and attend these types of networking events, so we felt that would be an important way to build professional and personal bridges between Latin America and the rest of the world. We gave special preference to institutions in Central America and the Caribbean, as these are areas with tremendous artistic importance that are often overlooked.

💬 *Which are the most outstanding achievements of museums during the twenty-first century so far and why?*

Museums around the world are now asking themselves how responsive their collections and programs are to the communities they serve. For many years museums were dominated by a Eurocentric discourse that made it harder to see cultural production from regions like Latin America. Fortunately, today the story is very different, and, at least as far as Latin America is concerned, it is now fully integrated into the canon of modern and contemporary art history.

💬 *Which are the changes in museum practices that you would still like to see accomplished in the near future, both globally and specifically in Latin America?*

İ am always worried about the long-term sustainability of institutions, particularly in Latin America where they are caught between unstable political systems and a lack of long-term private philanthropy. İ would like to see more education and commitment at the trustee level to make sure that museums can weather the many storms that they are subjected to.

💬 *Which is the role that CİMAM has to play in the contemporary ecosystem of museums? Which aspects of museum practices should CİMAM work further upon?*

Professional development is extremely important, especially in fields such as conservation and documentation, which are particular passions of mine. These are often considered the less “exciting” disciplines, so it can be harder to attract talent and support to these essential areas.

💬 *Throughout your extended support to CİMAM, you have secured funding for young professionals from Latin America to attend the Annual Conference; what is the role that CİMAM can play today to help foster the careers of young museum professionals in the region?*

Networking is extremely important, and museum professionals in Latin America can sometimes feel isolated from the conversations happening elsewhere. There are many opportunities for mentorship and professional development that an organization like CİMAM can foster and encourage.

💬 *Could you describe the ideal museum of the future? How will it be lived by audiences and by the young generations in particular?*

Museums have to find a way to integrate technology, while still remaining faithful to the experience of the physical object. İ think that young people have a completely new way of relating to the world, and we have to meet them at least halfway if we are to be able to create interesting experiences for them.

💬 *How can museums contribute to shape a better world?*

İ strongly believe that museums already do contribute to a better world by creating portals into other histories and traditions, and also into the individual soul of each artist/creator. İ can't think of any other institution that can do that, and that can have such a power to inspire us to think beyond our own limits and contexts.

💬 MAMİ KATAOKA İNTERVİEWS ALFRED PACQUEMENT

💬 *Mami Kataoka: Do you remember when you first joined CİMAM? What was the motivation for joining?*

Alfred Pacquement: İ very well remember the years preceding the opening of Centre Pompidou, when Pontus Hultén was named as the new director of the Musée national d'art moderne. This was a very exciting time, preparing the opening of a project which was going to contribute to a new definition of the Museum structure and

concept. Pontus, who was part of CİMAM, offered a few of us in the curatorial team, young curators involved in contemporary art, to join. This was around 1975. İt was extremely stimulating to enter a group where major figures of the previous generation took part, such as Edy de Wilde, Ryszard Stanislawski, or Knud Jensen. They were our heroes, as well as was a collector like Giuseppe Panza di Biumo who was among the patrons attending the sessions. CİMAM was then a small family and for a long time remained a quite stable group focused on Europe and the U.S.A. So, to attend these meetings, quite limited in terms of attendance, was a great privilege allowing me to be in close relationship with the main actors in the field of modern art museums at the time.

💬 *What was the major topic of discussion and concern within CİMAM when you were leading CİMAM?*

When İ was elected, İ asked Manolo Borja-Villel to become Secretary-Treasurer because İ knew Manolo would bring very strong and focused propositions on the content of our meetings. We wanted to develop discussions on specific themes in adequation with the major issues of the time. İ also made a condition for my election that CİMAM finds financial support to be organized more professionally and should hire an executive assistant. Together with Manolo, we found Pilar Cortada who did a terrific job. This was İ think the first time that CİMAM could hire permanent staff. We also solicited new patrons, such as Josée and Marc Gensollen or Erika Hoffmann.

İ replaced David Elliott who had already given an impulse on theoretical and political topics. During my mandate, we continued in this direction, avoiding too many interventions during the sessions only devoted to self-publicity on new museums, etc. This had been too often the case in the past. Whether in Rio, London, or Vienna, the debates and discussions were strong with topics which certainly do not seem out of date nowadays: globalization in the very specific context of Latin America when we were in Brazil; the intervention of the private sector in public museums seen through examples especially in the Anglo-Saxon world when meeting in Tate Modern,

which was at the time a very recent institution; production and new concepts in late capitalism, taking place in the Generali Foundation, which has closed since, example of the fragility of private institutions. My presidency (2005–07) coincided with a turning point in terms of the role and responsibility of museums, in those years following the trauma of 9/11 and preceding the greatest crisis in the economy since the 1930s.

💬 *What do you think has changed since that time within the museum of modern and contemporary art around the globe, and what remains the same?*

Even if the fundamentals of the museum remain the same, practices have changed considerably, the most spectacular being the entry into the digital age, but also this extension of the world reflected by the globalization of exchanges and information. İ also believe that the consideration to the Other has improved. There is definitely new attention given to parity, to artists coming from neglected parts of the world, or minorities in their own countries. My generation was certainly less attentive to these questions when we started. This is a real change.

💬 *How do you think the museum of modern and contemporary would have to change for a sustainable future?*

İt is hard to predict the future but the arrival of new actors, a redistribution of forces, including the growing power of the art market, means the museum has to be very vigilant in maintaining its educative and independent mission. The discussion on restitution is probably one major issue in the next decade. Africa is not only a major creative continent, but also beginning to have good museums infrastructures. China is opening new museums every month. This is certainly redistributing the map.

💬 *İn the future communities of the museum of modern and contemporary art, particularly after the pandemic, what role could* CİMAM *play?*

CİMAM has a crucial role to play to extend an international network of museum professionals all over the world, find new players, and bring discussions concerning all these actors. We are going through this health crisis, which will come to an end hopefully soon. Museums will survive, but new practices might appear, for instance, activities conceived for the internet. The exceptional situation we have faced has enforced some necessary evolution. CİMAM is and will remain one of the actors of the debate, one major site of discussions and information. İ am impressed by the improvement of the organization, in terms of internationalization, parity, and information on the activities through new media.

Q AND A WİTH MARC AND JOSÉE GENSOLLEN BY EUGENE TAN

As one of the founding patrons of CİMAM since 2005, what was the initial impetus for your support of the organization?

Through your time with CİMAM to the present day, in what ways have you seen it make an impact? What do you think has been its most significant contribution?

Have your experiences with CİMAM affected your collecting practices, or influenced the way in which the space (La Fabrique) in which you house your collection is organized?

What are some issues you see in the art world today that CİMAM could lend its voice to now?

Why should collectors lend their financial support to CİMAM?

We are Josée and Marc Gensollen. İn February 1996 at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, we were invited to participate as collectors in an exhibition called *Passions Privées*. We presented

some Minimalist and Conceptual works. Suzanne Pagé, then director of the museum and who was responsible for this look at French collections, also invited us to take part in a round table discussion on the theme of "Private Collections and Public İnstitutions." During the session, we met Alfred Pacquement, the President of CİMAM who would later become Director of the Centre Pompidou. We feel that our position as collectors is, all things considered, quite close to that of people working in the institutions. However, our choices are far freer, since we do not have the duty to cover the whole gamut of artistic creation. Our collection is composed of pieces that could be compared to words: words that are articulated together to form sentences. These sentences can be found in the collection, organized in a coherent way, forming a speech that has the value of a manifesto.

Our collection, put together in the forty-five years since we started it as students, grew to a point that led us to find a space for it. We did not want to create an exhibition space that could only be visited like a museum, with set days and opening hours, so we decided to live in the collection, surrounded by the artwork, in a factory built in the 1940s. This was La Fabrique. The building was rehabilitated with the help of an architect in the year 2000, to display the pieces of the collection coherently, while allowing us to live there. We took on the job of conserving the pieces, hanging them correctly, and presenting the artists' work effectively. Visits to La Fabrique are always guided, with a commentary on the exhibits.

La Fabrique went from merely piquing people's curiosity to eventually firmly establishing itself as part of the urban landscape of Marseille. Besides our professional work in La Fabrique, we decided to welcome amateurs by appointment when we were there: on weekday evenings and at the weekends. We did not have a website, so word of mouth, so dear to psychiatrists like us, was key in letting potential visitors know we were there. The rest was done by articles published in specialized journals on public art activities, courses given at the Aix-en-Provence art faculty, at the Louvre School, or conferences organized during various exhibitions, and our loans to 143 museums and art centers in France and abroad. Our collection became well known as one that only included artists who were starting out in their careers, and also because we chose not

to participate in the art investment market; we were soon taken on by several museum commissions to help acquire pieces for their institutions. This credibility, something that we had acquired over the years, led the CİMAM Director to suggest that we join CİMAM as founding patrons.

The fifteen years since we joined CİMAM in 2005 have seen it highlight its differences from private collections. When we came aboard, we were welcomed by great collectors like Anton and Anick Herbert from Ghent and Count Panza di Biumo from Verona, and we joined the likes of Erika Hoffman from Berlin and Antoine de Galbert from Paris. The relationships with other patrons have been warm and personal.

İn 2008, the CİMAM Board met at La Fabrique. One of the questions raised was the relationship between the public sector and the private sector. On the institutional side, the key mission of the people in charge, the directors and curators of the museums, was purely to choose pieces to display. Their choices took into account their knowledge of art history and their research while respecting the diversity of artistic options available: attention was paid to prior avantgardes, but there was also a push to build up representative collections of artists' work in the interest of the majority. Financial considerations did not seem to hamper them, beyond that of renewing the annual budget they were allocated by the Ministry of Culture. As for the private sector, the monetary side of things seems to be an all-important factor for collectors at all levels; and an individual building up a collection of works of art cannot ignore these commercial factors. Then we have the art market, which has been responsible for the boom in certain types of sales promoted by the big auction houses, which have become specialists in high-value investments. The members of CİMAM have refused to fall into this trap, instead choosing to approach large foundations and private institutions. Over time we have observed CİMAM distancing itself from private collectors and have understood that CİMAM's aspirations seem to have evolved somewhat differently.

Our experience with CİMAM has consolidated the way we have always behaved as collectors: to never be fooled by our first impressions, to closely follow the approach that we have

established for the collection by focusing on young artists, to put emphasis on the importance of content and richness of meaning rather than the formal dimension. The way that La Fabrique is organized has not changed; it is still atypical since we actually live there. Before we renovated it, we had an in-depth dialogue with our architect about the best way to make the most of the building. Although it has grown over time, the way it works has not changed.

The artworld is currently undergoing an existential crisis. Things are so dire that many so-called collectors only invest in pieces that have been given a stamp of approval by the art market. They only consider buying a work of art if they have heard of it. This is why we see the same well-known artists absolutely everywhere: they fulfill all the demand there is, and watch their popularity soar. The art institutions' mission is to showcase artists who have been overlooked unfairly.

Collectors should support CİMAM; in doing so, they will endorse and boost the endeavors of those in charge of museums. These institutions have historically been our cultural custodians and, with the support of collectors, they will have the ability to be more forward-looking while also giving other forms of creation their due, something which should ultimately strengthen the universal nature of our civilization.

JOAN WEİNSTEİN ANSWERS QUESTİONS BY MAMİ KATAOKA

Could you briefly describe your professional purpose within the Getty Foundation?

Joan Weinstein: As Director of the Getty Foundation, İ oversee Getty's local, national, and international grantmaking dedicated to enhancing the understanding and preservation of the visual arts. We have taken the broadest view of this work, embracing cultural traditions of all places and time periods, from ancient civilizations

to the modern and contemporary practices that are at the heart of CİMAM's mission.

💬 *The Getty Foundation focuses on grantmaking for the understanding and preservation of the visual arts, among other initiatives, supporting current and future leaders in the field. Since 1984, it has awarded more than 8,000 grants that have benefited more than 180 countries on all seven continents. How have the needs of emerging professionals in the modern and contemporary art museum sector evolved over the past 38 years?*

As an international funder, we keep an eye on developing trends across different countries and regions. For example, the field of contemporary art has attracted many more scholars and curators to its ranks over the last 30 or so years, which parallels the rise of a global art market. Yet too often emerging professionals in many regions, particularly in the Global South, have not had the same opportunities to connect with their peers. This was part of the impetus behind our funding for CİMAM travel grants. We are proud that our partnership has now benefited more than 250 curators worldwide who have participated in the energetic dialogue and debate that CİMAM fosters at its annual conferences.

💬 *The Climate Emergency has highlighted a basic concept such as Social Justice, which, among other issues, includes access to education and training, also comprised in SDG 4, "Quality Education." Do you think the Getty Foundation's work can help achieve this goal in all parts of the world?*

The climate emergency and social justice are very much at the heart of the Getty's next Pacific Standard Time (PST). PST is a regional collaboration in Southern California of more than 60 cultural institutions presenting thematically linked exhibitions, scholarly publications, and public programs. The third iteration of PST in 2024 focuses on intersections of art and science, and not surprisingly more than a few projects are focusing on the climate crisis. PST partners

are also tackling issues such as environmental justice, with artists working alongside scientists and community activists. With a range of international curators, scientists, and artists involved in these exhibitions, we hope to generate a wider civic dialogue around some of the most pressing issues today.

💬 *Do you recall how the Getty Foundation came to know CİMAM and why you and former Director, Deborah Marrow, decided to start supporting the Travel Grant Program?*

İ recall it very well! We learned about CİMAM from Lyn Kienholz, who was an early member of CİMAM and helped bring the annual conference to Los Angeles in 1990. For that conference the Getty supported ten curators from East Central Europe to attend. As we began the first Pacific Standard Time, Lyn reminded us of the extraordinary international roster of curators associated with CİMAM, and we saw an opportunity to widen these circles even further through the Travel Grant Program.

💬 *The Getty Foundation's support has contributed to positioning CİMAM as a truly international network of curators and directors of modern and contemporary art museums. Have you noticed a growing international collaboration among professionals in art institutions in the wake of the pandemic?*

Yes, amidst the very real strains that the pandemic has brought we are also seeing a hunger for connection. The ingenuity of art institutions embracing virtual programming is a big part of the equation. Necessity pushed us online, but organizations are recognizing the long-term benefits of digital technologies and infrastructure and harnessing them to drive new collaborations. CİMAM's Rapid Response seminars are a great example here.

💬 *Throughout all these years supporting the CİMAM Travel Grant Program, in what ways do you think CİMAM grantees have impacted the field of modern and contemporary art museums? What do you believe has been their most significant contribution?*

İ hope the travel grant recipients have been major assets to CİMAM and to the museum community at large, broadening our understanding of issues ranging from equity in the art world to the dangers rising authoritarian governments pose to artistic freedom. İt's also been gratifying to see some former participants in the Travel Grant Program go on to serve on CİMAM's Board.

💬 *İn 2017, you were personally involved in obtaining a legal waiver to support a professional from İran who could finally attend the 2018 CİMAM Annual Conference. What was that experience like? Do you think the art world can be a relevant safeguard in international politico-social crises?*

The Getty Foundation has always had a strong commitment to connecting professionals across borders and fostering international dialogue. İn recent years it hasn't always been easy, but we're fortunate to have a dedicated staff that puts in the extra effort to make it happen. İn this case CİMAM was a great partner in finding a successful resolution.

As for the role of the cultural sector in challenging the rising dangers we see all around us, we have no choice but to remain engaged. The art world may be one of the few places where we can continue dialogue when it's no longer possible in other spaces of society.

💬 *What issues do you identify in today's art world that CİMAM could address?*

CİMAM is already playing a significant role in highlighting critical issues, from the Museum Watch Committee to the Sustainability and Ecology Working Group. And your Rapid Response Seminars are keeping a spotlight on some of the most troubling events in the art world, such as the ways modern and contemporary art museums have become targets of rising xenophobia in parts of East Central Europe. These are massive problems, and we'll only make progress by working together.

Has this long relationship with CİMAM affected the Getty Foundation's criteria for supporting more modern and contemporary art projects?

Our grantees always impact our work and our thinking, and it's probably true that we've supported more modern and contemporary art projects in the last decade. We're also grateful that CİMAM has helped us spread the word about new grant opportunities, as it did recently for The Paper Project. This is an initiative that provides project support for curators of graphic art collections, including modern and contemporary prints and drawings, and we appreciate being able to leverage CİMAM's international reach to raise awareness about programs like this.

MANUEL BORJA-VİLLEL TALKS TO MALGORZATA LUDWİSİAK

Malgorzata Ludwisiak: You were a CİMAM Board member since 2004 and a Chair of CİMAM in 2007–10. What was the major topic of discussion and concern of CİMAM during this period?

Manuel Borja-Villel: İ actually was a Board member since 2001 and Secretary-Treasurer from 2004 until 2007 and President from 2007 until 2010. There were basically three aspects that we were working on at that time, which eventually led to changes. The first thing was the management of CİMAM. Our organization was in a phase of development and transition: an association of colleagues from the contemporary art field was just entering the phase of a large international body, and the need of its professionalization was really felt at that moment. For example, there was not a permanent office, the relationship with İCOM was rather obscure, and the whole accountancy was done by a private accountant of the Secretary-Treasurer! All that was organized at that time. We hired Pilar Cortada, she was key in all these changes.

There were also other improvements, like the first sponsors of travel grants were organized.

Secondly, CİMAM at that time was still very Euro-centric and even more than that: it was limited to almost only Central, Western, and Northern European countries. Since 2000, CİMAM has grown much more. The third kind of change relates to an ideological background. İ would say, that some kind of self-reflection or even self-criticism around museums—and the past and future CİMAM itself as an international institution—started to be a subject of discussion. We were all very much involved in the debates, but İ had a special input in the one in Berlin. There were also some debates that İ was especially involved in. There was one in Berlin, in 2002, when the annual conference was dedicated to a question of "erosion" of the public role of the museum. Great speakers were present there—like Okwui Enwezor, after his documenta, and also Bernard Blistène, Martha Rosler, or Peter Friedl. İ remember some of the conferences as being perhaps in a bit melancholic about ruins of the world, which is over. Other conferences that İ remember very well took place in São Paulo (2005)—with very strong discussions around the global scene—and in Mexico (2009). Debates that took place there were full of criticism of museum practices and also very critically received by some of the participants. But they also marked somehow the transition of CİMAM as a postwar European organization, which was supposed to supervise certain museum standards, to CİMAM as a global organization. İ am very honored and happy to be involved in these changes as a Board Member at that time.

💬 *What else, in your opinion, has changed since that time?*

İ think a lot has changed for CİMAM. İt has started to collaborate with other kinds of organizations and with an expertise coming from outside of the art field. And this is very needed nowadays. For example, we are unable to solve problems like a precarious situation of the artists on our own, without support of other organizations. To defend cases like this and to be effective, you cannot be alone. Hito Steyerl once said: "We have to be autonomous and we have to be connected." This is also how İ see CİMAM and a new kind of internationalism

in a near future. İ also think that a lot of self-criticism or self-reflection has been developed inside CİMAM—for instance about the neo-liberal way of developing artistic globalism, that many art institutions also contribute to.

How do you think that museums should change, confronted with social unrests, populist governments, economic crises, and a climate catastrophe? What role can museums play in the face of these crises?

The origins of CİMAM are rooted in social democratic structures. And nowadays the world has found itself between two extremes: neoliberalism and ultra-right populism, so we are in a new kind of civil war between those two. Marcel Broodthaers used to say in the museum context that we always play in the enemy's territory. This is truer than ever and moreover—this enemy's territory is in ruins. Douglas Crimp even said that a museum itself is in ruin. We live with phantoms of the past. İt is important today to talk about other forms of organization and governance in the museum field. As museum experts we should be not only reactive but also constructive—looking for new solutions and new museum models. For instance, in Maya languages there is not even a word for "art" as such, but their concept of art has a lot to do with concepts of caring and ecology. So, we have to decolonize not only our gaze, but also our ideas of governance, of art and its institutions. We should look at other kinds of organizations. We should observe and support other than Western kinds of political, cultural, or archiving practices, different institutionalities. To conceive and promote spaces of agency, which is always political, should be one of our objectives. İ think that this is the role of museum professionals and of CİMAM for the next years as the way to deal with the catastrophes. Deleuze claimed that revolution and resistance have to go together with rethinking of institutions. You can't separate one from another. And this is what artists, curators, thinkers manage to imagine and offer: the other forms of resistance and other forms of institutionality. So, İ would like to think İ am a moderate optimist.

İVO MESQUİTA TALKS TO AGUSTİN PÉREZ RUBİO

Agustin Pérez Rubio: Your work as Director and Chief Curator of the Pinacoteca has already made history in the Brazilian context. Also, your 28th São Paulo Biennial, along with many other of your curatorial positions, not only in Brazilian institutions but internationally, ever since you were young and lived in Canada. İn this sense, you've always been close to collections and research from the perspective of museums. İ'd like you to tell us how you learned about CİMAM *and why you decided to be part of the organization.*

İvo Mesquita: The first time İ heard about CİMAM was through Walter Zanini (1925–2013) in the 1970s, during a course on museums of modern and contemporary art at the university. Later, in 2004, Manuel Borja-Villel told me that CİMAM was looking for a venue in Latin America for its Annual Conference in 2005. At that time, İ was a curator at the Pinacoteca do Estado, in São Paulo, with Marcelo Araújo as director, and we thought it would be a good opportunity for the Museum to host the Conference. On the one hand, because the Pinacoteca, a traditional museum of Brazilian art history, was, under a new orientation, putting an accent on contemporary art. On the other hand, and more personally, İ think it is important to belong to trade unions and professional associations. İt also offered the opportunity for a meeting, for knowledge, for expanding a network between Brazilian museums and professionals and their foreign counterparts, including other Latin Americans.

The museum circuit was going through a very accelerated process of internationalization or globalization, where those—let's say the poorest and most peripheral, but rich in their communities—were in a hurry to buy in exhibitions from institutions abroad, to be seen as the windows of other museums, collections, and cultures, in order to belong to the *grand monde de la mondialisation* and the great economy that the entire art system had become. Besides, for different reasons, there was a lot of interest at that time in Brazil, with the first Lula government, and in Brazilian art in the context of the Latin American art boom in institutional and market

terms. Without forgetting, of course, an interest in the emerging and vain Brazilian sponsors!

With regard to CİMAM, İ don't know much about the relations between the committee and Brazilian museums and professionals prior to 2005, with the exception of Zanini and Aracy Amaral. After that, yes, Brazilians—not so much the institutions but some professionals—began to participate in the Annual Conferences, often with grants. İ don't know how many "memberships" we now have. But this absence is something specific to art museums (for economic reasons perhaps?), since other Brazilian museums—archaeology, science, education—are very present and active within ICOM and its various committees.

💬 *Tell me how you saw and see CİMAM's relationship with your country, Brazil, and the Latin American context. İ think that your presence, that of Natalia Majluf, and other Latin American professionals before, has been fundamental, but İ'd like you to give us your opinion from a personal point of view on these issues, since it is an organization that was created in Paris and its headquarters are currently in Barcelona. That is why İ am interested in knowing more about the decolonial relationship in this regard. This relationship with the decolonial is something the Board is working on, with the Congress in Sydney, and now under the mandate of a female and Asian President, Mami Takaoka. We are all very sensitive to new ways of doing things and how we implement them.*

İn the years 1980–90, CİMAM was not very popular with the ICOM committees. İt was known as a very snobbish group, all northern hemisphere, a club where new members were only admitted when they were proposed by one of the existing members and only after presenting a lot of credentials. However, museums, all of them, were then more academic than they are now. But İ believe that the changes of the last decades, that is, the increasing diversity of membership, venues, and conference participants, is part of the globalization process in every way, for good and for bad: the debates and political, social, and cultural transformations in societies;

migratory and economic flows; the growth of the cultural and tourism industries; museums and the visual arts as a great and powerful economy, a luxury product with added value.

İ don't believe that today the fact that CİMAM was created in Paris, or that its headquarters are in Barcelona, are colonial signs, but rather they are the circumstances of its history and the result of a pragmatic management. The debate about decolonizing is vast and complex. We will carry it for many generations to come. Personally, İ go along with my dear Aimé Césaire (1913–2008) who said: *Moi, je parle le créole, mais mon pére ç'est Gustave Flaubert*.

💬 *İ remember you were on the Board for several years. İ'd like you to tell me about those years, what were the guidelines and goals that you had, also the issues, policies, and actions that the Board promoted, and the Congresses that were held. How do you remember that time?*

This was between 2007 and 2013. Two issues seem important to me and they were on CİMAM's agenda and necessary for its institutional consolidation, representativeness, and resilience. First, was to define and resolve CİMAM's relationship with İCOM, something that was always delicate in institutional and financial terms. İ think this was settled in legal terms, and the establishment of an office/address such as it has today in Barcelona was very important for this. By the way, we must never forget that this achievement was a battle that was fought, for years, by Manolo Borja-Villel, Bartomeu Marí, Pilar Cortada, and the young İnés Jover.

İt was very important for CİMAM to guarantee its survival and work (İ think this has always been the case), and this posed positive challenges for us in the face of globalization. On the one hand, we sought to expand the number of professionals/members, not only for financial reasons but above all to add representation and legitimacy to the organization. Hence, the annual Conferences go to different places, outside Europe, and with the participation of invited artists, philosophers, historians, and activists. İt is important to engage with professionals from all the continents. At first, we had new members from Latin America and the United States, even

represented on the Board, but we immediately saw the presence of Africans, Asians, and many others grow. On the other hand, the number of patrons also grew, something very important for CİMAM's finances and its activities. İn addition, İ believe that the fact that CİMAM began to offer membership to independent professionals and to private collections with public programs was also relevant to this strategy. With all these actions, the political role of CİMAM developed, in a natural way, as a class organization and watchdog overseeing the practices of modern and contemporary art museums.

💬 *Finally, İ would like to know how you relate to CİMAM and the importance you attach to it from 2020 onwards, and even more so after the pandemic. What are the goals and lines of action upon which you think CİMAM should set its sights?*

İ am no longer in an institution, but an independent professional, yet İ'm still a member and İ hear about the debates, İ follow the conferences, one of the reasons for maintaining the connection. What İ love about the Annual Conference, besides the professional *aggiornamento*, is that it feels a bit like a family gathering once a year. After a while, we realize that we are like a family: we share the same work-related problems, the same economic instabilities, the same political disputes, and, more recently, the confrontations with the neoliberal model of museum and cultural management with its system of value and meritocracy for our work and intelligence. The feeling of belonging reassures me, the fact that we are peers, we share a field, a discipline, experiences, and affections.

On the other hand, we live in strange times, and in a Brazil of terror! The pandemic is both a symptom and a consequence of our global, social, political, economic, intellectual, and environmental disease. İ don't think museums can do much for the world as it is now. The fact that museums have remained open, even with restrictions, during the pandemic seems to me as important as keeping the schools open. The pandemic is going to change our lives in individual terms, such as family, friends, work, travel, but what poses a real threat to our world, in particular to museums, is the crisis of democracy, racial and economic iniquity, censorship,

conservative regression, and authoritarian movements. Hence, it seems to me, CİMAM has to expand its presence and representativeness as a way of ensuring that museums are democratic and transparent institutions, places of knowledge, socialization, freedom, and invention.

TOWARDS CRİTİCAL DENSİTY BY PATRİCK FLORES

İ was first invited to the CİMAM Conference in Shanghai in 2010 to speak on the shifting curatorial frameworks in Southeast Asia. İ had the impression then that, like any other institution of long standing, and viewed as an authority among the expert class, CİMAM would be strictly disciplinal, and therefore, decidedly modernist and museological. İ was thus surprised to know that the keynote speaker was Susan Buck-Morss, a professor of political philosophy and social theory, who spoke on the visuality of the global in her lecture "Seeing Global." İt proposed entry points into the theme of the concern of the conference, which was "Common Ground for Museums in a Global Society." İ liked the way the event opened with a broad philosophical outlook to either play out speculatively or be fleshed out by the granularity of museological and curatorial practice. To this inquiry of the "common" and the "global," my talk gestured towards the "collection" and the "collective" in the formation of the "curatorial" and the "contemporary" in Southeast Asia.

İn the next year, İ attended the CİMAM Conference in Ljubljana and Sarajevo. Another leg was also held in Zagreb, which İ missed because İ could not secure a visa. This iteration of CİMAM further affirmed my impression that CİMAM as an organization was keen to mediate museological work with discursive density and without reifying institutional power as a necessary orthodoxy. İ was struck by how it opened with the presentation of Renata Salecl, a philosopher and sociologist, with the paper "Art Between Violence and İdentification." İ was taken by this provocation and the inclination of CİMAM to implicate the contentious, and therefore formative,

problematics of the time. But besides the theoretical acuity with which the talks were cast, the procedure of setting up the meetings was equally generative. İnstead of detaining the participants in one site where they would sit through the lectures, CİMAM asked them to move from space to space not only to listen to presentations but to understand the ecology of the art and cultural world, the infrastructure, and the agents on the ground. The organizers called these sessions "Understanding the Local Context." This for me further inflected CİMAM's ability to address the complications of locality in the anticipation of the global, specifically within the rubric of "Museums and the City," which was the year's prompt.

After eight years of my first exposure to CİMAM, İ was asked to give one of the keynotes in Singapore in 2017. İ spoke on the possibility of unlearning within the museum itself or working through the museum via curatorial work. İ was interested in the "teaching museum," being the curator of a university museum as an analogue to the "teaching hospital," which was linked to the history of the education of the body and the senses. Through a discussion of artist-curators, İ was able to sketch out tentatively some contours of a possible history of curatorial unlearning in Southeast Asia. İ thought this was germane in the discussion of the meeting's anxiety, which was "The Roles and Responsibilities of Museums in Civil Society." The phrase "civil society" could only lead CİMAM to reflect on both the polity and poetics of the art-world ecology.

What İ noticed across these CİMAM iterations is the loosening of the hinge between the museological and the curatorial, and the careful but decisive rethinking of what "modern art" means translocally and transhistorically. Surely, the critique of its hegemony is embedded within the conception of modern art itself and the lively modernities that constantly trouble its authority and its power to collect. Moreover, the curatorial as an energy or a valence remakes the practice of mediating modern art through mutating procedures of constellating, assembling, reworking, and reworlding. İt is the curatorial, which has in a way reskilled the museological labor from its tightly guarded professional techniques and released it from hegemonic mannerisms, that has widened the latitude of the modern and the museum to respond to the vicissitudes of the

ecology through a range of means like the seminar, the screening, the reading session, the research, the interview, the archive, the performance, and so on. At this conjuncture, the affective and the pedagogical, the feeling and the learning mesh and are activated simultaneously and thus overcome the polarities of art and education, for instance, or custodianship and theory, or action and patience.

İn light of this alacrity, the modern art museum, alongside its much-vaunted collection, disperses or redistributes not as a critical institution invested in, or even spellbound by, self-reflexivity, but as an institutionality that reconstructs its privileges as it touches the atmosphere of social relations and interests. İt becomes a vulnerable entity, porous yet decisively conversant and politically positioned to deliberate on the difficulties of speaking with and for others.

VİCTORİA NOORTHOORN İNTERVİEWS KEN LUM

Victoria Noorthoorn: At the CİMAM Annual Conference 2010, you articulated a profound homage to Chen Zhen as you recalled a critical moment in your life back in 1995. You referred to the relational, situational, and contingent aspects of ethnicity and migrations in ways that remain urgent today. Have museums managed to address this complexity so far? And if not, how can museums address this key challenge of our present time?

Ken Lum: The best way İ can answer this first question is that issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion are at least on the table in a more serious way. There is still enormous lag especially at the level of higher institutional governance and at times the enthusiasm for diversity narratives can seem superficial, but at least such narratives are on the table. İ think it is important to weigh things with a balance of generosity and caution as the problems are societal-wide. İ know that some people advocate for a wholesale reinvention of the museum, but İ think that the key is a genuinely meaningful address of wider audiences and a significant

recomposition of leadership and institutional Board Members. Some of the problems confronting the art museum are generated by the biases built into the art system with its privileging of the business of art and its culture of moneyed elitism that is palpable as soon as one enters a pristine white cube space.

💬 *How can museums respond in meaningful ways to the challenges posed by migrations today?*

This question is interesting because it suggests the problem of non-identity between museum programming and the changing populations that museums are meant to address. There is enormous potential for museums to build new audiences. Having artists make work addressing diverse communities and artists from diverse communities make work is requisite but the problem of the institutional lack of engagement with communities remains. This is observable for any visit to an art museum, perhaps a bit less so for other types of museums, such as a natural history museum. İ was at the Philadelphia Museum of Art recently, and the diversity of the city's citizenry is certainly not seen among museum visitors. This is certainly true for many art museums, not just Philadelphia. There are probably many reasons for this narrowness of audience. Fairly or unfairly, museums can seem intimidating. Museums can also seem like places meant for other persons, perhaps more moneyed with the luxury of time on their hands for a visit. A diversity of programming can help as opposed to a program that touches on issues of diverse voices. What İ mean by this distinction is that a program of diverse artists addressing the social content of the lives of diverse communities remains tethered to a dominant system of contemporary art presentations that can make attractive content to a specific audience an alienating experience. Children's programs needs to be greatly expanded and the teachers guiding such programs need to be diversified, not just contemporary art enthusiasts. All of this would only be a start.

💬 *Do you think that any artist advocacy has affected change in museums' policies?*

İ think artist advocacy has affected a lot of change in museum policies, but at some point, at least until the recent past, advocacy has always hit a wall of obduracy due to issues of tradition, of an entrenched system of privilege including of the donor class.

💬 *Which do you regard as the most outstanding achievements of museums in regards to giving voice to contemporary artists during the last decades and why?*

Your question draws me back to 1989 and the *Magiciens de la terre* exhibition in Paris. Notwithstanding the valid criticisms of the exhibition, it did represent a moment of acknowledgment of Eurocentrism. 1989 was also the year marked by the process of the end for apartheid in South Africa, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the bloody events of Tiananmen Square. Biennales started to proliferate worldwide. Chinese artists exiled in Europe and America due to Tiananmen, and who came of age post-1979 post-liberalization, emerged as important artistic and political voices. *Cities on the Move* of 1997 was another groundbreaking exhibition as was Okwui Enwezor's *documenta 11* in 2002. The most outstanding achievements started with large scale special exhibitions that weren't tied specifically to museums, but the success of such exhibitions fertilized a broadening of art that museums had to recognize, if only for the furtherance of their own relevance.

💬 *Which are the changes in museum practices that you would still like to see accomplished in the near future?*

İ would like to see much more invested in public engagement, well beyond such activities being a supplement of the main project of museums. İ think public engagement, and that would include children's programming, needs to be foregrounded and seen as the central task of museums.

💬 *Could you describe the ideal museum of the future? How can museums contribute to shape a better world?*

İ think part of the problem confronting museums is twofold. Museums have for a long time functioned as extensions of the hegemonic social order. Of course, the functioning was never categorical and without many moments of contradiction and porosity, but ultimately museums are part of the habitus. Museums also exist without countervailing forms to their procedures and operations. For example, the problem of Confederate monuments that beset the United States is exacerbated by the absence of countervailing monuments to slavery. There are plenty of monuments to Confederate generals, but very few monuments to heroic slaves or to important sites such as lynching trees or where slave auctions took place. So, perhaps an attempt at an ideal museum would be to build a museum of counter- or subjugated narratives of art or of history.

MAMİ KATAOKA İNTERVİEWS BARTOMEU MARÍ

Mami Kataoka: Do you remember when you first joined CİMAM*? What was the motivation for joining?*

Bartomeu Marí: İ joined CİMAM in 2002. İ had concluded at the end of 2001 an important institutional experience in Rotterdam and, inspired by my friend Manuel Borja-Villel, İ imagined that CİMAM could be the right forum from which to connect with the professional scene in a different way. İ had been invited to participate in the 1997 CİMAM conference as a speaker and İ had kept a certain memory of how the conferences functioned. Many people İ knew were already members.

What was the major topic of discussion and concern within CİMAM *when you were leading* CİMAM*?*

Prior to leading CİMAM (2014–16), İ also served with Zdenka Badovinac as Secretary-Treasurer between 2011 and 2013. What was discussed

in the period 2014–16 seemed to be a continuation of Zdenka's mandate. My feeling today is that, before the Covid-19 pandemic, CİMAM members were concerned by issues that repeated, year after year, with different vocabularies. One of these topics was the relationship between public service and private finances, which is a very European concern. There were discussions, inside the Board, about accepting private institutions or biennale institutional memberships. The debates started opening to include new issues. We tried to transform a European-born association into a forum of global reach. İn previous years, CİMAM had attracted growing South American membership and we tried to open it up to Asia and Africa. The meanings of globalization, cultural hegemony, and escaping Eurocentrism were often debated.

A major topic that consumed incredible energy was providing CİMAM with a legal identity. İt had been a battle long fought by our predecessors and İ am proud to count this success during Patricia Sloane's and my mandate. Being an international council of ICOM, without our own legal identity, did not allow CİMAM to receive donations and grants, or hire the staff running CİMAM's office, who was held in a precarious working relationship. İt took a lot of diplomacy and dedication to conclude that complex and delicate process. Hans-Martin Hinz and Suay Aksoy, Chairs of ICOM consecutively, helped a lot.

💬 *What do you think has changed since that time within the museum of modern and contemporary art around the globe, and what remains the same?*

Major changes have occurred in the past few years. Some are due to the effects of the pandemic, and others were in preparation for a longer time. Very relevant, deep, and major changes are still to come. What we are witnessing since 2020 is unique: it is telluric, it changes the entire geography of realities and ideas for museums. Many museums worldwide are at risk of ceasing their activity. İ experienced the effects of the 2008 crisis, in which MACBA lost 40% of its income, but this can even be worse. While museums go digital, a new type of inequality arises: there is a huge divide in the

way institutions and users access the digital world. Technologies also hide another major shift, of profound consequences: from product to user. More and more institutions define their communities as the source of their identity. Collections or exhibitions are no longer the only components of their DNA. Community does not mean visitors only; a community contains members who haven't used the institution yet. Programming museums supposed continuity, a certain stability. Uncertainty will remain the natural context in which museums operate, for a long time. Communication has become rhizomatic, going in many directions, no longer from institution to user only. Therefore, museums are obliged to listen: the deaf museum is sentenced to extinction. The rise of much higher ethical standards in our societies, with MeToo and the BLM movements, connected with the debates about inclusiveness, respect for minorities, decoloniality, restitution, the ethical origin of private donations, and the fight against climate change, determine now what museums do and how they act. Most professionals focused, until recently, on doing "a good show," with a thick catalogue, preferably. Curatorial excellence is not the unique criterion anymore. Against the idea of a passive, neutral museum, we believe in the partisan museum that leads change. A shift to come: evolve from the experience economy to an economy of learning. Tourism, one of the most highly polluting industries, will no longer be what it used to. Populism and political extremisms also affect museums.

💬 *How do you think the museum of modern and contemporary would have to change for a sustainable future?*

There is a very long and arduous road to transit. Museums, as we have known them, are under a serious threat of becoming irrelevant and disappearing. Empathy has to replace authority, inside and outside of the institution. Museum governances have entered as well a deep crisis. Only in authoritarian contexts, governance is not in crisis. Leading a museum from here onwards is very different from what it used to be: different skills and abilities are required.

💬 *İn the future communities of the museum of modern and contemporary art, particularly after the pandemic, what role could CİMAM play?*

CİMAM's strength lies in its membership, a wide range of professionals from different parts of the globe. We remember that CİMAM started as a club for European members, masculine in its great majority, and rich. İt has changed a lot in the past decade. The public effects of CİMAM's voices were an important concern for us: how much do CİMAM's messages affect policies and the actions of institutional governances? I wish CİMAM would have a wider and deeper effect: our messages still remain within our professional community.

PATRİCİA SLOANE ON HER TİME AS SECRETARY-TREASURER WİTH BARTOMEU MARÍ AS PRESİDENT, 2013–16

Long before the creation of MUAC (Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo) fifteen years ago, Helen Escobedo was the leading pioneer of contemporary art production in Mexico. İt is through her that İ first learned of the existence of CİMAM, probably when she was Director of the Museum of Modern Art in Mexico City (1982–84). At the time İ was totally enthralled by the idea of an international gathering of experts in contemporary art.

İt was not until 2008, when we finally opened the MUAC on the National University Campus, that my long-awaited desire to be part of CİMAM came to fruition. Our Director, Graciela de la Torre approved our application for institutional membership, while also proposing the co-organization of the 2009 Annual Conference in tandem with Ramiro Martínez, Director of the Museo Tamayo Arte Contemporáneo, situated in Chapultepec Park. At this time, İ had also become acquainted with some of the CİMAM Board members through different international events and conferences. So, it was that İ became deeply involved in the day-to-day intricacies of the organization through Pilar Cortada, Zdenka Badovinac, İvo Mesquita,

and Bartomeu Marí. İn 2009, we celebrated a very successful Annual Conference in Mexico City, where Helen Escobedo and Nancy Kienholz were our very enthusiastic guests of honor.

For the following years, Mexico was a permanent participant at the Annual Conferences, starting with a massive eleven-member delegation in Shanghai, sponsored by MUAC. The expansion of CİMAM into new territories and cultural contexts was very exciting, as it was simultaneously revealing the upstart of a global contemporary art platform. Part of this new approach was also the inclusion of alternative art institutions as an additional and complementary resource for art exhibition, beyond the traditional museum structure. This was particularly interesting for the future growth of CİMAM, along with an increasingly diverse and complex discourse at the heart of the Annual Conference.

This evolution was visibly relevant throughout the next six years, as the conference hosts alternated between distant continents and cultural backgrounds—what at that time became known as the archipelago of the art community. Each and every city provided an extremely different experience and the opportunity of a first-hand intellectual and sensitive exchange of approaches to art practice in the public sphere. Such was the case of Ljubljana/Zagreb, Sarajevo; İstanbul/Beirut; Rio/Brasilia; Doha/Sharjah, Dubai & Abu Dhabi; Tokyo/Naoshima; Barcelona/Bilbao, each with its unique approach to the formation of a "new" art polyphony.

The internal organization of CİMAM during this period continued to take place in Barcelona, with Jenny Gil Schmitz as Executive Director and İnés Jover as Programs Coordinator. After the 2013 elections during the Rio conference, Zdenka Badovinac relayed the Presidency of CİMAM to Bartomeu Marí and it was agreed that İ would take over as Secretary-Treasurer. The Board was composed of a unique group of extremely talented professionals who made it very easy to develop the contents of the Annual Conference, as well as the lists of speakers and travel grant recipients. We were always fortunate to have extremely powerful support in all three venues where we organized the Annual Conference in collaboration with the director of each institution (Abdellah Karroum, Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha;

Mami Kataoka, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo; Ferran Barenblit, Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona)

Because of the continuity within the Board and the operational model, our three-year tenure then centered mainly on the negotiation to restructure CİMAM's relationship in the realm of ICOM's İnternational Committees. This was an essential step to gain our administrative autonomy while maintaining a strong relationship with the core institution. Prior to this, all CİMAM finances were controlled by ICOM's central office in Paris. This meant that all income from membership, sponsors, and the Annual Conference registration was controlled through an ICOM checking account. Simultaneously, all expenses, checks, and balances were audited by ICOM's administration, which directly affected both our operative and legal status in Spain, as well as the efficiency of our working process.

At the time, CİMAM had become ICOM's strongest and most active İnternational Committee, and therefore our request for autonomy was met with great reticence by Dr. Pr. Hans-Martin Hinz, President, and Anne-Catherine Robert-Hauglustaine, Director-General of ICOM. Bartomeu Marí's strategy consisted of promoting a long-term dialogue via invitations for both officials to attend the CİMAM Annual Conference. This diplomatic approach served its purpose and by mid-2015, we had agreed to the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding that was signed between ICOM and CİMAM in June 2015 during the ICOM General Assembly in Paris.

This is certainly the highlight of our achievements, considering the transcendence of this transformation for the current well-being of our institution. Beyond the tough moments and very fond memories, İ need to emphasize my continued affection for CİMAM as one of the most admirable institutions in the artworld. İt was on a quiet November afternoon in 2016 at MACBA in Barcelona that we left CİMAM in the capable hands of Liz-Ann Macgregor and the new Board. Bartomeu Marí will certainly provide a very thoughtful conclusion to our collective collaboration as a team during his brilliant tenure as President of CİMAM, but here İ want to share our parting statement:

> "Far above its original mission, and over the fifty years as the ICOM Committee for İnternational Museums for Modern and Contemporary Art Museums, CİMAM has continuously strived towards the renovation, democratic inclusiveness, and comprehensive discourse of the expanding global exchange in art practice.
>
> Both CİMAM's web page as an open assembly for permanent debate, as well as the annual conference, are the tools for the continuing reformulation of our performativity, social responsibility, and civic freedom.
>
> We strongly believe in the active involvement of CİMAM's membership as a horizontal and proactive forum for this and other current discussions."

With the distance of the last six years, today, at the time of this publication, Mexico has a new generation of artists, curators, and museum directors, including MUAC with Amanda de la Garza taking the helm of our museum during the pandemic. And this is certainly the case with a number of CİMAM partners, members, and associates who have joined the Committee since this publication was conceived. İ personally reiterate my total commitment to CİMAM's capacity of leadership and flexibility in the face of this ongoing transformation of art in its quest to make an always coherent stance vis-à-vis of the permanent challenges that pave the many and very diverse trajectories of human nature, and our common joys and battles that are now on the way to becoming our collective and universal histories.

SLAVS AND TATARS TALK TO MALGORZATA LUDWİSİAK

Malgorzata Ludwisiak: Since 2006 the Slavs and Tatars collective has been working with the concept of Eurasia, shifting the cultural boundaries and proposing a trans-cultural, syncretic model. Could you imagine a museum of Eurasia? How could it look like? And do we actually need one?

Slavs and Tatars: When we gave ourselves this particular remit, it was in equal measures a geopolitical one as a poetic one. İn both instances, though, it was deliberately excessive, a scope of work which could not be containted within one practice, one institution, one lifetime, etc. To that effect, a museum of Eurasia probably wouldn't be a particularly great endeavor. Or then again, perhaps defeatism can also be an agency of investigation for an institution, who knows?

Do you think that any artist advocacy has affected change in museums' policies? Or might it do so in the future?

There have been examples of changes to the back office so to speak of museums: the make up of a board, sources of financial support, etc.

Pickle Bar in Berlin, your projects related to fermenting and hybridizing (of ideas, language, cultures), seem to be more relevant than ever in times of nationalisms, populisms, and all other kinds of crisis that we are currently confronted with, on the global scale. How do you see the role of contemporary art and its institutions in confronting them?

We must create a space to ask questions which haven't been considered in universities, in think-tanks, in advocacy groups, and other forums. There's too often a lazy type of consensual thinking across the academy, the museum, and the intelligentsia. Art must remind us to ask questions differently. To be antinomian, to use a term which reminds us of the bygone, sacred role of art.

Perhaps it is not CİMAM's role per se, but one thing which Covid brought home rather forcefully has been the need to foster long term relationships between artists and institutions. More often than not, an engagement with a museum lasts the duration of what is required for an exhibition or an engagement, anywhere from one to two years. But once the exhibition opens, the engagement ends.

During the past couple years, Slavs and Tatars has moved to institutionalize on a small-scale: initiating a residency, opening the Pickle Bar, etc. One unexpected result has been the ability to engage with institutions over several years, under different disguises. As hosts for visiting residents, as researchers, as editors, co-publishers, as curators for the Pickle Bar program, or more traditionally, as artists. As a result, we really begin to understand what a relationship between an artist and an institution could and should look (and feel) like. We see that the previous accelerated rhythm is not only unsustainable, but it does disservice to the very vocabulary we use such as "engagement," "development," "collaboration." İn the end, perhaps there's a way for CİMAM and museums more generally to slow things down, to advocate a newer rhythm of working in the creative fields. İt would only benefit all parties.

💬 *And is there anything, from your perspective, that CİMAM could do as an international association?*

To provide robust and sustained guidance in fostering equitable institutions of art in places sorely lacking them.

💬 MALGORZATA LUDWİSİAK İNTERVİEWS MARYSİA LEWANDOWSKA

💬 *Your research as well as your artistic projects explore the public function of archives, collections, and exhibitions in increasingly challenging times of privatization, political, economic, and climate crisis. How do you see a relevance of such work nowadays?*

Marysia Lewandowska: İ consider those challenges you have listed as closely interconnected spheres with consequences for all our engagements. Over time İ have developed a practice employing tactics that are both time and context sensitive, where İ use research as a site of my practice. An ongoing withdrawal of public funding from museums, which represents a reality for many institutions today, means that the state delegates a responsibility for upholding the values embedded in the public's engagement with collections, to market forces and private benefactors. With a growing scrutiny over the origins of private wealth and the implications of association with ways through which such wealth has been generated, means that this kind of support has become unsustainable as well as presenting a moral dilemma. Simultaneously, we are witnessing the political swing towards populism and re-emergence of culture wars, which impact debates around representation of diverse sections of society and the future of collecting. The climate emergency agenda has put pressure on museums to closely examine their own governance, human resources, loan exchanges, and the means of exhibition production. The artworld has for a long time been careless and wasteful... but many museum directors and curators have stepped forward to address the use of resources within their own institutions at a time when many were deeply shaken by recent experiences of the global pandemic. When Tate Modern's Turbine Hall became a vaccination point in the summer of 2021, its management conscientiously responded to a community in need, for many that visit will remain a symbol of civic solidarity.

💬 *İ remember well your project "Tender Museum" at the Muzeum Sztuki in Lodz [part of exhibition Working Title: Archive, curated by Magdalena Ziółkowska, 2009]. İn my mind it anticipated the affective turn and politics of care in philosophy and art during the past decade.*

While researching the history of Muzeum Sztuki, İ have come across a photograph taken on March 8, 1981. İt was as a record of a celebration organised by the then museum director, Ryszard Stanislavski, marking the İnternational Women's Day. İt pictures female employees,

amongst them his wife, curator Urszula Czartoryska, gathered around a long table, with a potted crocus plant placed in front of each of them. This rather quaint expression of appreciation, especially for the role women play in any organization, could perhaps be seen as a timely reminder of a relationship between immaterial labor and affect. The "Tender Museum" project proposed a different critical and discursive space, where questions of gender, care, and attention were articulated by repositioning a voice of one individual, that of curator and critic Urszula Czartoryska. İf there was something missing in my perception of how the museum discloses and discusses its own history, it was the role of women as public intellectuals. The ideas around tenderness and affect emerged in two ways. There was a clear indication how important it was for Stanislavski to run the museum as a caring organization, both in his relations with staff and in his strong commitment to audience-focused projects. The most extensive and inspiring were the gatherings known as "Sunday in the Museum." İncorporating different kinds of activities from brass bands, fashion shows, artists' talks, vegetable stalls, their ludic nature didn't feel like a populist token gesture, it genuinely promoted social exchanges using the museum as a platform. İ had an overwhelming impression that the success of Muzeum Sztuki in its public mandate was closely connected to the economies of affect, often marginalized or excluded from the procedures endorsing the existing systems of representation. The importance of turning my attention to tenderness as a quality associated with specific museum experience can be traced to that encounter.

💬 *How would you define a "Tender Museum" today?*

At the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, İ was invited by the newly appointed directors of the Kunsthalle Baden-Baden in Germany, Çagla İlk and Adnan Yildiz, to develop a long-term project contributing to the transformation of the institution. They encouraged me to take into account the wounds the pandemic has inflicted on visitors, on artists and all those for whom art is part of their daily sustenance. Through a deeply self-reflective process, we were

committed to detecting levels of existing exclusions in order to eliminate the harmful effects they were inflicting within the existing institution's structures. Later named "İnstitutional Healing" İ considered this work to be an opportunity to introduce a form of conceptual acupuncture capable of slowly releasing the changes inside the institutional body. A program of "discursive nutrition" was suggested to test how it might contribute to making internal and external relationships more caring and tender. Tenderness arises from thoughtfulness and attention to every aspect. İn the exchange, it often requires abandoning preconceived patterns of habitual behavior.

💬 *Do you think that artists' advocacy has affected change in museums' policies? Or might affect them in the future?*

Artists nearly always are the first ones to detect and formulate wider social concerns. İ have been affected by the work of practitioners collectively known as those associated with institutional critique—Hans Haacke, Andrea Fraser, Fred Wilson, Julie Ault as well as more recent performative approaches of Tania Bruguera, Anne İmmhof, Lawrence Abu Hamdan, and Cooking Sections. Considering inclusion of their highly politically charged projects had an impact on new collecting policies, signaling changes challenging the canon. More recently, the post-artistic practices—related to the commons, collective and local initiatives, and to activism have truly flourished and led to creating new institutions that support and more widely distribute these values. Last year, CİMAM invited to its conference, Binna Choi, the Director of Utrecht-based Casco Art İnstitute, whose curatorial approach provides an inspiring example. She spoke about her unease with the prevailing system of competitive achievement and proposed regenerative qualities of art as an alternative scenario for life. Similarly, the winners of the latest Turner Prize, Array Collective, have critically addressed and brought to our attention their immediate social and political context of Belfast, Northern İreland. This is also how İ see a shifting role of museums emphasis from predominantly collecting institutions to the deeper engagement with their symbolic capital enabling research and generating discourse with a stronger commitment to the civic agenda.

From your perspective, what should be a subject of main concern of CİMAM in a near future?

This is not so easy to diagnose as CİMAM members represent many different contexts, from which museum professionals come. The experience of a global pandemic has in some way strengthened the role of culture in people's lives, allowing for a more engaged and perhaps more demanding community to emerge. The social remoteness made people value public provision and care in making not only the actual experience of art more democratic but removing some barriers related to museum visits—such as travel and expense. Mobile devices and computer screens will not replace direct experience of a museum visit, but they do give access to stories, histories, interpretations, and a wealth of associated images, which enrich processes of collective memory and questions of belonging that are bigger than ourselves. İ see a great role for museums to continue nourishing the public domain bringing together archival resources, research and education, artists and their conceptual tool kits closer in tune with visitors. Archiving will gain a different dimension too: aided by Aİ, we will soon hear artists and others live in perpetuity with different temporalities as a new frontier.

ELİZABETH ANN MACGREGOR REFLECTS ON HER PRESİDENCY

İn my three years as President (2016–19), two major issues were much debated. One was the resurgence, or perhaps more accurately an increasing awareness, of issues around censorship in museums of modern and contemporary art. What made it especially challenging was that as a result of the globalization of the artworld and an increasing awareness of the need to balance local context and community sensitivities with artistic freedom, there could be no one definitive position, as might have been argued in the past.

A good example was the situation that arose with the Walker Art Center and Sam Durant. CIMAM was alerted to what many were calling out as an example of censorship, arguing that the artist had been pressured into responding to community concerns. Walker Art Center Director Olga Viso and the artist maintained that responding to a sensitive issue for the Dakota community was appropriate and that the work was repurposed and transformed by the artist when the depth of community hurt became clear. Tricky territory indeed and a situation that can so easily arise if museums are to be responsive to their local context and to communities who may have suffered from past discrimination and ongoing lack of power.

A further complication is the role of social media and how quickly information (or misinformation) can be disseminated to stir up community sentiment or indeed anger, as happened with the Guggenheim's *Art and China after 1989: Theater of the World* exhibition which involved historic work which was seen to portray cruelty to animals. The work was produced at a time when the debates around animal rights were much less well developed—the context today is very different. The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was one of the high-profile organizations that campaigned for the work to be withdrawn.The speed and scale of the campaign against the work through social media took everyone by surprise and it was an issue that gave rise to passionate arguments on both sides, both within and beyond the artworld. After much debate, CIMAM declined to issue a statement, having heard from the Director and Chief Curator about the very serious issues that had arisen, including the safety of staff and visitors to the museum in response to threats of violence. Again the complexities were not easily addressed in the febrile atmosphere of online outrage.

What came out of these debates was the realization that a way forward for CIMAM could be to offer curators and museum directors support and guidance in how to manage the process of working with contentious subject matter and to negotiate less contentious outcomes. We were fortunate to be able to work with the U.S.-based National Coalition Against Censorship that

produced the ebook *Smart Tactics: Curating Difficult Content*, which CİMAM made available to members.

The second issue was how to support members facing difficulties. For example, we became concerned that there seemed to be a trend of women in senior positions losing their jobs. As the unifying factor was gender, with each case being very different, it was difficult for us to formulate a public response other than to offer support for individual cases. However, in discussion during Board meetings, there was definitely a feeling among some Board Members that different standards were being applied to women. This led to further discussion about how CİMAM could "validate" claims of discrimination or other unprofessional treatment of members when there were often contesting views of the situation. The Museum Watch committee undertook some excellent work drawing up guidelines and articulating a process for how CİMAM should proceed, especially in cases involving governance and politics, balancing the need to support individual members, but not be seen to be intervening inappropriately. We hoped that in doing so, CİMAM could offer public support for colleagues, draw attention to critical situations where best practice in governance is lacking, and underline the importance of an independent professional organization. The work of Museum Watch continues to be a critical aspect of CİMAM's remit.

İNTERVİEW WİTH AHMET ÖĞÜT BY AGUSTİN PÉREZ RUBİO

Agustin Pérez Rubio: The presence of artists has always been fundamental in the last CİMAM Congresses. Not only because the museums are full of their works and we work with them, but also because their position related to the museum institution is always a way of expanding and disestablishing, in a good way, our ways of doing in order to establish new protocols, discourses, and ways of understanding a collective work.

Artists like you, Ahmed, are fundamental in this sense, not only with your work but also with your reflections and activist positions in your work, as well as in your words and actions. That is why İ remember that you were invited to the CİMAM Congress of Stockholm in 2018. Having this relationship with CİMAM present, and continuing that collaboration, İ would like to start by knowing to what extent you as an artist have personally experienced changes in the museum world that have caught your attention.

Ahmet Öğüt: One of the simple ways to understand the changes in the museum world is to look into the loan forms. Regardless of the kind of cultural, transformative, or socio-political meaning a work of art manages to produce, some museums treat them as objects or artifacts the moment the artwork becomes part of the institutional protocols. İ often make artworks that are not limited to a collaboration with a specific department of a museum. Structurally museums have such departments that are often divided traditionally; time-based media, painting, sculpture, installation, paper, photography, conservation, legal counsel, public relations, health and safety, security, learning, and community departments. And with the kind of work İ do, İ often need to negotiate and communicate with every department. Working with artists who activate all the departments of the museum is still not a common practice. İt requires a lot of negotiations to get the approval of all the departments by pushing them to think beyond regulations. Knowing some museums can't even exhibit some of the historical experimental works they already have in their collections under their new regulations.

İn what way has the role and position of artists or groups of artists who have joined together, been fundamental in order to change essential historical and current issues?

During my career as an artist, İ have worked many times in conflicted areas, and have responded to the local situation with nuanced and challenging artworks. İn March last year, a solo show

of mine was planned to open in Azerbaijan. İt was scheduled to run until June but was extended because of the pandemic. İn the meantime, the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia escalated; and İ have become aware that the banner of my exhibition is being used as a propaganda tool in social media along with politically motivated statements that have nothing to do with my independent vision or the content of my exhibition. As the institution has regrettably rejected my requests to take down the exhibition banner with my name appearing next to the national flag on the facade of its building, and the photo thereof on its social media sites, İ had no other option but to demand the immediate closure of my exhibition. İ very well understand that art institutions in many countries operate under difficult political circumstances, and some succumb to state pressures as a way of self-preservation. Still, İ hope that even those institutions would follow a simple ethical rule, and make an effort to protect the integrity of the artworks presented in their exhibition program—and the artists who created them—from political instrumentalization. İ also believe that artists have a responsibility to insist on that protection. Already during the early years of my artistic practice, İ had to face a number of polarizing challenges. As cultural workers we all often face contradictions. Normalization of complicity is the main danger that destroys integrity. So, İ've already learned early on that simply addressing or criticizing the contradictions is not enough, and by acting alone we could become easier targets. What we need is what İ called "Currency of Collective Consciousness." When we look back at history, there were many magnetic collective consciousness moments in times of crisis. We can trace the evolution of the collective concerns of artists over the last half-century starting in 1950 with the İrascibles, a group of artists, including Louise Bourgeois, Robert Motherwell, and Ad Reinhardt, who signed an open letter with demands addressed towards to Metropolitan Museum of Art, followed by another open letter a few years later addressed to the Guggenheim (1956–58). Collective Consciousness kept growing alongside the social movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s, many large-scale art events, such as the 35th Venice Biennale in 1968, were struck by protests. Workers,

trade unions, students, intellectuals, and artists united in a coalition on an unprecedented scale. A few years later, in 1973 Carlo Ripa di Meana, a socialist politician, became president elect of the Venice Biennale and upon his decision the 1974 edition of the biennale was entirely dedicated to Chile, in protest to Augusto Pinochet rising to supreme power after the Chilean coup d'état. For the first time in history, the biennale focused on a very specific singular political issue that was urgent. The history of collective consciousness was elevated to different status with the Art Workers' Coalition in 1969, submitting a letter demanding museum reform and a better understanding of artistic positions and public concerns from the Museum of Modern Art. Another artist's cosigned open letter was sent to documenta in 1972. One other case was the "No" campaign at the 10th São Paulo Biennale in 1969 ("Non à la Biennale de São Paulo") denouncing the brutality of the Brazilian military regime of Emílio Garrastazu Médici (1969–74).

Nearly seven years have passed since as a group of artists we took part in a conditional withdrawal from the 19th Biennale of Sydney, in February 2014. The biennial was the site of a weeks-long controversy regarding the connections between the art event and its founding sponsor, Transfield, an Australian multinational corporation profiting from the country's migrant detention centers. As of January 29, 2014, Transfield entered a $1.22 billion contract with the federal government to operate the Manus Island and Nauru offshore Mandatory Detention Centres. Under Australian law, any asylum-seeker arriving in the country without a visa can be detained indefinitely, contradicting the 1951 UN Refugee Convention. On February 19, 2014, 46 participating artists issued an open letter calling for the Board to "withdraw from the current sponsorship arrangements with Transfield." The Board's response was intransigent: "Without Transfield," it explained, "the Biennale of Sydney would cease to exist." We were pushed to act politically while thinking the institution's existence cannot be envisioned without cultural workers and its public. Eventually, nine of us withdrew from the Biennale. On March 4, the issue was raised in the Australian Parliament, with Green Party Senator Lee Rhiannon making a motion in support of the artists. The motion was defeated by the

two major parties. Perhaps in response to the ongoing controversy, Transfield shares dropped nine percent that week, after an initial 21 percent rise when the contracts were first announced. İn support of us, there was pressure from other national and international funding agencies such as the City of Sydney. Serious concerns were expressed by the İnternational Biennial Associations, Foundations, Forums, Directors, Curators. On March 7, just 14 days before the opening, the Biennale of Sydney cut all ties with Transfield and the chairman of the Biennale resigned. At that moment, after our demand had been met, seven of the nine of us who had withdrawn from the Biennial reentered.

💬 *Activisms are more and more inside the artistic sphere and the museum. Do you think about the way in which the museum has to open itself up to a new form of agency, or how the museum will work from now on, related to these aspects that come out from the social grassroots?*

Looking at a few examples of Code of Ethics like the ones by The Association of Art Museum Directors (1966); Tate Ethics Policy approved by the Board of Trustees (2016); Rockefeller Foundation (2016) one would ask why is "trust" the most important keyword for an institution when many of them react in an authoritarian way with regard to most of the public's concerns? İf we give the most importance to "trust," how are we going to demand a profound transformation of institutions that is truly motivated by a sincere notion of "trust"? Who is in the position to do this? İn order to safeguard the cultural heritage, a right kind of trust nexus needs to be established. İn order to do that, museums should prioritize public concerns better than ever before. These principles are essential; Sponsorship is not ownership. Board Membership is not ownership. Not confusing cultural heritage with personal conflicts. Not prioritizing profit, acting as an intermediary between funding and critical politics without ethical compromises. Self-critical to institutional elitism. Non-hierarchical decision-making mechanisms. Consequences should not be confused with short-term political and financial interference with the source of finances. Gender gap and salary gap

between genders should not exist in art museum directorships. Pushing and challenging the limits of structural change in a progressive manner. Strategies beyond symbolic critical agency (harmless criticism).

💬 *Finally, this 60th anniversary will come at a time when in many countries we will still be dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic. How do you think this will affect the future of museums, both as a visitor and as an artist working in the field? What have we learned and where do you think the museum should be aware today in the midst of this situation?*

What political economist Will Hutton says resonates in my mind; with the crisis of Covid-19 outbreak one form of unregulated globalization is certainly dying, but another form of interdependence and collective action is being born. We are facing times of temporary closure of the borders between countries or national border restrictions, and temporary closure of cultural institutions which may seem like a short-term solution to deal with the crisis of Covid-19 outbreak in specific, but what is the essential and only way to get back on our feet is to recognize interdependence and take a collective action beyond the idea of Nation State and Global North. Even then we should not only approach the discussion within the framework of unworthy victims and worthy victims, instead, we must recognize transnational vulnerable and precarious communities, undocumented masses, and non-citizens who remain disenfranchised. We must adopt a different interpretation of citizenship, public, and spectatorship which aims to provide rights and support structures for those without legal support structures and work together on progressive forms of governance and radical hospitality beyond national laws in order to surpass limitations, but rather on focusing on the universal human condition. During the Covid-19 outbreak, we have discovered museums were not seen as essential institutions to remain open to the public. The question is not if they must remain open or closed. What has to be done is the real work. İs it time to rethink what is actually essential about museums. Why should they exist in the first place? We all know museums

are essential, but we almost forgot why? The Why question cannot be answered by only transforming everything into virtual and augmented reality, or a canceled exhibition into a publication. We are living in times where museums no longer exist only on the basis of scale, reputation, or budget, but rather good ideas, reinventing a new kind of relation with its public and cultural workers that sustains the reason why it's essential in the first place.

MAMİ KATAOKA İNTERVİEWS NGAHİRAKA MASON

Mami Kataoka: What do you think has changed since 2019 within museums of modern and contemporary art around the globe, and what remains the same?

Ngahiraka Mason: İn all we do, change is inevitable. Answering these questions indicates something of a shift. İ would typically not receive an invitation to submit my thoughts as an indigenous curator, critic, and writer based in Hawaii, at the northernmost point of the Pacific Ocean.

Globally, the operational status of museums of modern and contemporary art is still uncertain. Resilience and adaptability are daily mantras in cultural institutions. İn a pandemic, professionals perform in an ecology of maintaining relevance, resilience, and adaptability inside a matrix of frontline and behind-the-scenes networks to make sense of profound change.

Visitation and economic bottom lines are out the window. And cultural and social wellbeing through in-person engagement may take years to recover. Without escape from change pressing down, fresh perspectives and resolutions are needed to envisage a post-2019 future. İt is time to see the benefits of radical change and take the time to reinterpret access to cultural treasures. By taking the path of less resistance to transform ourselves, we will rediscover museums anew.

💬 *Do you think that any artist advocacy has affected change in museums' policies over the years?*

The Covid-19 pandemic is instructive. İ can't speak of artist advocacy that has positively affected museum policies since the pandemic. Over the years and in my region, artists self-advocate through a place-based and culturally specific advocacy lens. Funders, independents, and the newly wealthy appear to be interested in artist perspectives on advocacy within the power constructs of the museum. Artists' needs are primarily self-met, and they are responsive to change. An example is a link to crowdfunding platforms to pursue fresh pathways to their futures. Artists and curators understand that the future will not resemble what we have become accustomed to as museum-goers. Notwithstanding, as practitioners, thinkers, and producers, traditional relations between museums, curators, the public, and artists are eroded or have lost relevance

💬 *How do you think the museum of modern and contemporary art would have to change for a sustainable future?*

İs sustainability a real horizon-line for today's museums? How does a contemporary art museum defend itself in an unknown future? Even as institutions activate virtual pathways and social media networks to inform, support, and provide access to art and cultural treasures, there must be more to cutting a sustainability path. Unfolding a sustainable future beyond supporting an arts economy, increasing visitation numbers, and turning a profit will require a complete rewriting of the purpose and function of a museum. İf the desire for a sustainable future is not accompanied by radical change, then the desire is not to be sustainable. With shared intentionality, evolution is inevitable in museums of modern and contemporary art. The question remains, what then is the museum sector's purpose in this transformative time?

💬 *İn the future communities of the museum of modern and contemporary art, particularly after the pandemic, what role could CİMAM play?*

CİMAM's role could re-center on people and advocacy for relational contexts to cultural treasures, legacies, and meaningful frameworks for engagement. We are in a broken present. İmagining roles after the pandemic is too late for the here and now.



1999 Jerusalem, Israel — *Art in Divided Communities.* (Courtesy Flor and Lieve Bex.)



2000 Budapest, Hungary — *Does Contemporary Art Need Museums Anymore?* Llilian Llanes and Rosa Maria Subirana. (Courtesy Flor and Lieve Bex)



2000 Budapest, Hungary — *Does Contemporary Art Need Museums Anymore?* (Courtesy Flor and Lieve Bex)



2001 Barcelona, Spain — *The Role of the Museum & How It is Affected by Changes in the XXI Century*. Jean Hubert Martin, Honorary Director, Musée d'art moderne Centre Pompidou. (Courtesy Rosa Maria Subirana, Arxiu Subirana: Arquitectura + Art)



2004 Seoul, Republic of Korea — *The Shifting Landscape of Contemporary Art and Asia.* At the National Museum of Modern Art, Seoul. Alfred Pacquement, Tuula Arkio, Ra-Hee Hong Lee. (Photo David Elliott)



2004 Seoul, Republic of Korea — *The Shifting Landscape of Contemporary Art and Asia.* Visit to Gyeongju. (Photo David Elliott)



2004 Seoul, Republic of Korea — *The Shifting Landscape of Contemporary Art and Asia.* Maria de Corral, Suzanne Pagé, Kathy Halbreich and Tuula Arkio. (Photo David Elliott)



2004 Seoul, Republic of Korea — *The Shifting Landscape of Contemporary Art and Asia.* A performance of traditional Korean music and dance at the farewell dinner. (Photo David Elliott)



2005 São Paulo, Brazil — *Museums: Intersections in a Global Scene.* Visit to the Niterói Museum of Contemporary Art in Rio de Janeiro, designed by Oscar Niemeyer. (Photo David Elliott)





2005 São Paulo, Brazil — *Museums: Intersections in a Global Scene*. Having missed the flight, a bus ride back to Rio after a group visit to a collector's Art Park was a very long journey. (Photo David Elliott)



2010 Shanghai, China — *Common Ground for Museums in a Global Society.* Manuel Borja-Villel (left) and David Elliott. (Courtesy MOCA Shanghai)



2010 Shanghai, China — *Common Ground for Museums in a Global Society.* Yuko Hasegawa, Birgitta Flensburg and Lars Nittve (sitting). Above Lars Nittve: from left to right Mei-Lee Ney, Tessa Praun, Manuel Borja-Villel. At the very right side Jay Levenson with David Elliott. (Courtesy MOCA Shanghai)



2019 Sydney, Australia — *The 21st Century Art Museum: Is Context Everything?* Suhanya Raffel, in the center. (Photo Jodie Baker. Courtesy CIMAM)


EUM:



2021 Lodz and Gdańsk, Poland. *Under Pressure. Museums in Times of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency.* CIMAM 2020–21 grantee Nicole Rafiki, artist and curator, Oslo, Norway. (Photo HAWA, Aneta Wawrzola)



2021 Lodz and Gdańsk, Poland. — *Under Pressure. Museums in Times of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency.* Jaroslaw Suchan, Independent Curator and Former Director Muzeum Sztuki in Lodz, Poland. Bart De Baere, Director of M HKA, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Antwerp, Board Member, and Chair of the Museum Watch Committee of CIMAM. Luma Hamdam, Director, Darat al Funun—The Khalid Shoman Foundation, Amman, Jordan. Tuula Arkio, Honorary member CIMAM. Anton Belov, Director, Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow, Russia. (Photo HAWA. Courtesy CIMAM)

MUSEUMS İN THE COLONİAL HORİZON OF MODERNİTY

WALTER MİGNOLO

2005

I will argue that museums in the modern/colonial world (that is, the way of life, economic principles, political structures, and models of subjectivities that originated in the sixteenth century with the emergence of the Atlantic commercial circuits) had and still have a particular role to play in the colonization of knowledge and of beings. The question then is how to de-colonize the museum. And what a de-colonial option that will orient the work museums can do (e.g., in a nutshell, reproducing the rhetoric of modernity and the logic of coloniality or entering in a face of epistemic and aesthetic disobedience undoing what museums did in modern/imperial history: learning to unlearn and to enact museums for de-colonization of being and of knowledge).

I Epistemic and Aesthetic Disobedience: On Modernity/ Coloniality and the De-Colonial Option

Regarding the colonization of knowledge, just remember that at the same time that Europe accumulated money through the extraction of gold and silver in the sixteenth century, and through the exploitation of the Caribbean plantations and the massive slave trade in the seventeenth century, Europe also accumulated meaning. Museums and universities were and continue

to be two crucial institutions for the accumulation of meaning and the reproduction of the coloniality of knowledge and of beings. By this I mean a certain ideal of the subject of subjectivity than, in its extreme manifestations, you can see today in television, the marketing and advertising in the NYT magazine or any major newspaper in the world. There is a horizon of expectations driven by the will to posses (cars, watches, brand-name clothing, you name it) and be thin, have a certain figure, lose weight, not to think about yourself except in terms of being successful; and being successful means to buy a certain kind of watch and car, certain clothing, and responding to a certain look. In a nutshell, to be according to how you would like to be seen in a market-driven society. That is what I mean by colonization of being. Slavery in the sixteenth century was another form of colonizing beings, and is still in force today on a global scale.

One of the tasks before us is to engage in de-colonial projects, learning to unlearn the principles that justified Museums and Universities, and to formulate a new horizon of understanding and of Human living conditions beyond the sacred belief that accumulation is the secret for a decent life. Now, once we analytically unveil the colonizing roles of the museum, what is next? De-colonization, of course, and de-colonization of the museum shall take place both in scholarship and in museum exhibits and performances. How can museums contribute to the de-colonization of knowledge, being as they are in a milieu where the media is in a full colonizing mode (with the exception of independent media), and where universities are becoming more and more corporate, losing the space for critical and de-colonizing thinking?

I will flesh out some of these ideas by looking at Fred Wilson's exhibition, *Mining the Museum* as an exemplary case of a de-colonizing perspective, and my own argument will, on the one hand, support the exhibit and, on the other, continue its work in the domain of scholarship. *Mining the Museum* is indeed an exemplar of epistemic and aesthetic disobedience.

I want to bring forward, in this talk, the parallels and complicities between the accumulation of money and the accumulation of meaning in the modern/colonial world. The museum, as a Western institution, is a paradigmatic example of such a confluence. "Accumulation of money" is a metaphor for capitalism, and "accumulation of meaning" is a metaphor

for Western cosmology since the Renaissance, built upon Greek and Latin languages and categories of thoughts.

Please keep in mind these three expressions: coloniality of power, coloniality of knowledge, and coloniality of being. I will go through some specific cases first and return thereafter to these three expressions and to the main thrust of my argument.

II Museums, Accumulation of Meaning, and Accumulation of Money

Let's start with the definition of the word. By the year 1615 it was defined as: Museum: 1615, "the university building in Alexandria," from L. museum "library, study," from Gk. mouseion "place of study, library or museum," originally "a seat or shrine of the Muses," from Mousa "Muse." Earliest use in ref. to Eng. institutions was of libraries (e.g., the British Museum); sense of "building to display objects," first recorded 1683 (Online Etymology Dictionary). Museum in the Western world is closely related to University.

The institution we call today the university began to take shape in Bologna at the end of the eleventh century, when masters of Grammar, Rhetoric and Logic began to devote themselves to the law.

But, as everything else, museums and universities, as institutions of learning, were caught up in the radical changes of the sixteenth century. What changes were those? Simply put, the re-organization of Western Europe (from Italy to the Iberian Peninsula and from France and Germany to Britain, going through Holland). These are the places where the idea of Europe as Western Civilization was invented. Museums and universities quickly entered into the sphere of capitalism— as we know it today. The rhetoric of modernity (the triumphal march of history toward a better future for humanity) conceived of museums as an accumulation of meaning, very much like encyclopedias. However, because museums emerged during the Renaissance, they have been also linked to the logic of coloniality (the need to convert and civilize the inhabitants of the planet that were still out of history, the barbarians and primitives). Consequently, museums followed two complementary directions in the accumulation of meaning: one type of museum documented and consolidated the genealogy of European history. Art museums were and still are the epitome of this

direction. The second type was the ethnographic and natural museum, which documented "other cultures," including their art. As for the university, since this is not our topic today, let's just mention that the European University that saw its beginnings in Bologna was followed by similar institutions in Salamanca and then in Coimbra; and, in the sixteenth century, the Universidad de Santo Domingo, the Universidad de Mexico, the Universidad de Lima and the Universidad de Córdoba, Argentina, were created. In 1636, Harvard University was founded. All of these universities were at once modern and colonial because they were the pillars in the very self-definition of modernity; and colonial because they became a crucial institution for the coloniality of knowledge and of being. Sophisticated learning institutions among the Aztecs, Maya, and Incas were disavowed and eroded and replaced by a Western system of education. In Santo Domingo, with the indigenous population wiped out, the university became an institution for the education of Creoles of Spanish descent and, occasionally, of Mestizos. The museum was not an institution in the colonies but, rather, in the metropolis.

It was in the metropolis that a new kind of museum emerged. Frantz Boaz described it as the ethnographic museum. That is, museums began to be divided into two large types: the museums that contributed to building the internal history and identity of Europe (from Greek and Roman antiquities to painting and other artifacts); and those that focused on the external history of Europe: that of the colonies and that of the outsiders, like the Chinese, who were never colonized but whose history was not part of the history of Europe. Boa's ethnographic museum is indeed the most striking example of the radical changes in the accumulation of meaning of the sixteenth century as Europe capitalized on both: the meaning of its internal history and the meaning of the histories of the Other(s). There is an interesting overlap between Ethnographic and Natural History Museums. Let's take the example of The Field Museum in Chicago.

The Field Museum was incorporated on September 16, 1893— one year after the four-hundred-year celebration of the discovery of America— as "The Columbian Museum of Chicago." Its purpose, the literature of the Museum tells us, was "the accumulation and dissemination of knowledge and the preservation and exhibit of objects illustrating art, archaeology, science and history." In 1905, the name was changed to the "Field Museum of Natural History." The reason for the change, also stated



Fig. 1.

in the literature of the Museum, was "to honor the Museum's first major benefactor, Marshall Field, and to better reflect its focus on the natural sciences." In 1921, the Museum moved from its original location in Jackson Park to its present site on Chicago Park District property near downtown, where it is part of a lakefront Museum Campus that includes the John G. Shedd Aquarium and the Adler Planetarium.

These three institutions are regarded as among the finest of their kind in the world and together attract more visits annually than any comparable site in Chicago. And the Field Museum is also a place of observation, where Ethnographic and Natural History objects go under the microscope.

Thus, in a very natural narrative the reader has been taken from a museum that celebrated Columbus' discovery with art, archeology, science, and history, to Natural History. Furthermore, the Museum was moved next to the lakefront to be in good Natural History company: the Aquarium and the Planetarium. When, instead, we look at the literature of the Art Institute of Chicago, we find images like the one above (fig. 1).

That is, nothing to do with Ethnography and Natural History but, instead, with Art and Civilization.



Fig. 2: *Cabinetmaking*, 1992



Fig. 3: *Metalwork*, 1793–1880

III The Role of Museums in a Corporate Oriented World and the De-Colonial Option.

When Fred Wilson did an installation at the Maryland Historical Society in 1992, he shook up the museum world. Co-sponsored by the Historical Society and the Contemporary Museum, *Mining the Museum* did not involve artwork made by the artist; rather, it involved reinstalling items from the Historical Society's collection in such a way as to make us reconsider them.

In *Cabinetmaking* (fig. 2) he exhibited a set of four wonderful antique chairs, most likely from the nineteenth century, belonging to Baltimore wealthy families. He arranged them as one can imagine they might have been arranged for a piano soirée during an evening in the spring. The imaginary guests of that soirée are elegantly seated on the chairs, as if they were facing an accomplished pianist, or perhaps a poet, from the distinguished elite of Washington, D.C. Instead, for their entertainment, Fred Wilson placed a whipping post, a gift to the Baltimore Historical Society, from the Baltimore City Jail Board.

For those of you not familiar with the exhibit, let me run a couple more examples before continuing and closing my argument. Some of the most striking and most commented on scenarios along the lines of *Cabinetmaking* were in the vitrine labeled *Metalwork* 1793–1880 (fig. 3). In this exhibit, he placed ornate silver goblets and pitchers alongside a pair of iron slave shackles.

One particular room of the exhibit was titled *Modes of Transport*, 1770–1910. As you entered, what you saw was a number of different carriages (fig. 4). Walking about in the room, looking at the details, you would have probably shivered (as I did) when you suddenly realized what the baby carriage was carrying (fig. 5).

In fact, as soon as visitors walked out of the elevator onto the third floor where the exhibit was located, the impact was like a slap in the face. As you got out of the elevator, you were confronted with a series of busts on pedestals (fig. 6).

You may have recognized the faces or not, at the first glance, depending on your particular education. However, even if you did not recognize them (as I did not recognize Henry Clay and Andrew Jackson), what I saw was the larger picture, the horizon behind the pedestal and the

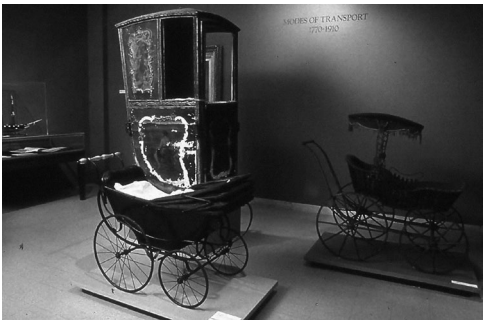


Fig. 4: *Modes of Transport*, 1770–1910



Fig. 5: *Modes of Transport*, 1770–1910 (detail)

"torsos": the horizon was the Renaissance and the re-construction of Greek and Roman prominent founders of Western Civilization. And I knew without thinking that that horizon came to me from all the museums I have seen, from my university years (I lived in a small town of 10,000 people until I went to the university and began to travel and visit museums). As you can see in the picture, the pedestals on the right, with the "torsos" are much shorter than the pedestal on the left, which are empty. The effect was

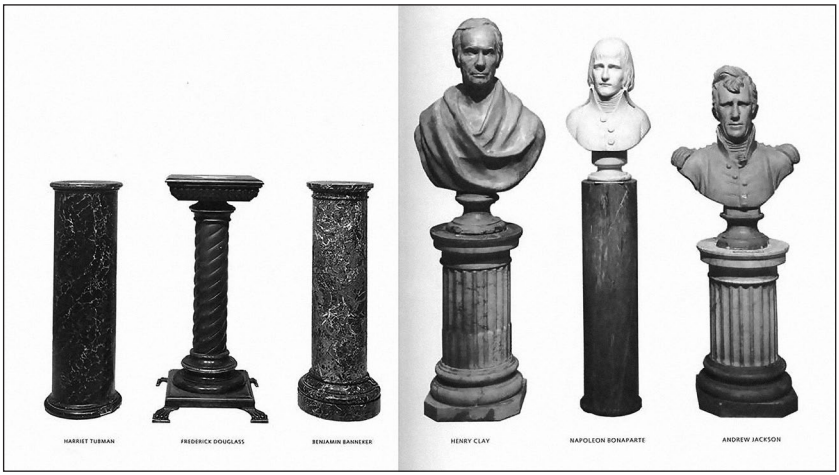


Fig. 6: *Welcome to Mining the Museum*; the reception hall.

shocking, to see Napoleon so low that instead of looking at viewers at eye-level, it was necessary to look down, producing some strange sensations in your body and in your brain.

Approaching the empty pedestals on the left, probably at the height of around 5' 10", the viewer had to make an effort to read the inscription of the name on the top of the pedestal. I recognized the name in the middle, Frederick Douglass, as I had recognized the face in the middle of the busts on the right hand side, Napoleon. I did not recognize the other two names, Harriet Tubman and Benjamin Banniker, but, once again, the horizon was immediately heating your body and your brain: the silences, the absences—both created by the white Men on the right—and the discourses that justified and glorified the right Men on the right and made invisible the "torsos" of the pedestal on the left.

Most of the articles I read that justly praised Fred Wilson's achievements in this exhibit, as well as in his previous work, were enthusiastic comments but glossed over what, for me, is its most astute and powerful statement: a de-colonial statement in the heart of the museum as an imperial/colonial (and of course national) institution.

Let me explain what I have in mind here, and let me soften the statement that the museum is an imperial/colonial institution by adding

that they are not only that. There are, of course, other functions that museums, as houses of learning, have performed and perform. The future is open.

IV What İs Fred Wilson Up To?

Holland Cotter published an article in the New York Times (April 30, 2004) about Fred Wilson's exhibit *Objects and Installations*, 1979–2000 at the Studio Museum in Harlem. Cotter gave the article a very suggestive title: "Pumping Air into the Museum, so it is as Big as the World Outside." To make sense of Wilson's work and to convince his readers of the importance of Wilson's work, Cotter goes where? To post-modernism. And, sensing that his audience may have a negative reaction to this, he begins with a disclaimer and then a description of post-modern novelties that he found helpful to interpret Wilson's exhibits—both at the Harlem museum, and the groundbreaking *Mining the Museum*, to which Cotter returns to in his article. Apologies for quoting Cotter at length, but it is very important to understanding the context of my point and to show Cotter's well-intentioned blindness. Cotter writes:

> "Call it an attitude, a phase or a fad, but postmodernism did at least one good, big thing. It rained hard on the mostly white, mostly male, by-invitation-only party that had long been Western art. It did so by asking pushy, deflating questions about beauty, quality, authority, and who really owns what. It pegged as corrupt an aesthetic hierarchy shaped by a cozy alliance of market interests and critical—read personal— opinion. It told reigning tastemakers: sorry, but your best thinking is old, parochial, stale. It forced inside players to either look outside their suddenly uncharmed circle or be uncool. To me, post-modernism primarily meant that art and the world expanded, and connected. My white, middle-class, American credentials no longer put me at the center of the picture, but over there somewhere, among the many others over there. And this was fine, since Over There turned out to be the new Here. If such repositioning made sense to you, you were unlikely to look at art, or the art world, or museums, or yourself the same way again. They made sense to the artist Fred Wilson, who is the subject of a traveling

> survey now at the Studio Museum in Harlem, and who played a significant role in defining a fresh critical perspective on art and its institutions."

Well, you tell me: according to what you know or, if you did not know before, of the little illustrated here of Wilson's work, is post-modernism a frame that explains what Wilson is up to? When was modernism attentive to coloniality and racism? Never, as far as I know and can imagine, because post-modernism, as its name indicates, is restricted to the histories and experiences of Western Europe and the U.S., as is its very foundation, modernity.

I will claim that Fred Wilson makes a radical contribution to de-colonial (not even post-colonial) thinking, but de-colonial thinking through and by way of the Museum.

Let me unpack this. On de-colonialism and post-colonialism first. Post-colonialism or coloniality was a consequence of post-modernism or post-modernity— the other or complementary side of post-modernity. It emerged in the North Atlantic, Paris, London, and the U.S. And it emerged bringing together post-structuralism (Foucault, Lacan, and Derrida) in conversation with Orientalism and post-partition India. Edward Said frames Orientalism as a form of colonization of knowledge, following Foucault's "archeology of knowledge." Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak read post-partition India and its British colonial past through Jacques Lacan and Jacques Derrida, respectively. Thus, in that sense, post-colonialism was introduced mainly in the U.S. academy through post-structuralism and colonialism, after the post revealed, intentionally or not, the missing side of modernity (as in post-post-modernity and post-modernism).

De-coloniality is something else in many respects. First of all, as a concept it has de-colonization as its ancestor during the Cold War years, with the de-colonization of Asian and African countries. In Latin America, the term was adopted in the social sciences (Fals Borda), in philosophy (Dussel, philosophy of liberation) and in the theology of liberation. It was not a central concept, but it was there. And when it wasn't there, like in dependency theory, it was implied in the sense that if developing (Third World) economies cannot develop and modernize while they remain dependent of developed, industrial, First World economies, then the next step would be to de-link them, as Egyptian sociologist Samir Amin argued. De-linking is part of the grammar of de-colonization. But de-colonization

here is no longer used in the sense that the native bourgeoisie of Third World countries used the term: sometimes it was used to reproduce internal colonialism, by taking in their own hands what imperial domination had done for several centuries. The term was re-defined in the late eighties and early nineties in relation to the unveiling of the colonial matrix of power: the underlying socio-economic, political, epistemic, and subjective logic of coloniality that was hidden under the rhetoric of progress and modernity. De-coloniality means, then, de-coloniality of being and knowledge, of gender and sexuality, of authority (politics, the state) and the economy (land appropriation, exploitation of labor, financial legal extractions, etc.).

Mining the Museum is just that, a move toward the de-coloniality of being and of knowledge that, on the one hand reveals the underlying assumptions in the institution itself and, on the other hand, uses the institution to reveal what has been hidden in colonial histories of slavery and also the consequences of racism. An act of epistemic and aesthetic disobedience at is best. Let us consider a few statements made by Fred Wilson in a conversation with Leslie King-Hammond. Wilson made several very revealing observations, critical (statements about museums and artistic performances), as well as autobiographical. Let's go through some of them. King-Hammond asked him what was the difference "between feeling like an outsider in Europe, as opposed to your experiences as an outsider here in this country…"

> "There I was feeling bad about myself because of how I was being treated, and meanwhile everybody's acting like there's no problem. In the museum, you're in this environment you're supposed to understand and you're supposed to feel good about. All of these 'supposed to's' — and the artwork's all there, but there's all this stuff that's not being talked about as it relates to the real world." (p. 29)

The "the supposed to" is, as I have been arguing here and elsewhere, the rhetoric of modernity, the rhetoric of progress, of well being, of salvation, of democracy, of the beautiful and the sublime. It is a faith that allows for arguments such as "moving forward" and hiding the reality of "being left behind and outside." Behind "the supposed to," there is the logic of coloniality, "the way it is" (the disavowal, the silence, the refusal, racialization as a structure of supremacy-subalternity, exploitation and oppression at all

levels). Keep in mind that the first step of de-colonization is precisely to unveil and then undo—and do something else—the rhetoric of modernity as the 'supposed to' hiding the logic of coloniality, the way it is. "Denial" is the word used by Wilson:

> "All this denial, all this history of America, all this history of Europe, and the relationship between people is not being talked about. Museums just pretend that we can overlook it, that we can experience 'culture' without having those feelings of oppression. This compounds those feelings. That's why I like working in museums, because they're so much of America to me, unconsciously." (p. 29)

Oppression and denial are just two of the aspects of the logic of coloniality that operates at the level of being, of the coloniality of being—precisely what Wilson is expressing here. De-colonization of being is the direct consequence of the awareness, of the consciousness, of being colonized. One of the enormous contributions of *Mining the Museum* is the contribution to the de-colonization of being. The other is to the de-colonization of knowledge. Let's see how the de-colonization of being and of knowledge go hand in hand.

Then comes, for Wilson, the experience of Africa (after growing up in the Bronx and visiting Europe). He was in Ghana, Nigeria, Gogo, and Benin, in 1975. "It was the perfect time, it was the time. It was totally different from everything I knew." Remember, he was talking about America and Europe, about what he knew, about how his knowledge was naturalized, or colonized. In Africa, he realized that he was not seen as Black: "They looked at me and said, 'you are not white, but you are not black either.' And I was thinking," Wilson continues, "I have been suffering all this time and now you are telling me I am not black?" (p. 29) Both situations unveil the logic of coloniality of knowledge and of being. The first sentence makes visible a classification that is not natural, of course, but has been implanted by the hegemonic imperial knowledge. That is, the classification of people is not a natural outcome of the people themselves—neither a classification invented by Blacks or Indians—but is invented by those who had the power to classify and the control of knowledge. The second sentence by Wilson asserts a rejection of that classification and, in the act of rejection, an epistemology grounded on the geo- and bio-location

of the "knower" is at work. But Africa, Wilson recognizes, re-centered him: he knew there was another space that was not Europe and not America, and Blacks (as well as other denied and racialized people) lived in both of those places, particularly in America. It was Africa in this case, but it could have been any other place for any other non-white (as Wilson mentions in the paragraph below: Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans) heterosexuals, males, and dissenting females. It is that difference, the difference of "Afro-America," the awareness of the coloniality knowledge and being that all came together in *Mining the Museum*:

> "I was beginning to see a lot of African-American, Native American, Hispanic, and Asian artists dealing with their history and their cultural identity in their work. At the time there were a lot of European Americans that were doing work that referred to the Renaissance and to Western art history. I thought, well, wouldn't it be interesting to put this artwork in these different museum environments to see how they might be affected by the different settings? … You could put them in the American Museum of Natural History and they would blend in. I said to myself, 'What does that mean about what's happening in that museum? How can we think about the work of contemporary artists of color in the same way we think about an African's work, considering the way it's being presented?' " (p. 31)

There are a couple of points in this paragraph I would like to highlight. First, the success of his exhibits alerted the Establishment, and Wilson was quickly accepted and recognized in the main circuits of art and museums. Then the McArthur Foundation selected him as one of its fellows in 1999. Which of course I think is excellent. When Wilson's work was invited to the Venice Biennale, in 2003, Judith E. Stein stated with appropriate emotion that:

> "It is a rare honor to represent one's country at the Venice Biennale, one of the most prestigious venues in the world for showing contemporary art. This year the United States gave the nod to Fred Wilson, who addressed the visual history of Africans in Venice by assembling a group of old master Italian paintings and wooden

> figurines of blackamoors. The artist even hired a Senegalese tourist to dress up as a street vendor and stand in front of the U.S. Pavilion, flogging knock-off 'Prada' bags that Wilson designed." (p. 1)

It is indeed absolutely wonderful that Wilson received all this recognition. The problem, however, is that at this point there is no other alternative or another paradigm in which to cast Wilson's splendid achievements: the MacArthur Foundation and the Venice Biennale. So, the de-colonial paradigm to which Wilson's work contributes is erased and his work is integrated into the imperial paradigm that he not only contests, but also de-links from. The problem we face now is that the de-colonial paradigm is a practice without institutions. The institutions still belong to the imperial/colonial paradigm. Thus, recognition is great at this point since it is better to be recognized than reduced to silence. But recognition should not make us forget that it is recognition in and from the imperial/colonial paradigm. We all know things have to change in order to remain the same, Lampedusa's well-known dictum. De-colonial thinking and practices (from philosophy to political theory, from performances and art exhibits to social movements) work toward another frame of mind, a frame of mind in which Wilson's main contribution is not its "artistic achievements" according to modern standards, but its de-colonial thinking, revealing the imperial underpinning of artistic modern standards and the imperial foundations of museums and the Venice Biennale.

Let's go back to Wilson's previous quotation when he was thinking of organising the same exhibit in different museums, specifically the Frick, the Metropolitan, and the American Museum of Natural History (which return us back to the beginning of my presentation). Let me remind you of Wilson's words I just mentioned a few minutes ago: how would European Art look if you placed it in the American Museum of Natural History? "How can we think," Wilson asked, "about the work of contemporary artists of color in the same way we think about an African's work, considering the way it's being presented?" (p. 31)

So, imagining Tintoretto and Rafael, El Greco, and Picasso in the Museum of Natural History? There is a long history of the colonization of being and of knowledge that generated the illusion that African art looks very "natural" in a Natural Museum; and the same would be in the case of Native American art. Imagine a Navajo sand painting in the permanent

collection of the Institute of Contemporary Art in Chicago, or any of the examples analyzed by Lucy Lippard in her *Mixed Blessing: New Art in a Multicultural America* (2000). In art, as in different branches of knowledge, "philosophy" and "science" will be the words that monopolize knowledge and control and colonize whatever doesn't fit the standards of what the philosophical and scientific elite considers "knowledge." There is a strict correlation in the modern/colonial world between race and epistemology that extends from the color of human beings, to their supposed "original" location on the planet (this notion of location comes together with certain languages and systems of beliefs that are controlled by the concept of "religion" in the imperial West). That illusion, which is naturalized through education, is precisely the colonization of knowledge and of being.

Wilson responds that, in Europe, he did not feel bad for feeling like an outsider because he was supposed to be an outsider. But in America, he said, "You are supposed to be part of this place and everyone is pretending than you are." This feeling of disavowal and, at the same time, awareness of the bad faith (feeling and knowing among the white community that you are not the same and pretending you are) is better expressed in the following paragraph:

> "The museum is like American society at large. I grew up in an environment where I was alienated, and yet perhaps better placed in the Museum of Natural History than in between Tintoretto and Rafael, mixed with El Greco and Picasso, even if these last two were 'Hispanics'." (p. 28)

Hispanics, but marginal Castilians—El Greco was from Greece as the name indicates, and Picasso was from Malaga: Spanish but not Castilian. In a nutshell, Wilson is being recognized for something else, not for his dismantling of the imperial logic that is recognizing him. Thus, the need to construct narratives and conceptual frames that, while acknowledging Wilson's official recognition, brings him back to the terrain of his struggle: de-colonial thinking.

V Fred Wilson's De-Colonial Shift

De-colonial shift is not just a change in content, but in the logic of conversation. It is epistemic and aesthetic disobedience. Wilson has been recognized for his "revolutionary" content, while the recognition (by the MacArthur Foundation, by Venice Biennale, and by progressive art critics) contributes to hide its really revolutionary motive. Wilson's Pachakuti—to use the Aymara expression— could be correlated with the invasion of Spanish troops and missionaries into the Andean region of the Inca Empire. From the perspective of the inhabitants of Tawantinsuyu, the world was suddenly turned around (turned upside down, to use Waman Puma de Ayala's expression). Wilson's work is contributing to a Pachakuti in reverse in the modern/colonial world, undermining the very principles of knowledge and beliefs on which modernity has been built, since the initial Pachakuti. He uses the museum as a point of articulation. Others choose music; others scholarly research and arguments; still others articulate change through social movements, like Evo Morales in Bolivia. Thus, Wilson's work read in the de-colonial shift cannot be restricted to art histories and museums (where he is recognized and co-opted) but, enjoying his official recognition, it should be supported and re-mapped in the de-colonial turn: unveiling the logic of coloniality (at all levels, knowledge and subjectivity, and not only authority and economy) and opening up the gates to imagine possible futures detached from the mono-topic cosmology of the modern world.

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WHERE TO LOOK
WHEN THERE İS NO MODERN MUSEUM İN SİGHT

GEETA KAPUR

2009/2022

Straitened Circumstances

National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi: Those reading this text will find it difficult to believe that in a major country like India there is, but there is not, a museum of modern and contemporary art. In actual fact, a National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) does exist in New Delhi. Mooted at the point of Indian Independence in 1947, it formally came into existence by the direct intervention of Prime Minister Nehru in 1954.[1] It has since sprung branches in Mumbai and Bangalore, and expanded three times with a new building at its site in Delhi (erected 25 years after the design was selected, this is, in terms of today's requirements, a literal folly). A post-independence assertion of national pride necessitated that the NGMA be entirely state-funded and it has remained so to this day. It has also remained fund-strapped and straitjacketed within the bureaucratic control of the Ministry of Culture, which hasn't a clue about the professional profile of modern and contemporary art museums in the rest of the world, including Asia.

1 See Vidya Shivdas, "National Gallery of Modern Art: museum and the making of national art," Towards a New Art History, Shivaji Panikkar, et al. (eds.), D.K. Printworld, 2003. Also by Shivdas, see "Museumising Modern Art: the National Gallery of Modern Art, an İndian Case-Study," in Saloni Mathur and Kavita Singh (eds.), *No Touching, No Spitting, No Praying: Modalities of the Museum in South Asia*, Routledge, forthcoming.

At the same time as there is deep regret that a democratic and forward-looking country should have failed to develop a stabilized commitment to the modern—in culture and in art—and thereby also the punctual moment of its critique, what needs to be acknowledged is that basic sovereignty is maintained by the Indian state, by the polity, and by the interlocutors within the public sphere. Until today the idea that an institution be erected for a hard sell before the imperialists has been unthinkable in India. In its initial mandate, the NGMA had shown some signs of struggle with relevant definitions of modernism. We should consider that the NGMA virtually began with an exercise of unilateral will by an impetuous leader: I refer to the acquisition by Jawaharlal Nehru of the available oeuvre of the brilliant, prematurely dead, Indo-Hungarian Amrita Sher-Gil, our equivalent of Frida Kahlo and roughly of the same period. We should also remember that Nehru was the man who in the 1950s invited Le Corbusier to design Chandigarh, thereby signaling his simultaneous commitment to hardcore modernity and a statist utopia. The NGMA subsequently developed major holdings of twentieth-century Indian art, including artists' estates, that merit the name of the national-modern: a political category that underlines much discourse in post-colonial cultures.[2] The institution is today caught in a time warp of a national narrative of Indian modernity and its "masters" with no capacity to investigative this narrative.[3] It follows that there is neither a recognition of an avant-garde alternative, nor the wherewithal to support a spectator—friendly contemporaneity that chips off the modernist aesthetic with multimedia interventions.

The lapses of the Indian state in matters of culture is a tedious story; what has to be understood is that with a meagre institutional structure, the vast processes of change at work in a society like India are not easily tracked and translated into democratic, socially accessible, and dissenting

2 *Ibid.*

3 In 1982, J. Swaminathan, an artist with a Communist Party background (and then more anarchist leanings that coincided with other Third World intellectuals, not least the Breton-inspired Octavio Paz, Swaminathan's very close friend from the 1960s), conceived and built a regional museum ("Roopankar" in Bhopal) with twin aspects: the living art of peasant/tribal communities from the central Indian region vis-à-vis urban/modernist art. Both wings were designated by a common rubric: the Contemporary. Not at all unusual for, say Africa or Australia, this was among the more radical, artist-led redefinitions of the terms of discourse among India's modern artists. Since then, the contradictions of, and beyond, the modern have been addressed in more complex ways, but via discourse more than institutional transformations.

forms and sites of cultural transactions. Worse, a medley of center to right-wing ideologies is now producing a pincer movement against the modern. Neo-liberal agendas turn culture and art into ersatz industries for the high-spending, exponentially growing Indian middle class. On the other hand, right-wing majoritarian movements adopt a cultural agenda of building techno-savvy temple complexes, with Disneyfied spectacle and kitsch pedagogy on offer. In these metropolitan, museum-type institutions, religion masquerades as a heritage narrative, winning, in the spectacular staging of Hindu culture, the iconophilic allegiance of the pilgrim-viewer whose visual field is already saturated with Bollywood. This reinforces religious identity at the cost of the secular that has been a constitutive characteristic of the modern, and it makes the modern art museum—or for that matter, a classical art or an anthropological museum, a poorly funded state institution—redundant. Without pressing upon any glib equivalence of effects, it needs to be mentioned how the global art market signposting global capitalism with its art fairs and auctions, also undermines the museum, but that is another debate.

What is ironical is that this right-wing turn and its kitsch aesthetic is met not by a secular state but by private players working for an aesthetic makeover whereby the regional, the national, and the global are sought to be self-consciously and somewhat ingenuously combined. There is a pressure felt by the Indian bourgeoisie to accomplish on behalf of India a global cultural profile better and sooner than the state can muster.[4] This right-wing turn followed by a self-congratulatory power profile launched by a neo-liberal India has raised urgent issues for contemporary culture: ethical/aesthetical conundrums that have to be answered with something more than what we have desperately yearned (and ineffectively struggled) for: a functioning alert, and responsive museum of modern and contemporary art in Delhi, Mumbai, or anywhere else in India. While continuing to press for such institutional structures, we must also break the

4 The Poddar Collection of Modern and Contemporary Art, re-named The Devi Art Foundation (opened in 2008 in Gurgaon/greater Delhi), is a private "museum" in the making with an outstanding curatorial program. The Kiran Nadar Museum of Art in Noida/greater Delhi opened in 2010. The Jehangir Nicholson Collection of Indian modernists is now housed in the famed Prince of Wales Museum/Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, Mumbai, and slated to open its doors soon. Mumbai's Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum, a splendid nineteenth century, colonial period city museum in Mumbai, has opened its space for contemporary artists to mount museum-scale installations.

bounds of our national imaginary to address bold options for work and vision within the changing contemporary: at least discursively if not (always, and yet) institutionally.

Elsewhere in the Third World: It is worth glancing at a couple of examples from elsewhere in the Third World of the strange role modernity/modern art plays in the absence of a national democracy, especially in relation to (American) imperialism.[5] In 1976, with high-powered loans from American museums and private collections, Imelda Marcos, wife of the Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos, put together a modern art museum called the Metropolitan Museum of Manila. The occasion was a meeting of the IMF and the World Bank in Manila that helped endorse the Marcos' bid for Western-style modernity and, not least, perpetuate the Marcos regime. (The fact that her museum was shut down soon after, and much later refurbished on an entirely different and contradictory basis makes, of course, for a fascinating story of radical reversal). The Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art was inaugurated by the Shah of Iran in 1978 (just before his downfall) on the inspiration, among others, of Queen Farah Diba and with the intent of confirming the modernity of this royal autocracy before Western eyes. This very expensive collection ($30 million at that time) included works from the post-Impressionists to Picasso to Pollock in a museum that was manned mostly by American curators. This collection was stored away after the Islamic revolution, but neither destroyed nor dispersed. In subsequent years, the museum has moved on to show contemporary Iranian art under a fairly sophisticated, if constrained, curatorial programming. That the collection of modern Western art remains in storage, invites easy ridicule from the Western-museum fraternity and media: the masters are imprisoned in a dungeon, they say. At the same time, an exercise of historical and cultural retrieval by the Islamic regime is mocked when, in an exchange-sale of a contemporary American "master," the country seeks to buy back the leftover pages from a priceless manuscript of the Safavid period (Shah Tamas's calligraphed copies of the Shahnameh, decimated by Western collectors in rampant greed).

5 İ borrow the following two examples of Manila and Tehran from Kavita Singh's, "A History of Now," *Art İndia (The Art News Magazine of İndia)*, special issue: The Art Museum, Vol. XV, No. 1, Quarter 1, 2010. Singh, in turn, refers to a well-known source: Carol Duncan, "Art Museums and the Ritual of Citizenship," *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, İvan Karp and Steven D. Levine (eds.), Smithsonian, Washington D.C., 1991.

Let us for a moment pursue the example of modern art in the Islamic world. Apart, of course, from a long-Europeanized Turkey that has, besides avant-garde artists, a museum and biennale culture of high repute, there is now an energetic production of contemporary art in Arab countries: Lebanon in particular, and also Egypt. On another plane, there is an extravagant push to "showcase," that is to say, display and consume, contemporary international art and architecture in the Emirates that reads like a cross between the fantasy of some conspicuously cosmopolitan Emirs and Euro-American agendas for lucrative dealings in the region. Before it is glibly proven that modern art is an anomaly (and a waste) within cultures of the South, and the more so under Islamic regimes, there is the example of a nationally fought-for project in adjacent South Asia: I refer to the impulse to complete the modernity project by a vocal intelligentsia, nurturing a putatively democratic polity and its desire for an interventionist public sphere, even given the harsh reality of a dictatorial state in Pakistan. The National Art Gallery in Islamabad (inaugurated in 2007)[6] can claim an immanent birth, way beyond the fake promptings of the dictator-friendly United States of America. Delayed for over a quarter of a century on account of dictatorships, political (and sometimes theological) opposition to un-Islamic modernity/modern art, Pakistani artists celebrated their long-awaited moment of democracy with a show titled *Moving Ahead*. In the full range of contemporary art language, the exhibits are modernist of course but also avant-garde, political, and audacious in ways that are both cutting edge and vulnerable to possible censorship. The Ministry of Culture in Pakistan has given assurances; on their part, the exceptionally courageously Pakistani intelligentsia anticipate difficulties but, among other issues in the public domain, see it as their right to adopt the contentious contemporary as a frame for critical self-reflection.

Transcultural Discourse

I would like to draw attention here to the fact that the terms used in the description of CIMAM's 2009 sessions are steeped in Enlightenment terminology: substantive rationality, regulatory ethics (Protestant/capitalist bedrock term); fair trade (early capitalist economics shading into liberal,

6 The 132,000 square-foot, 4-storey building cost 8.9 million dollars; on display now are 600 works borrowed from public and private collections of over a hundred artists.

now neo-liberal, agendas, by which time the term is turned on its head with impunity); and systemic crisis (Marxist understanding of capitalism). Honorable as these concepts are, they are of course entirely Eurocentric and may also be anachronistic. The modern has now been upstaged by the contemporary—a conjuncture based on a precipitate sense of the historical—and this is the subject of complex and ongoing discourse worldwide. Precisely for this reason, it becomes necessary to think through non-European histories of modernity and break open the teleology of Western modernism, not as a de-historicizing drive played out by global capitalism's neo-liberal agenda (and in favor of a self-endorsing contemporary), but, more radically, as recognition of a putatively transcultural public sphere realized by contestarory histories that are at last recognized as shaping this contemporary.

This is where curatorial alternatives build up. Such critical discourse on culture and curating, forged in the South in extreme conditions of political stress, is what has stretched the context and definition of modern and contemporary art. Let us consider the curatorial interventions in the global art scene of Llilian Llanes and Gerardo Mosquera in Cuba, Paulo Herkenhoff in Brazil, and Apinan Poshyananda in Asia, during the eighties and nineties; that of Okwui Enwezor across the world since the turn of the century, and those of Vasif Kortun and Jack Persekian in West Asia today. Persekian, Artistic Director of the Sharjah Biennale, has "instituted" an emancipatory model in the Arab world that serves as a beacon. These initiatives have mounted a reconsideration of key historical agendas, of what remains an incomplete mandate of decolonization after the abandonment of Third World solidarity; of how the post-colonial takes over and plays out a similar function, then goes on to offer a self-reflexive critique of late twentieth-century history; how the violated territories of Central and South America, Africa, and West Asia are positioned in relation to global capitalism and how, then, the contemporary call for a transnational consciousness must stand in direct contradiction to its appropriative use by the corporatized global.

The title of my paper, "Where to Look: when there is no modern museum in sight," is, of course, polemically pitched for the very purpose of diverting a lack and a farce into some form of compensatory investigation. What we find in India is an advanced and committed discourse on the interrelation of history, society, and culture, such as, for example, institutionalized academic discourse in Marxist historiography, critical

post-colonialism, subaltern studies, and, now, the possibility of a new democracy with its virtual yet activist citizenry multiplied by networks into communicational "commons" and indeed into transitive, shape-changing communities. The volatile play of confrontations continues to operate on parliamentary and extra-parliamentary platforms, i.e., in civil and political society and their respective public spheres, where discourse is galvanized by action and the players include a broad swathe of intellectuals, critical theorists, the independent press, political and juridical activists, cultural workers, film-makers, documentarists, and artists. Politically progressive public discourse in India now foregrounds a critique of the statist aspects of the modern from the standpoint of multiple nationalities, ethnic and religious minorities, and, at the dire end of social inequality, the caste-oppressed Dalits. These aspects of the demos also constitute anti-state dissenters. Thence we can extrapolate a subaltern deconstruction of the elite social order, and an interrogation of hegemonies, not only in the form of established political power, but of culture itself.

The post-colonial/post-modern problematic (with the issue of religion and culture imbedded in it) has tended to unsettle the very institution of art (and art as institution), to the extent that even a default position of "lack," such as I have described for India (and true of many places around the world) may turn the museum imperative on its head. At any rate, the lack of viable cultural institutions for the modern in so much of the world should make established museums count their privileges in the full glare of our sublimated envy. This envy should not be dismissed as gratuitous: a reckoning with privilege will lead in fact to a degree of alertness, and the possibility of comprehending how many of the non-players are, in their criticality, their desire, their struggles, and their absent-present status, players of a kind in contemporary global art. So, what sort of players are they?

"Institutions" of/around contemporary art

a. The status of the biennale(/triennale) as an institutional supplement, even substitute, for the contemporary museum.

b. The ubiquity of the art market; the exponentially growing enterprise of the art fair.

c. The putative project for a real and hypothetical global art history and towards global museums.

d. Alternative contemporaneities emerging from cultural spaces/ cultural politics resistant to coherent institutionalization.

Biennales: *contestations in the contemporary*. In counting the stations for critical reflection on the roller-coaster ride of contemporary global art, I have hinted at the importance of conceptual curating in relation to site and situation as this corresponds to advanced discourse on marginalized localities and the politics of interstitial spaces. Only when a diversity of cultural spaces is seen to come alive can there be a transcultural public sphere premised on an agonistic reckoning of the forces at play in the contemporary. I believe that this possibility is curatorially manifest, even more than in the museum, in the biennale format.[7]

For a decade now, there have been doomsday warnings about the exponential growth of biennales outside the Euro-American gambit. Many of the global exhibition venues are in Asia. Impelled to examine this biennale-bashing, I construct a kind of maze to track what might be that teaser called Asian "difference" that is causing such alarm in the exhibitory circuit. This is a tentative attempt to practice the kind of reflexivity I mentioned above: about conceptualizing contemporaneity in relation to divergent contexts.

Throughout the following exposition, there will remain an open question: how viable is a regional (intra-regional) grouping like Asia in what is no doubt an ambition to think globally? Asia is a vast spread, covering from West Asia through South, Southeast, and East Asia. Within the very rubric of this region's ancient civilizations there is, indubitably, the hard fact of its compromised account with global capital. And precisely for this reason, the madly flourishing art production in these fast-growing economies may turn out to be a kind of nemesis: many of the questions that haunt the contemporary — self-disintegrating, crisis-ridden, and systemically

7 I have argued this position on other occasions. See, Geeta Kapur, "Cities of Contemporaniety," *Where Art Worlds Meet: Multiple Modernities and the Global Salon*, Venice Biennale International Symposium, Robert Storr (curator/ed.), Marsilio, and 52. Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte, 2005. See also my contribution to the Guggenheim Museum's Asian Art Council Symposium, "Contemporary Reflections on Modernity in Asia," *Yishu — Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art*, Vol. 9, No. 3, May/June 2010.

irreversible as that concept is — are played out in the exploding cities of Asia as extravagant nihilism, reflecting as it were a renewable death-wish within late capitalism.

But to come to the scene of "crime," most Asian Biennales have been seen as opportunistic occasions deployed by Asian capitalism's self-endorsing spectacle wherein the empowerment of the region's artists, critics, and curators is only a side business. I want to suggest ways to turn this evaluation around, to view the biennale phenomenon critically, yet make regional configurations of the global into a productive ground of contradictions.

I

Can these Asian biennales be taken as a form of civilizational exchange? Cast a glance at the great Asian empires and consider their historical dismantling, accompanied by a critical recognition of current economic strategies and power-bloc alliances. In an annotative continuation of that theme, it is in our interests to unpack curating as a form of narration that deals with endings and beginnings, as it also deals with scrambled sequences and contrary moves that characterize our critical understanding of the narrative paradigm itself.

In more provocative terms, if the Asian "hordes," viewed from the perch of old Europe, provoke the familiar cry "The barbarians are coming!," we might do well to assume the masquerade and ask ourselves the following: within Asia's inherited and reconstituted systems of knowledge (including religions), how much of that "interim" historicity of the modernist project (multi-ethnic nationalisms and secular mediations) survive? If contemporary pluralism dissolves modernist universalism in an act of critical scrutiny, does it then restore the barbarian persona and rage, or does it leave us the more tamed by our own ethnicity?

II

In an exactly contrary move, Asian civilizations are seen to have, throughout history, the lure of high sophistication, of cosmopolitanism: consider Baghdad, Tehran/Isfahan, Istanbul, and in the twentieth century, Shanghai, Mumbai, Tokyo. It can be argued that the cultures of these

flourishing cities have extended the mandate of modernity in a way that makes it not only co-existent with European modernity, but in effect the more keenly personified: a twin whose face is quizzical, sometimes shrewd, and certainly provocative.

There is now, after Edward Said, a tendency among artists to invert the thesis on Orientalism, to enhance the masquerade, making it at once audacious and melancholy. There is also, in the framework of post-modernism, a retake on beauty that is, not unwittingly, a retake on an Asian-Oriental aesthetic to be renewed through curatorial (and through art-historical) expositions.

New cosmopolitanism must include the inadvertent transnationals: migrant labor and political refugees, for example, who are world citizens but are nevertheless excluded from that status, and from the privileges bestowed by global cultures. The very figure of the cosmopolitan, then, gestures towards a darker counter-drive. Recognizing the compound trope of loss and greed, artists will sometimes make a (narcissistic) sign of self-mortification and tease out a death-wish in the very practice of art. This is observable in several Asian artists.

III

There is a mythologization of Asia's material cultures in terms of richness of resources, traditions, and continuities in language, styles, and skills. These assets, still quoted by contemporary artists, are used in fact at various levels of respect and expediency. Not only is there a tendency to gloss over the class/caste-based definition of artisanal practice, but the actual role of available labor, and the use of these material cultures in the manufacture of contemporary art, often remains unexamined. These aspects of "value" and "surplus" need to be considered critically and in relation to aesthetic and market conditions alike.

IV

In contrast to the legacy of delicately wrought artisanal practices, and the playful recycling of everyday visual cultures, both invoked in the making of contemporary art across Asia, there is a bold new Asiatic scenario that is cognizant of the global purchase on post-production art and is studded with

spectacles derived from media-based artworks that seemingly cut across the globe with no undue prejudice in favor of any given culture.

Apropos of a value-based economy, the illegal—that is, unsanctioned—is a telling trope. In terms of contemporary art, it qualifies in favor of what has been pushed to the edge: art that is erotic-illicit and/or political-transgressive. How do Asian artists deploy these means?

V

Is there a counter-geography that marks out a new social imagery and a differently charted ground of history? The interrupted relationship between country and city in what were until recently peasant economies has resulted in demographic imbalances, as it has in a ruptured consciousness. This is now an urgent concern in the economy and the ecology of the globe. Is ethics, then, inscribed in a counter-geography?

The globe is mapped with urban archipelagos, many of which are in Asia. Networked with each other, Asian cities are "on the move" (as even curatorial titles are). Art works seem to chase memory through virtual landscapes, through the detritus of material obsolescence and urban entropy. What is the measure of the speed at which consciousness comes to terms with this accelerated history; and how does the aesthetic impulse establish a spatial phenomenology that best locates works of art?

VI

To address the problems of the public sphere more directly, the literary, theological, and social systems of knowledge in many Asian cultures have a long tradition of oral commentaries, textual annotations, and elaborate argument. These make up what would be the prototype of the public sphere: they index styles of interlocution/intervention within established conventions of collective knowledge.

Colonial and national archives, both textual and oral, are an important feature in the recuperation of histories. This refers to codes that open and retrace the materials of memory, the documentary voice-over of the present-day interlocutor who reads and translates these testimonies; it raises questions at the vernacular level, of caste and gender alike, exposing the structural blindness built into state machinery (as well as cultural institutions).

VII

In societies with diverse histories ranging from liberation movements to Communism, from parliamentary democracies and republican states to genocidal dictatorships, the modes of address that the contemporary intelligentsia (among them artists) deploy in their traversal of national politics is judged by the level of subaltern interrogation. Do evidential "truths," reconstructed fictions, and the ethics of retrieval of that which is left out constitute the political in contemporary Asian art in some especially, culturally, designated way?

VIII

There is a "worlding of art" in that contemporaneity presents itself as a volatile phenomenon that can nevertheless be comprehended. As a mass of fragments, as new universals, as barely differentiated images and objects in the gargantuan consumption mechanism of global capital, it poses itself in many different ways. How do we make sense of these developments: as anti-hegemonic politics, as an expository ground for resurgent identities, as an index of democratization, as a spectral triumph, as a fresh franchise on creativity?

By way of a conclusion, we are seeking (and sometimes, in the given roster of Asian biennales, approximating) a curated exhibition that is thematized and problematized through and beyond the rhetoric of the global; art practice that opts for a critical contemporaneity, for a politics of culture, for avant-garde art practice, where we can witness on occasion some hitherto unknown artist-citizen "performing" his/her subjectivity with an urgency lost to the tired representatives of the West's humanist/universalist conscience-consortium.

Art fairs: Until a couple of decades ago, the validation of art works had the museum (the preserver of art, let us say Tate) at the pinnacle of the pyramid; public art institutions (with exhibition programs, say the Whitechapel Gallery) in the next tier; then private collectors (as patrons) and then the commercial art world (of galleries and auction houses) at the bottom of the pyramid. But perhaps now it should be said that contemporary art derives its hard purchase from the art market, the art fair and the auction house, partnering as these do with museums and biennales.

We have an example in India: while the National Gallery of Modern Art flounders, and the Triennale India (started with a convincing Third Worldist flourish way back in 1968) is a bureaucratic showcase of no consequence in world art, we now have a Delhi art fair (called Art Summit) that began in 2008 and has already achieved a high level of success. Once we have arrived at fairs and booths—a spatial phenomenology derived from the circus and freak shows, from techno-parks and merchandising events—what level of attention, let alone contemplation, can viewers muster? With commodification/reification and the "acting out" of transactional good will, there is a decline of aesthetic protocol and exhibitory ethics. In a situation created for distraction and deals, what rationality, what regard, what definition of value can we envisage?

In the current round-up of the global art world, the unruly outsiders—players from the South who have a shaky grasp of the modern and career in with a free handle on a marketable contemporaneity—are often seen to be the villains. It is true that only yesterday, at the turn of the twenty-first century, contemporary art from China, India, and the Middle East came into global focus through biennales and art fairs, and thence into the MoCAs in the making. Not to speak of the Chinese, even Indian artists are hitched to what is, despite a temporary setback in 2008–09, a booming art market, including a succession of auctions in Delhi, London, and New York. These art scenes have had no substantial museum or academy support, and their players are novices at the game; yet, if the villains in the game are, let us say the Chinese, the buzz and the business leaves all scrambling after profits. And the winners are the great Euro-American auction houses, Sotheby's, Christie's, et al. So, who's complaining?

What is disturbing is not the fact of the art market but that market and the museum, the biennale and the smaller, more radical initiatives, engage a similar-sounding rubric for globalization (with direct plug-in points into ancillary interests such as city tourism, commerce, and political purchase). At the art-historical level, the universalist institution(s) of (Western) modern art, and also the nationalist (to avant-garde) art movements related to the nation-space—in Mexico and Brazil, for example—have dovetailed into a more standard global "institution of art." Instead of ideologies and eccentricities relating to co-produced, sometimes insular or uneven modernities and their corresponding modernisms, there is now a programmatic investment in a profile that requires less historical narrative

and more (urgently construed) contemporaneity that suffers from a paradox: the sameness of difference!

The global art museum: There are concerned efforts underway to theorize a global art history as, for example, David Summers and James Elkins have done.[8] Quite predictably, the initiative comes from Western scholars, inclined to map and survey, classify and categorize, and they undertake this epistemological exercise for the sake of comprehension as much as to contain the damage, or is it to meet the challenge from intruders? In 2006 Hans Belting and Peter Weibel initiated the Global Art and the Museum (GAM) project at ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe. GAM was initiated with the aim to explore the impact of art's globalization on art museums, their audiences, and the art market, thus linking global production of art, global expansion of art museums, and global patterns of art consumption. As part of GAM, Hans Belting conducted workshop/seminars in São Paulo (2008), New Delhi (2008), and Hong Kong (2009). The Delhi stopover, titled *Global Art and the Museum. The Global Turn and Art in Contemporary India* was summarized in a few pages by his colleague, Andrea Buddensieg (present on the occasion) for the book *The Global Art World. Audiences, Markets and Museums*.[9] Their global traversal was premised on a minimum responsibility: of re-presenting these intellectual encounters between and beyond their specific locality. We found to our dismay that Buddensieg (and by implication, Belting) had misunderstood just about everything that was stated by Indian speakers in the seminar. Buddenseig, for example, managed to flip my entire life's mission, to historicize every cultural circumstance that I encounter, by this sterling observation: "In conclusion, Geeta Kapur stressed that participants ought to 'de-historicize' the global present and forget the cultural premises which differ in each case."[10] In more respects than one, they had actually squandered the opportunity to engage, misused the brief by a lazy and prejudiced interpretation of "other" cultures: cultures in contemporary

8 See David Summers, *Real Spaces: World Art History and the Rise of Western Modernism*, New York: Phaidon Press, 2003; and the review by James Elkins, "Real Spaces: World Art History and the Rise of Western Modernism," *The Art Bulletin*, June 2004. See also James Elkins (ed.), *Is Art History Global?*, Routledge, New York, 2007.

9 See Hans Belting and Andrea Buddensieg (eds.), *The Global Art World. Audiences, Markets and Museums*, Hatje-Cantz, Ostfildern, May 2009. Also see Peter Weibel and Andrea Buddensieg (eds.), *Contemporary Art and the Museum. A Global Perspective*, Hatje Cantz Verlag, Ostfildern, 2007.

10 *The Global Art World. Audiences, Markets and Museums*, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

discourse, entirely capable of presenting themselves within the global problematic in what we are now calling the transcultural public sphere. Fortunately, because the second part of the publication(s) includes textual contributions by guest authors critically engaged with culture and politics from their agonistic positionality within the global, a much greater cognizance of the issues at stake emerges. What I wish to point out is that this possibility, of a vexed fuzziness (or is it false ideology?) may colour much global prognoses coming from a Western perspective. When a highly prolific world-travelling art historian like James Elkins, or a profoundly honed philosopher and art historian like Hans Belting, attempts to map the global contemporary (vis-à-vis the more classical modern, institutionalized in the academy/art history and the museum), the phenomenon, rendered unfamiliar by what must appear to them as self-serving aliens, produces seething anxiety; worse, they get the politics (whether shallow or radical) dead wrong.

A critique by Western scholars of the de-contextualized global/contemporary (at the cost of the modern) is fully justified. What is needed, however, is not damning or even indulgent surveys of the scenography, but attention to the foundational changes in political equations across the globe, changes that shift the context, as defined in sociological, ethnographical, and political terms. But, then, the priority to evaluate the terms of the context may no longer rest with the guardians of the Enlightenment, precious as that knowledge is to the very dialectic that spells historical change. It may rest at least as much with those who have been interpellated into global contemporaneity by forces of history that produce new and strange subjectivities, urgent definitions of the artist-citizen, and a seemingly unassimilable, potentially volatile aesthetic.

Meanwhile, the boom in art and globality translates into multiplying museums (e.g., 100 new museums in Shanghai by 2010!). The East Asian region (including Southeast Asia, especially Singapore) has, in tandem with an economic push, initiated a kind of professionalism in museum policy. It is of further interest that some of these museums, especially in economically or culturally depressed regions, have spectacular architectural signage: the building itself is a grand and ostentatious gesture. Global Guggenheims have sprung up/will spring up in relatively remote Bilbao, relatively barren Abu Dhabi. If the Bilbao effect is one of economic and cultural upturn in the region, soon there will the Abu Dhabi effect, whereby no economic miracle will be sought, only the profit of profile, prestige, and a negotiated

aesthetics; a museum where the provenance of the art works on display and their curatorial programming will need acute scrutiny given the global "gold rush" sweeping the Emirates.

I would like to conclude this argument by suggesting that given the options opened up in Biennale-space, the modern museum, a prime object of desire tantalizing us to this day (and indeed irreplaceable as a key institution of art), need not take on an omnivorous scale, nor the nomenclature of a global art museum. And I choose a particularly cruel comparison to frame the likely travesties that may ensue from such an ambition. Consider a double allegory within the Arab world: the tragedy of the looting of the Baghdad Museum and the Guggenheim fantasy (amidst other fantasies in the cultural district of Saadiyat Island) at Abu Dhabi. Consider how the epistemological integrity of the enlightened West crumbles before a cosmopolitan but "absolute" feudatory offering lucrative patronage for contemporary (Western) culture! Then consider, in a spirit of redoubled irony, who the client and who the patron might be in an over-accelerated global circuit with new sites of "cultural exchange."

Alternative Spaces (KHOJ, İndia)

Newer exhibition circuits—mostly the biennales—deliver a worldwide range of artists into the cosmopolitan contemporary. Artists, in turn, find themselves responding to curatorial concepts that incite new forms of thought and practice and they find modes to address transcultural imaginaries unraveled by travel, and cultural traversal. This transcultural space offers what one might call alternative contemporalities (in extension of alternative modernisms). Often emerging from cultural spaces/cultural politics that lack coherent institutionalization, these "contemporalities" address issues differently: they are less pedagogical than museums; more anarchic as well as more dialogic, with many strands of argument weaving through everyday life, civil society, and dissident forums.

I am referring especially to informal, artist-initiated infrastructures that privilege workshops and residencies; forms of relationality, conviviality; a social aesthetic with participatory situations; and, by extension, interactive practices that now designate the field as networks, blurring territoriality, privileging multiple/virtual modes of a nomadic and transitive aesthetic.

Every cultural context today can provide examples of this kind of discourse and practice.[11] I take the example of an alternative space that has developed in Delhi since 1997, Khoj: International Artists' Association.[12] An artists' initiative, Khoj (with Pooja Sood as co-ordinator and then director, her colleagues in the advisory committees, and the young Khoj crew) has galvanized international funding to become diversely experimental and evermore ambitious. Besides linking up various initiatives in India and South Asia, it has staged international avant-garde performance art festivals (*Khoj Live!,* 2008), supported large public art projects in the city, sustained research and residency for emerging curators. Further, the great variety of participating artists from around the world, provoke an imaginative rendering of the very term alternative, exposing for scrutiny its various forms and spaces: the differential ground between artists' collectives, communes, and community arts practice; between art works in public spaces and public art projects; between site-specific works that are performative, provocative, and those that are interactive on a sustained basis.

Khoj has also opened up the debate on the premise of alternatives when the institutional structure is underdeveloped. Not conforming to an ideological brief, Khoj aspires to a praxiological rigor on the assumption that even sheer practice can push the resulting art work into a reflexive zone, and indeed, Khoj's own history—its ten years alive and kicking—has mapped new territories that can now be theorized.

As a typical turn of the century formation, Khoj emerges with an explicit mandate: to quizz the notion of "absolute" freedom that artists

11 The contemporary conjunction of artists' spaces with politically annotated public engagement emerges in the West during the 1960s and in various parts of the world at different times, since.

12 Bare facts: Khoj began its activities in the form of international workshop-residencies in 1997. İt acquired its permanent space for Studios in 2002 with the support of the Triangle Arts Trust of which it continues to be a member. İts international activities include residencies for artists from Africa, West Asia, especially South Asia. Over the decades, Khoj has helped develop parallel artists' initiatives in Pakistan (Vasl), Shri Lanka (Teertha) Bangladesh (Britto), and Nepal (Sutra). Khoj is now helping to develop partially supported, ideologically autonomous, project-based nodes in İndia: Khoj Calcutta, Desire maching@ khoj, Guwahat, Khoj Kasheer in Srinagar, Khoj@1 Shanthi Road in Bangalore, and CAMP, Mumbai. See, Khoj: İnternational Artists' Association website. A ten-year reckoning of Khoj is now available in the form of an ambitious publication, *Khoj*, Harper Collins, New Delhi, 2010. İt has detailed history of Khoj by Pooja Sood; four theoretical texts; interviews with lavish illustrations by one hundred and one İndian artists; glimpses of international participants' work, in between. See my essay, "A phenomenology of encounters at Khoj," in the same volume.

have singularly claimed in the first half of the twentieth century; to interrupt the protocols of what may have been secret cabals of experimentalists by introducing equally pressing interventionist modes addressed to consciously gendered, multi-ethnic, multi-religious publics; to interpolate the experience of diverse citizenships and develop an aesthetic that is incorporated within societal/communitarian contexts.

We know of course that this very ethics poses something of a dilemma: the pull of neighborliness and the push of the irreverent artist towards anarchist gestures and performed risk. Artists continue to seek representational value outside sanctioned representational norms; to allow meanings to slip through the gaps of cultural goodwill; to gain solitary visions, paradoxical maneuvers; even to scuttle art's burden of social concerns. Most of us have divided loyalties on this question—of autonomy and responsibility—and we need only to acknowledge the potential of such informal institutions in their ability to stage these antinomies as creative options.

Because they combine civil society transactions with what is undeniably a new aesthetic, high claims are staked via theory on such collective modes that imbricate art and life; that bring the very space of the imaginary into a communitarian ethos. Indeed, these interventionist/relational maneuvers are now arguably on a par with the privileged site of the museum and even perhaps in proxy of art "proper."

İn Conclusion

I end with a note of self-irony. Where to look, I asked at the beginning of the presentation, and proceeded to lay multiple tracks so as to lose sight of the desired monument, to dislocate the centrality of the edifice that rises in the modern period and confirms the authority of "art as institution." The modern museum is the site where canons are established and wherefrom the avant-garde overtakes them; it is the site against which key gestures of iconoclasm are played out and where, in blatant contradiction of its historical premise, avant-garde art is "enshrined."

When there is no museum in sight or none that performs the function of briefing and debriefing the public in the paradoxical maneuvers of institutionalized art history, the tracks I laid out can run aground. And here is when the "outsider" status I assumed must shift from voluntarism to self-reflection: how much rhetoric of otherness, how many hypothetical

alternatives will suffice to face the legitimate positionality of the museum fraternity that CIMAM represents.

Afterword

As it happens, my initial query and concluding paradox was addressed within the session itself by the perfectly pitched response of the assigned respondent, Natalia Majluf, director of Museo de Arte de Lima (MALI), Peru. She built up a case for an appropriately modest, precisely motivated museum that sustains the poetics of real and imaginary distance, an outsider-insider status. Besides the "case," she offered a form of address before the aforesaid fraternity that looped in the irony of my elaborate elisions.

Postscript 2022

As I review this live talk turned into a text for the CIMAM website, I note its ironical hypothesis ("no museum in sight"); its appraisal of the institutional infrastructure for contemporary art in India; and, thereon, the propositions about an affiliative agenda for contemporary art of the global South: more specifically, from West Asia to East Asia. This is vast ground and, like any author, I would like to hone my extrapolative forays post facto. However, as the talk and text are duly dated, I will let these arguments retain their odd punctuality, offering urgent annotation on only a few selected issues.

There has been, almost as if on cue from the moment of "lament," a rapid "institutionalizing" of India's modern and contemporary art. In this postscript I address two of these developments. I refer to the emergence of an exceptional museum, the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, in Delhi. And to an impassioned alternative that emerged alongside: the Kochi-Muziris Biennale. These two developments in the last twelve years mitigate the restrictive hold of nation and state; at the same time, they switch focus from the art market and its cache of vested interests.

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In 2010, the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (KNMA) had just laid its foundation. The *absent museum*, a motif in my 2009 CIMAM presentation, has materialized in the form of KNMA. It has developed a superb collection

of India's modern and contemporary art; it has an exhibition program (conceived and curated by its Director and Chief Curator, Roobina Karode) that provides historical focus through archived retrospectives that have begun traveling to major museums abroad. It also stages explorative exhibitions on themes, genres, and contemporary concerns, a distinguished feature of which is the priority given to India's many exceptional artist-women, a choice that is a norm for Roobina Karode.

In 2019, KNMA announced the selection (by an impressive international committee) of the renowned Ghanaian-British architect**,** Sir David Frank Adjaye, to construct its large and diversified museum complex in Gurgaon (greater Delhi). Once the project is realized, KNMA will become a presence in the global cartography of contemporary art museums. What is awaited is a dialogic approach to policy and a participatory role in curatorial discourse, especially in the global South. The built environment should be able to provide a platform where artworks are seen through and beyond the scopic view of modernist art history. And where community, ecology, distributive sensibility, and such self-reflection that art offers become manifest.

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I turn now to a brilliant initiative, the Kochi-Muziris Biennale (KMB), staged in the port-city of Kochi situated on the ocean route connecting India to Africa and Asia, to outposts of the Roman empire and, via Vasco da Gama, to Europe. Located along peninsular India, this civilizational site harbors speculation about a deluge in the medieval period and stirs further fabulation among curators and artists.

The first edition of the KMB in 2012 was pure adventure: in terms of its precarious funding; its elementary infrastructure; its mandate of inviting artists as curators; its cutting edge, internationally pitched curating; and its vast local viewership. I have written on the KMB over the years, focusing on its public access and pedagogical programming by a left-oriented foundation in a supportive state; its curatorial attitude that can be idiosyncratic or intellectual to great effect; and its bold itinerary that has found engaged viewership across the world.

Art in India has now something of a developed infrastructure. A multiplicity of alternative institutions are on the anvil. And many informal

collectives seeking *de*-institutionalized spaces have come into being. "Khoj," narrativized in the 2009 talk, has been supplemented by urban avant-garde initiatives, research spaces, and regional-rural communitarian groupings. Critical culture in the arts seems poised to develop a rhizomatic form.

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India's state institutions have remained underdeveloped, allowing private (corporate-funded) institutions to take the lead. That the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) in Delhi can galvanize an exhibition program offering curatorial skills has been sporadically witnessed (in the 1970s, in the late 1990s, between 2010 and 2014). It needs a capable director and a progressive respondent within the Ministry of Culture to initiate funding and allow curatorial autonomy. Enlightened state initiative is still desired in India, and we are inclined to associate emancipatory aesthetic with sovereignty in the public domain.

But here I interject with a dire note. At the current juncture, there is a great threat facing India. Never before has the country witnessed such cultural regression; never before has the ground for civil and political discourse been so treacherously subverted. Lies generated by the present government's proto-fascist politics are applauded by billions of benumbed acolytes. Art and culture are but minor before the fate of a people led into hate, coercion, and impoverishment by a peculiar yet predictable pact between neoliberal machinations and religious chauvinism.

Does a putatively radical culture fail before such a betrayal? In India there is now political protest by democratic parties, trenchant investigations by academics, resistance by civil society activists. There are vectors of critique exploding in the public sphere. As a writer I would venture that discourse—even as it appears at the moment to be overpowered—runs along subterranean channels of the historical imagination. Premised on emancipatory passion as on rational prognosis, historicity cherishes contradiction and admits failure. And artists, placed within such a paradigm, find ingenious ways to fulfil—often through forms of disjuncture—both ontological and societal wagers.

On this note, I shall refer the interested reader to certain of my other writing on exhibitory sites, sitings, and curatorial encounters. And the politics thereof.

Geeta Kapur is a critic and curator. Her books include Contemporary İndian Artists (1978); *When Was Modernism* (2000); *Speech Acts* (forthcoming) *Critic's Compass: Navigating Practice* (forthcoming). Curatorial projects include: "Dispossession," Johannesburg Biennale (1995); "Bombay/Mumbai," *Century City*, Tate Modern (co-curation, 2001); "subTerrain," House of World Cultures, Berlin (2003); "Aesthetic Bind," Chemould, Mumbai (five exhibitions, 2013–14). She was a founder editor of *Journal of Arts and İdeas*; member, advisory committee, *Third Text*, *Marg* and presently, *ARTMargins*.

İMMİGRANT MOVEMENT İNTERNATİONAL

TANİA BRUGUERA

2013

First of all I want to thank you for inviting me, especially when two years ago I said I would never show in a museum again, so it's exciting to talk to you today, and while I am working on shows and exhibitions—that is not my work.

I feel that in museums, there is a big difference between short-term projects and long-term projects. For me, the actual conflict that might happen right now—that you confront in museums as an artist—is exactly the difference between working short-term and long-term.

As we know, the short-term that museums have solved, somehow, is the situation with the audience in which it is very easy in a way to have a short-term relationship, where you have to condensate the experience so that the audience has a strong situation that they can process later on.

This is some of my work. So, basically, what you do in this kind of presentation is more traditional, you can have a more violent—violent because you condense the experience into a very short-term situation—and you do not have all the explanation. Or you can even, like in this case, contextualize where you are, in this case it is Russia, and have a piece that talks to the people specifically, the audience specifically in the place and their own history, even if you are just a guest or you do not know enough as an artist, which is also ethically complicated, but you can manage to do these kind of formats.

Also you can have situations as, for example, where I invited underground members to be part of an art historians' conference and you can subvert the relation with the audience. In this case, I planted people in the audience whose only indication was to not let the speaker talk, and take over. So, this is kind of a change of power relationship; what I like about this situation is that in this short-term format you can even play with art historians because at that moment nobody thought it was an art piece and the next day, the conference people were asking if that was a performance.

So, with all these in-place situations, we can even go further, like when I was giving cocaine in Colombia. Where of course there are consequences of these kind of processes, in this case for example, the government: they were looking for me to put me in prison. But at the same time, even in the short-term projects you have to be very aware of politics. In this case, my responsibility as an artist was to not put anybody in trouble, so nobody at the University lost their job. I mean I took responsibility for everything. I feel like the way in which we work in politics, in the short-term situation with museums and in collaboration with museums, this has been somehow solved. It is kind of clear where are the limits, where are the dangers, where are the ethics in short-term production.

Or what I did in Havana and even when you can use an art space, in this case a biennial that gives you some political freedom to do something, otherwise you would never be able to do it. Here I gave one minute of free speech. I negotiated with the institution not to censor anybody, not to put anybody in prison and it was the first time in fifty years that people were saying what they think about the government, in favor and against. Even some people went so far as saying they do not want any more Castro in the government, nobody from that family.

So, I think, these kinds of short-term pieces also can work with historical references that have, let's say, some long-term impact. And in that case, for example, it was very rewarding to me when I met some of the dissidents in Cuba who, when they met me, they thanked me, because they understood the quality of performativity (needed) to do their work, after this piece.

Of course, the problem is with the artists telling the story. I think these are some of the problems with the short-term presentations. Sometimes we give too much importance to the history told by the artist instead of by the audience or the people who are involved in the process of

the, let's say, consumption or developing of the work. In other cases, of course, what we can do is to have pieces that are incomplete and make the audience be the people who create the work.

So, I feel like, really to be honest, even this kind of institutional critique, where do you have for example in the Pompidou: I worked with the collection, the video collection, and I sent emails to all the artists in the collection asking their permission to pirate and copy and steal the work from the collecion for one week so I could distribute it in the streets for €1.

And even in those situations when it is kind of itchy because, you know, the people at the museum were nervous and asking the lawyer to come and make sure, and we even played this game where I told them you are only responsible for the "inside' of the museum space and I am responsible for the "other' side—so we played the game where they were not supposed to know what I was doing. So, all of these things are kind of normal now in short-term pieces—I even feel that institutional critique has been "absorbed' by the institution—in ways that sometimes work.

But I think for me the most important part, is when I do not know what art is. You know, when there is this space where you are not sure what art is. For example, I signed a contract with a friend, an artist friend, where we decided that whoever dies first, will be using the corpse of the other person to do an art piece. And of course, what is art? Is the art the contract? Is it the gesture? What is the piece going to do? Is it the process of negotiation between us? Who knows? But this is exactly what I think is more interesting in the short-term, in general, about doing art.

But of course, sometimes you hit the wall because in this kind of short-term processes, there are moments in which even if you try the hardest, in the piece that was in the Venice Biennial, you can encounter contexts that do not let you do political work. In this case, I was reading a statement about what political art is for me and how to do political art is to bring things to the farthest possible and to commit as far as possible your ideas but of course, if I had shot myself and died at the Venice Biennial, who cares, it would be just a joke at a party at night, probably. So, I think those are the contradictions with short-term projects. Why? Because there is not weight, there is always this kind of attitude that there is some lightness to the projects and where everything is taken in a way ironically or cynically.

I have been talking to a lot of people in the industry, because the art world is an industry at the moment, and I have been seeing a lot of interest

in political art. And it is interesting because recently I went to the New Museum for a conference and while I was waiting I was looking at the wall and I was looking at the names of people who were benefactors or were helping the museum and in there—a very, very, very small list of artists. Yet this is one of the most political institutions in the United States from the beginning (originally), where you had a lot of artists on the board and a few people giving money.

So, I feel that, as an artist, it is very hard to work in that kind of institution, where your voice is only part of a very small space. When you have to negotiate also things like the precariousness of the artist. And I want to take advantage of being here and say that, there is a big situation at the moment in the art world where artists are not taken as workers, artists are taken as, I don't know, I don't know what you guys think we live off, but I think we need to start taking seriously about the fact that artists have to be paid for their work.

When you do the budget they have to have money for, not only production or promotion, but also the fact that the artist has developed a project, taking their time, they have done their work. I had to say that because otherwise I would die. Because I know some European institutions do it, but in general I think if institutions want to be political they have to stop being political in themselves and also the way they look at artists and the way they look at the work of the artists.

So, I feel that right now things like what happened in the New Museum make me think, why there are not more artists on boards, instead of rich banks and rich people. I mean, some rich people really want to develop art but most of them really do this for vanity. Why don't you guys also have on the boards: art historians, sociologists and other people who are experts in the field—so, when the decisions are being taken in museums, they are not being taken only from the economic side or the art historian side, but also taken into consideration other areas. Why? Because many of the museums right now are trying to do political art, and political art cannot be done only because somebody can pay for it, it has to be done in an expertise way, in a way that so many other elements are taken into consideration.

So, I feel like the big challenge right now for museums is the long-term projects. Why? Because long-term projects have a different, strategy, have a different way of being processed. I have done a few projects like I did a ten years' project of redoing Ana Mendieta's work. And I just talk

about this because recently we have seen a re-appropriation, reenactment of performance and I feel that the long-term projects are very much linked with the way the museum has approached performance art, and re-doing and re-enacting performance art. Why? Because they have made a translation of an image instead of the transfiguration of an experience. And I think that's one of the main problems we also have in long-term pieces.

I also did a piece for nine years, which is at an art school in Cuba for political art. And of course, some of the critique you have is wow—the image is always people together! Well why not.

You know, this is what you do, you act together and you develop a community. So, I think this idea of approaching aesthetics in a different way also is extremely important and having value to other things, other than representation. And also the idea of understanding that maybe some projects are not possible to be done in the museum—as you may know. But in that case, for example, I have seen, I have experienced in New York the example of some main museums where I was extremely disappointed because they wanted to do "community art" or they wanted to "political art" and what they did basically is transport something that could be done in Manhattan to Brooklyn or the Bronx, and just the same people who go to one museum go these exhibitions, but they do not do the work in the field.

What do I mean by that? Immigrant Movement is a project that came out from something that is not artistic. So, you have to understand when you do these kinds of projects that the main relationship is not going to be the art history itself but something that happens outside of art and that also have to create the environment to understand the work and to process the work. Also in this case, for example, I have been doing this project for two years and a half and I have not done my work yet. Why? Because I have spent two-and-a-half years preparing the conditions to do the work. What does it mean? Preparing the audience, the participants, the users, and the people involved in the project.

So, in this case, of course, it is an example about Arte Útil, I am going to discuss it a little later. So, basically, the way we work in Immigrant Movement is that we use art. We do not use art as art itself but we instrumentalize art. I know it's very complicated to use the word instrumentalize, there is a lot of prejudice but we try to give art a different meaning, a different use. In this case of course, we're trying to put together practical knowledge with creative knowledge to create political knowledge. So, this

is what we are trying to do. Also we are trying to do a think tank, and we try to do artivism. So, one of the things that happens with these kind of projects and what happens in contemporary political art and Arte Útil is that we are in need of a new lexicon, not only new strategies on how to deal with the situation but also a new lexicon, new words that we can use so we understand that things are different, are functioning in a different way. I have suffered personally in critiques that the project has received from people trying to analyze the project with the same tools that you use to analyze an exhibition, or a sculpture or something like that. So, I think this is very important.

And for us education it is extremely important because we believe in education as a holistic process in this case where art is creativity, of course. So, in this case we have done this year as the main subject, we have events every day and in this case, the events every day are done just because we need to create confidence in the community: that we are there for them, you know, and trust is one of the biggest challenges of these kinds of projects.

So, the other thing that we have done is not to be condescendent with people in the project, like "if you do not understand our history so you do not get it," but what we do is try to involve them in all the processes and try to, let's say, put them together with experts. In this case Saskia Sassen was talking with somebody who was undocumented and does not know so much about politics, so create the situation where both "high and low" can be together.

We created a Migrant Manifesto, we do make a movement where we invite all artists to do Arte Útil events, we go to prisons, etc. We have created a campaign. This case for me is very important. In Immigrant Movement what we do is to present art to the community, we present contemporary art and public art to the community. A community that has no idea of what art is. Why? Because we talk about subjects, let's say, in this case they were worried about where, they are paying taxes and they wanted to know where their money is going and what happens with their tax money, and what we do is to present contemporary artists doing political art. It does not matter if they do not know the name of the artist, the year, the process, what kind of material they use—what it is important is for them is to open up to this kind of creative language.

But something else that was very important is that artists are being trained to produce, we are trained to have an idea, and make the idea real, outside of our head. And that is something this community cannot do, they

always have their ideas and always become fantasies or frustrations because they never realize them. So, what we do is by using the tools of art to make them able to do something that they imagine. And in this case it's very simple, they put stamps on the money. And it was very complicated because I know that Cildo Meireles did that. So, history-wise I was not happy with it, but it was more important that I understood that from one minute to another, you have something happening, so you gain this confidence in art.

Another example is an Art History for Stay-at-Home Moms. That was one of the most successful projects because we had somebody coming saying I want to paint the community—and we said you can't paint the community: you have to give something in exchange. And she said okay, she made an Art History with the feminist point of view, it was only for stay-at-home moms. And it was very interesting how looking at Art History and looking at the relation between the model and the gaze of the artist to a woman, not only to teach them English—they learnt English, they learnt Art History, but they also learnt who they were as women. And after that we realized that there was a big problem with domestic violence in our community, so we had to go to a next level.

So, I think this is kind of an example of how we want to use art and Art History in the project. And of course some of the main "exhibition" of the project does not happen in museums because this is not the kind of environment we want to deal with. It happens in places like the UN, or for example Occupy Wall Street or this kind of, let's say, community that we have created around the world, of artists. Because we also realize that many artists are immigrants without rights and we want to also make them aware of that status. Because there is a fantasy of artist-artists, but we are doing all this.

And of course all of this needs a lot of money and needs a lot of support and a lot of collaboration. I am very glad that, for example, the Queens Museum has stepped in and will work with us and committed to the five years of the project. And of course it had created for them a lot of contradiction in their own system.

I also tried to bring the project to Mexico, where I did the Partido Pueblo Migrante, and of course the project changed into a more political format. It was during the elections so we did this event were the "voceros," people who yell out the news, were yelling the rights of immigrants, we did the visits, etc., and at the end we applied for (we were number 45) to be a political—a real political party.

So, I think these kinds of long term pieces have the challenge of reality, they are real: they enter the realm of the real. Of course, you still have these kind of symbolic elements, you know, where you use cynicism on so on, to get your work. And of course, we still believe in the power of image et cetera, but that is not the core of the project. Why? Because we are working with people who have a history, who have to trust the project and who need time. And I think this is the biggest challenge we have right now, working with institutions.

Okay, what we use is "artivism," what do we mean by that? And for example, one of the main things that we did is that we were part of the United Nations—and I think you guys should use that too, I mean it is a very good tool—I was part of the expert group that drafted the first Document on Creative Rights and Artistic Censorship, which is extremely useful in case you may need in some of the countries to respond to some censorship of governments.

So, I realized doing my own work—part of the situation was that autonomous art was not working anymore—for me. So, I came up with this idea of Arte Útil. Why?

Because—and it is in Spanish, also politically, because I want people to understand that they do not have all the information. But also because UTIL in Spanish has two meanings: it's a tool, by which you do something and is usefulness. So, I think it is great. This is the symbol we use, so we put the Marcel Duchamp piece in the bathroom again.

These are the elements of Arte Útil:

- We want to propose new uses for art within society.

- We want to challenge the field in which it operates. I mean so many times we see art exhibitions, and so on, that pretend to be civic, pretend to work with law but do not intervene in the tissue of that area, it's just a representation. So, we are not into representation, we are into activation, social activation. And also we want that if somebody come up with an idea, it is as exciting for the art world as it is for the scientists or the legal teams and so on, so it has to be creative in both areas.

- We also wanted this to be "timing specific." And political timing specific sometimes, so it respond to the precise urgency. That means that it can be ephemeral and that means that sometimes this kind of project is not art anymore, and that is okay. You know, I feel sometimes a lot of fear that this kind of production has to be art and we have to be so sure that is art. And sometimes it does not matter. Sometimes it's just art for a little bit—for a specific moment.

- We also want, and this is very important, to be implemented and function in real situations. We do not want situations where it looks like it works, or we have like "ten people from the museum" posing for the photo pretending that it works. No, we want people who are outside of the art world to make it part of their own life—and to actually appropriate the project and reproduce it.

- We want to replace authors with initiators and spectators with users. That is extremely important because when you are initiator— it entails that you are not owning the whole process—that you are just proposing something that has to be developed by others.

- We also want to have practical, beneficial outcomes for its users. We have plenty of projects that are utopic projects. We do not want utopic projects: we want to implement utopia, and therefore, it won't be utopia anymore, hopefully.

- Pursue sustainability while adapting to changing conditions. This means that we have to understand that these are long-term projects that have to be changing with the situation.

- Re-establish aesthetics as a system of transformation.

So, the thing is, like we have of course certain hypothesis that we have to deal with. One of the biggest problems with this kind of projects is that there is a different way to look at the aesthetics. You know, aesthetics, in what we have proposed is "Aesth-ethics" so it is the ethics of, there is the aesthetics and the beauty and all everything that you want say aesthetically that is related with the ethical process that you create. So, I think this is

extremely important to understand because, Arte Útil is about ethics and it has to be analyzed from that point of view. And ethics is aesthetics. I am coming from a communist country where you get more excited about a good gesture than a beautiful painting, so it does have this quality of aesthetic.

Of course there are many, many questions that we have and we have the questions of sustainability, we have the question of who benefits but the most important question we want to ask with Arte Útil is: What For? We want to change the question of how, when, where, for "what for." What is this for? And of course, who benefits for real from these projects. One of the things that we have realized is that Arte Útil has a lot of illegal, or we call it "a-legal" moments. Why?

In Spanish, "a-legal" means that it is not legal yet. So, we work a lot with moments in which Arte Útil wants to transform society through art, and I totally believe it's possible, even for a short moment.

As for the ways and strategies, we look at the loopholes in the law and look at what has not yet been codified and what has not yet been established legally, to work from there. So, that is extremely important too.

Also it's extremely challenging—the idea of access and replication. Why? Because so many of these projects stay in a state of just looking at it and getting excited at the possibility, but they are not actually working with the people who need those projects. So, we want to emphasize the need, also for museums if they want to do these kinds of projects, of understanding who they have to reach and what is the work that needs to be done with the audience, in this case, the users of the projects.

And of course, there's the idea of the project's eco-system. Why? Because these are projects that need to function beyond the author and need to function after you intervene them and are taken by the people. And of course, even if in the United States they don't like this word, usefulness is an ideology. This is not a trend, this is not a new way of doing things: this is an ideology. Why? Because it is the kind of work in which the artist's "question" is on value and it's function in society, so for us it's ideological.

I want to show you also the fact that Arte Útil is something that has its own history and is something that has to be taken into consideration not with the traditional art history situation, but a different one. So, as you can see, this is our definition: Arte Útil imagines, creates, and implements for social-beneficial outcomes that make the world work differently.

So, as you can see we have created here a timeline. And a timeline to understand that these kinds of projects have different concepts. One is the timeline of the practice itself that we can locate in the nineteenth century. Also, we have the timeline of concepts, how we have dealt with the concept of this practice over time, and also some artworks. And, of course, we have art practices in the whole world, which is exciting, we have found a lot of this everywhere.

We want to start from people, so this is the kind of work that values creativity but also understands moments in which people have worked with the imaginary, not only when they use art but also when the use a new way of seeing things and a new way to think society. So, basically these kinds of projects are projects that entail a different way to be in society, a different way to function in society. And we have of course our examples—but we also have things that are not so much art related.

Questions

Question: I am Kevin Consey from San Francisco. In our country, the United States, where less than 3% of the population are indigenous people, this is a country of 97% of immigrants. Tell me what are your emotional experiences in working with a large population that consists primarily of immigrants who at times are virulently opposed politically, socially, and economically to the extension of rights for immigrants just like themselves and their families once were. This is something that seems incomprehensible to me, but I hope you have some additional insight from the Immigrant Movement project that you can share with us. Thanks.

Tania Bruguera: Well, I think one of the contradictions right now is that the world is selling itself as global but it is limited to economics or privileged casts. What we are trying to do in Immigrant Movement is to try to make immigrants seen as political beings. Because when you immigrate, the first right that you are stripped of is precisely the right to be political. You know, you become an economic asset, you become muscles, but you cannot be political. Even sometimes when you are a privileged immigrant, meaning that you have a job in a university, you know, or you have a high skilled job. I think that's our main focus and for that, of course, we have to do a lot of work and we are going to start in September now an artivist school in the project so people understand art and activism, because for us

it is very important that every member of the project also knows about art, as a tool basically.

Question: Hello, my name is Maria Lind, I am from Stockholm. I have a question relating to authorship, which is something that you would like to question and you obviously spoke about many projects throughout the presentation and you kept coming back saying "we." Who are the different "we's," because I do imagine that they are actually not the same?

Tania Bruguera: Well, the "we" is funny because I have changed my language before I was "I," and I automatically say "we" and I think it's because the structure that we have created in the project was very author-oriented at the beginning, because I had a very clear idea of what I wanted but at this point I am trying very hard—and it has been very hard, specially working with art world people to get away from authorship because, for example, people come and they want to interview me, and I say "no, I do not give more interviews, you have to talk to people in the community, you have to talk to other people." So, it is very hard because I also feel the art world is still very personality driven, you know, because they think you are very special and at the moment, for example, we have created recently, we have mm…. it was my idea but I shared it with the people and they loved it, that we have created a committee, a council in the project. And the council is going to be basically having people in the community who want to take care of the project.

They decide from now on how things have to be done, like what is the… everything! In order to be in the council you have to graduate from the Artivist School. Why? Because you need to understand what it means to do art and what it means to be political and what it means to be a citizen in a way. That's maybe why I say "we" now, because I don't feel any more that it is my project solely. We have people from the museum, we have people from the community who decide stuff. Right now, 90% of the workshops that we give are being suggested by the community—so it is something that I don't come up with any more.

And it is interesting because they want more, for example, art history: they are dying for the new one! Who would imagine that this mom looking at tele-novelas the whole day wants more art history? You know, who imagined that? And I think it's because we are trying to put together these two things: like what we want to propose and what they need, but it is always based on what they need. We never come up with something, we first

hear and see what happens and then we come up with some version of that.

The other thing that is very important for us is like a PhD student can go to our workshops and be happy. Why? Because I feel one of the main problems with immigrants is that the quality of the services are crap. We want to give the best quality possible of everything that we do. Without money, of course, but we try as much as possible. And that is another thing, for example, one big challenge is the fact that, people who do critique of the work, now I have a rule that if you want to talk about work you have to be part of the work. You have to do this kind of immersive critical criticism. Either you give a workshop, or you have to become an intern, or you have to become part of the process. And sometimes it is interesting because they are very well known critics. And that's the rule, if you don't do that, you cannot talk about the work. And this is just because I feel that these kinds of projects need a different approach, not only institutionally but also in the sense of how you criticize them. It is a process. You cannot have a conclusion, because there is not a conclusion possible; there is always a process of change, where everything is changing all the time. For example, I am doing three interviews with one student every year. And it's beautiful because you can see how everything is changing through the interview. We did one the first year, and I had all these questions and all these things, and now she is doing another one… she is from Mexico, and it is interesting to have this kind of…. practice and it is a very different approach and I feel that the museum structure is not ready for that, in my experience. I have been very lucky with the people I am working with at the moment, and I prefer that they work with philanthropists than collectors, for example. That's another problem that we had. We had people coming to our project who want to give money, but they were collectors, and they always want something to take with them. And I say "no, I do not accept their money," you know, you have to work with a philanthropist that wants to change society in the same way you want to change society. That's kind of the experience we had, not that there are many out there, not that the immigration issue is that popular either.

Question: Hi, this is Sabrina Moura from Videobrasil in São Paulo. You mentioned that you cannot analyze this practice as an exhibition—so I suppose you cannot analyze it as an NGO either. So, I was wondering in what ways Immigrant Movement is becoming an institution itself? And would you say that you are re-defining its parameters, a new framework for its understanding?

Tania Bruguera: I think, as an artist, for my long-term projects, I have always worked with the idea of institution but I hope—and that is where I sabotage my own projects every time I feel they become an institution themselves—I try to work with the format of the institution without institutionalizing the practice. For example, right now I am doing a project at the Van Abbe and I am acting as a curator together with the team. It's a collective decision process where we are doing an Arte Útil exhibition, but it is very clear that I do not want to be curator. I just want to challenge this idea of what the role of the artists is in art history and to create one "movement," let's say. But in this case, for example, at one point we had a crisis—we had many crises in the project—but at one point we had a crisis where people working on it wanted to become an NGO.

The reason why they wanted to became an NGO is because in the United States there is one rule for NGOs, one only rule, "You cannot do politics," which made me understand very well how political art works in the United States after that. So, this is exactly the reason why I did not want the project to be an NGO. And also, for example at some point we had to decide how much do we look like other institutions that work with immigration, and the reason is that we have the freedom.

One day—this is very quirky, but it happened, one person came to the project and said, "What I like about this project is that I feel free." And I said, what do you mean? "It's like you come here and anything can be happening and I can be myself and I can do anything I want." That's something that does not happen with NGOs, they are very specific and they have their mandate very specific. I feel that the project needs to have enough expansion that you can all the time re-invent the project and negate your own process, in case you need to. I do not know if that answered your question.

Question: Hi, my name is Meghna Singh, and I am from Cape Town. There is something that really concerns me, which is there is a certain language when we talk about "them," and immigrants and if you might have a kind of more global population of people moving around or that have moved, so I am just concerned about this kind of segregation which is re-created when you talk about "them" and communities and…. so how does one get over with that, you know, a certain kind of connectiveness that is needed without using this language?

Tania Bruguera: You talk from an institution or from…?

MS: No, it's just like in terms of a presentation, like you made this

presentation, all the work that's been done, it is always "them" and communities and work coming out of "them."

Tania Bruguera: For example, one decision we have made and I was also very concerned about this is that, I am here presenting because it is an "expert" crowd and I wanted to talk about the art-strategy in the project. But we have decided recently that I do not talk about the project anymore, so anywhere else that they invite us to talk about the project, it will be somebody from the community who will come. And it does not matter if they do not know how to speak, if they are not trained to speak, it is just important that people understand their point of view. So, I am, as much as possible trying to get away from the project so they can take their voice.

But I feel that institutionally it's very complicated, because it is very clear that the institution responds to other interests, not the immigrant community's interest, and their board of trustees has very different interests. I think there are moments in which it is very clear the distance and you have, as an artist, to negotiate that distance. We just put them in and they have to deal with that, but that is how we are doing, the same way they are taking decisions now, is the same way they are talking about the project at the same time.

Question: I am Corinne Diserens and I have a very short question. I would like to know who/ how you constructed the timeline of the historical narrative you showed us in which you inspired yourself.

Tania Bruguera: Yeah, well at the moment we have been working for a year with the team at the Van Abbe. Gemma Medina is the main researcher, she is great, Alessandra Sabatini is also working, Nick Aikens and Annie Fletcher, and of course, also Charles. And what we realized is that for Arte Útil—first of all there is something that has been happening for a long time—it may have not been called that way but it has been growing from artists' interests to being in the social sphere. And we started looking at examples where people imagined society differently, and of course, the moment in which we should try to implement something and imagine things functioning differently, we want to call that art as well. So, we want to extend the idea of what art is. It's a team that has been working for a year, and we also have a timeline of exhibitions that we thought have been building up to what we are doing now. It's a timeline of concepts, exhibitions, texts, and practices. And it is online if you want.

Question: I am K.C. Kwok from Singapore and working in China. From your presentation, you have tried to negotiate some of the very difficult

tensions that I believe we all face, terms like "long-term project," "contracts," "eco-system" sound very systematic, sound very close to institutionalization, yet on the other hand you are very critical of museums as institutions or any form of institutionalization. And this is very difficult to negotiate I suppose, and something very close to us working in the museum as well as working in the art community.

Now, how has the museum come about to absorb the kind of social "activism" that you are talking about, that it has to come some way after all that, you know, you have clarified that it has to be an essential part of museum programming now. However, you are not very optimistic in the longer term. It seems that museums will not be able to do that kind of long-term social engagement that you are talking about. Now, do you see—given a conference like this, where there is a gathering of museum workers from all over the world—that it is also possible to influence, within the museum sphere, that we can expedite this progression towards more social activism within the museum institution?

Tania Bruguera: Yes, absolutely. I would be lying if I say I am a total outsider because I am here talking to you. But for example, one thing I really liked when I proposed a project to Creative Time when they called me is that is the first time the team from Queens Museum talked about the project in public they said to the press, "we do not know what there is." And that was beautiful, you know, they knew the goal, the long-term goal but they did not know how we are going to get there. And I think, my experience with many museums has been that they need certainty, like to be sure about what is going to happen and this is very administrative situation where you have to be clear about many things—not everybody—but many of them. And I think, first of all, this idea of uncertainty is extremely important and to jump, you know, a "phase" you say?

The other thing, for example, is that, not every museum works the same way. You know, for example, there is this museum in Poland, Museum of Modern Art, that I like very much because I worked with them, and they have no space, which I love. They actually have a project and after the project requires whatever it requires, they find whatever the project requires. And I think this is a beautiful idea because it is a mobile, a malleable format for a museum. Like many of the museums I work with, they have a place and say, "this is your room," and I am like… well I do not need a room.

I think this idea of trying to understand that not all the museums, of course, are the same and to understand that sometimes you do not need—for this kind of practice—you do not need a space, what you need is a set of relationships and also the idea of long-term is extremely important to understand in museum because, yes, you can have a museum that works five years on a project, but why can't we have a five-year commitment to a social project? You know what I mean?

This is kind of the thing and in the case with the Queens Museum it has been very good, and also with Creative Time, because we had a very intense discussions, so I feel like I am working from the inside of the institution. So, I am doing institutional critique from the inside. I am not outside saying "you did this wrong," but I am trying to go inside the structure and push a little bit, you know. And it has been very hard for them, like to pay for the space for five years has been extremely hard to explain to the board and to understand what is happening after that.

So, I feel that, well for example, recently I had a conversation with Tate and Van Abbe, and they invited me talk about collecting activism. I was extremely shocked. Because my first question to the institution was: if you want to collect activism—you guys are dealing with how to deal with politics, right?—I asked, are you willing to become an activist museum? Are you willing to buy an art piece that may be not such good art but the money goes to a "good" cause? Are you going to take sides politically because you support this or that?

I mean these are all sets of questions that I feel art institutions have to ask itself when they are dealing with political art. Not only showing or trying to see the document or the photo or the video that can show you what happened but also how can you activate, in real time, the politics that the artists wants to activate, you know? Even if you do an exhibition twenty years later, you know, and that's my critique for example with the way museums deal with re-enactment in performance, like they mostly show the image, and now you see it for real, this is the same image that you see in the photo, why do you need it in real? That's not what a performance is, that's not what politics is. What politics and performance is, is how you activate a set of relationships that make you react in certain way or makes you think about certain things that today is not the same as twenty years earlier.

I feel this is the main challenge in a way because for very long time art institutions sell themselves as a-political in a way. You know, you take

sides but you have to stay a little distanced sometimes, in general, there are always exceptions. And I think, you guys, if you want to deal with political art you have take risks, and risk your director position and risk everything. Because that is what politics is in a way, so it's not easy to tell you that but… and self-sabotage your own institution in a way, for the idea. I know is not easy to hear that…

Question: Hi, I am Stephen Wright, I want to come back to your parenthetical comment that "artists, are workers and as such need to be paid," which is a fairly straight-forward demand that neo-liberalism remunerate those who produce value, but is paradoxical in the light of what you said I think for two reasons.

In light of your defense of Useful Art, one could argue that there are not better ways to perpetuate autonomous art. If artists were paid by art institutions they would have no compelling reason to enter in the realm of the real as you described it and secondly, because I was hoping that you would add to that, that users should also be remunerated because after all, the key site of surplus value extraction today is around usership.

Tania Bruguera: I totally agree and I am glad that you are here so you can talk also about usefulness tomorrow. One example is that, in the contract when Tate bought the piece of Tatlin's *Whisper*, in the contract there is clause that says, "Anybody from the audience can take any sort of documentation and they can sell it for the market price of my work." Of course, unfortunately I am not so expensive, but hopefully someday… The reason for that is that, I totally agree with you. If you are an artist and you work with people and people complete your work, they also have a right to be remunerated economically, they also have a right to have access to the benefits, not only the spirit of benefit but also the concrete benefit of the work. So, this is a little gesture that I did trying to signal that need. And I agree, I think for example, in our project we try to pay everybody. We do not have a lot of money but we try to pay people, we try even if it is people in the community who are part of it, like, for example, at the Artivist School we are going to give grants to people in the community who want to go and they will be paid to go to the school. I am totally with you.

And it's ironic because we are creating an industry that is very strong where you graduate so many artists every year, but then there is no security for those artists, there are no jobs for those artists in the art world. Because the only thing…. I mean, some museums pay but it is always a fight, it's

always a fight as an artist. Even artists like me who supposedly do not have to fight for these things any more—I always have to fight!

And for example, three years ago we did a project for Murcia and they have not paid me yet and they breached the contract, and I've been trying to demand…. It is not the money, is just the fact that I feel violated as an artist and disrespected. I want the money because if I had not done the exhibition they would go after me because I did not fulfill my contract, but for them is fine! "No, we do not have money any more," but they still do exhibitions with other artists.

So, I feel there is this kind of situation where the artists have to be taken into consideration as a worker. This is our time, this is our brain, and these are our ideas, and we are working for the museum when we do exhibitions. It is not like we are just there because "oh, we are going to be famous because we having a show in a museum." No, we are working for the museum when we are doing projects.

And that needs to be said because I am lucky but there are many, many younger artists that are struggling. And for example, Immigrant Movement, I wish I could be there all the time. I can't because I have to go everywhere for a hundred dollars here, a thousand here, three thousand here to find money so I can produce the project, you know. And that should not happen.

Question: Hi, I am Nicole Smythe-Johnson from Jamaica. The question I wanted to ask you is about creating the circumstances for your work. In Jamaica, I think it is easy to talk about challenging the institution but, in Jamaica, we are fighting to justify an art institution at all. And there is not an acknowledged tradition for activism. So, in that kind of space, I think your work is really interesting, and I definitely think that it would be really valuable in a place like Jamaica, but I am kind of, where would I even start? So, I wanted to know, first of all, if you have worked in that kind of place where there are not too many art institutions or any at all, and also, where you have worked, how have you gone creating the circumstances for your work?

Tania Bruguera: Well, as I said it took me two years and a half to create this. For example, when I went to Mexico I had to change the project because the project could not happen exactly the same way it happened in the United States. I think, one of the things is the idea of adaptability to places and political—I use this term: political timing specific—which

means that is an artwork that reacts to the political circumstances, understanding that they can change any time, of course.

And one of the problems probably with the idea of long-term projects is that there is a long period of time where the art did not exist, yet. I think the institution gets nervous about this sometimes. So, you are creating the circumstances where you can have art happening, and art can be just maybe one day out of five years, you know. So, I do not know, it depends on the circumstances, it depends on the place, it depends on the dynamics of the place.

But in this case, the first thing was trust, so the community trusts us. The second thing was to be there every day—even weekends, holidays, all the time—and understand what they are lacking—which is respect, trust, and people who want to deal… For example, we do something that is very specific: everybody who works in Immigrant Movement knows that if somebody enters the door—even if they are doing a grant for a foundation they have to stop everything. Actually one day we could not submit a grant because we were finishing and somebody came because their husband was in prison and we had to deal with that and we did not make the grant within the deadline.

I think this is very important, you know, to understand what is the priority. Also because we are like two people working there, if we were fifty people we could have done everything, but we are very little group of people. So, I think this is very important, to understand what is the priority and also to understand that it is a human project, it is not an art project, it is a project that is artistic because it is human, and trying to create the different relationships with that, I know sounds a kind of corky, but it is true.

And for us it is very important that we are not using people. I mean there are many projects that look like long-term projects, where the artist has their idea, preconceived before they arrived at the place. They do one or two trips very quickly; they talk to one or two people and they come and decide what to do and they come as an ovni as they implant their project. And everybody in the art world is extremely happy because it is for them—not for the community. You know, there is enough community work that people feel they are good people when they come, but it is not really for them, you know.

I have a friend who—I won't mention his name—he is an artist who told me once that at his project he got robbed, someone stole his equipment. And I said: "this is because people do not trust your project." We had a

huge discussion. In Immigrant Movement we had an ipod for a year and a half, we do not know whose ipod that is, and like I leave my money there: it's a very safe space, so this is the main thing that we have created, it is a very safe space and everybody can be themselves. And that takes time, that takes a lot of time, you know. Thank you so much.

Tania Bruguera, Cuban performance artist and activist. Her performances question the possibility of political representation and attempt to collapse the distance between art and life, eroding institutionalized injustice and prejudicial hierarchies in the process. Bruguera has had solo exhibitions at the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Havana (2004); Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase College, New York (2010); Tate Modern, London (2012); and Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, The Netherlands (2013). She has participated in many group exhibitions since *New Art from Cuba*, Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (1994). She has also taken part in the Havana Biennial (1994); São Paulo Biennial (1996); Venice Biennale (2001, 2005, and 2009); documenta, Kassel, Germany (2002); İstanbul Biennial (2003); Shanghai Biennial (2004); and Gwangju Biennial, South Korea (2000 and 2008). She was a finalist for the 2016 Hugo Boss Prize. She founded (2015) the İnstitute of Artivism/İnstituto de Artivismo Hannah Arendt (İNSTAR) in order to "foster civic literacy and policy change." Bruguera lives and works in various cities depending on the location of her long-term projects.

COLLECTİONS: PATRONAGE AND POLİCY

RANA SADİK

2014

Good morning. A thank you, a very quick thank you, to Bartomeu for inviting me to speak on this topic, and definitely to Jenny Schmitz for all your efforts in helping me get here. Bartomeu asked me to speak on the subject of patronage and the construction of a sphere for production and reception of artistic practice. There are two types of patrons in my world: the state-sanctioned patrons for protocol function and management of an event, and the private patrons, individuals who create and support private initiatives. There are no legislative decisions that either encourage or discourage patronage. In some countries, financial incentives and benefits are given to encourage individuals and institutions to venture into the world of patronage for arts and culture.

There is a real lack of understanding of what the role of a patron is and how this can be used to capitalise on that. Patrons are members of the community, usually with influence in certain spheres and rather visible within their communities. This may not necessarily fit into the agenda of state-sanctioned patrons. Sometimes protocol frowns on this and it can be misinterpreted as opening a breeding ground for competition rather than incorporating the patrons' visibility to reach out to the community. If I can take this one step further, immigration regulations further complicate being a patron in countries where residents live on short-term renewable residency

permits rather than a guaranteed indefinite leave of stay, so what possibilities are there for these people to play an effective role of patronage?

There are large minority communities in all of our Arab world that go completely unrepresented and unmentioned in the state artistic and cultural agenda. In my opinion, this marginalisation is discouraging for both the patron and for any artistic cultural production that may address the existence of these minorities. I find it admirable that, in spite of no legislative action for patrons or patronage and no incentives, from this void come patrons, patronage, non-profit spaces, ambidextrous spaces, private collections, private museums, endless shows, regionally and internationally, and venues for production and display, art fairs, and galleries.

I would like to brainstorm on what the terms patron and patronage mean to me from my own experiences. Two biennales ago, at the Sharjah Art Biennial, I was asked to give a talk alongside the artist Khalil Rabah, him being the artist and me being the patron. My understanding of being a patron has evolved since then and has taken on another dimension. It has moved away from the simple one-dimension act of funding artists' projects or exhibitions, and expanded into this new multidimensional model on which I can work with artists, share experiences with them from other shows I've visited, do sneak peeks at their work, do a critique, listen to their thinking processes.

This understanding of patronage comes from experience. It is because my interaction with, and observation of, some of the most seasoned patrons like Salwa Mikdadi and Suha Shoman has created a space for me and defined frameworks to work within, without overlapping or being repetitive, ensuring that my work is both relevant and laying some groundwork to be built on by others later.

I grounded my own art initiative, MinRASY Projects, which was founded in 2009. MinRASY Projects rests in my head—that's its piece of real estate. We've done interventions, art in public spaces, commissioned art works like Tarek Atoui's sonic metaphor *Unplified*, and some art publications. I keep MinRASY Projects separate from other artists' initiatives. I invite artists and curators to collaborate on projects that I have conceived. In 2010 I started working on a museum project with curator Samer Younis, the Museum of Manufactured Response to Absence (MoMORta). MoMORta, above everything else and appropriately for CIMAM, is about museum authorities and narratives, but that's another

twenty minutes of discussion, which we'll leave for another time. In order for us to create objects for this museum, we started commissioning objects. MoMORta is an ongoing project. We're frequently working on new commissions, and rethinking and changing submitted works for the collection. There are very specific guidelines and a time framework for the objects, and we do pay the artists a fee and the cost of production [of their works]. When we first started giving commissions there was much resistance from the artists regarding any input we wanted to include. It took time to gain the trust of the artists to work together rather than in isolation. Between displays, MoMORta is in storage. All four instances in which it has been displayed have been the contexts of interventions, not in art shows as such. By requesting commissions from artists, the MoMORta museum project becomes a patron of the arts, working in that depth and new dimension I discovered, which is building concepts from ideas, to tangible objects with artists, cultural managers, curators, exhibition designers, and so on. Patrons can be individuals or institutions. A successful patron should condition audiences for taste. They should be opinion-makers, guardians of the work now and prepare for its legal protection in the future. So, patrons, in my opinion, should be more than just cash-injectors or underwriters of a project. Patronage comes from different parts of the body: the mind, the heart, the eye. Patronage can only be from individuals, even within institutions. So, it contains a human element; it's about humans working together, interacting, brain-picking, networking.

On my last MRI, my brain measured 1130 cm^3. Ashkal Alwan, an incubator for artistic production, has a whopping 1000 m^2 of vastly open spaces, allowing for versatility and porousness in production. No artistic production can happen without interaction— whether it's with another human being, the environment, or the angels. No man is an island. Asking Christine Tohme, its director, about the impact of physical space on production, she says, "It opens up infinite possibilities and allows for multiplier effects of benefits because larger numbers can be accommodated for." The National Council for Culture, Art and Letters in Kuwait provides thirteen artists' studios free of charge, plus a modest sum for materials. The National Council assumes a more classic and traditional role as patron. In this case neither the patron nor the artist leads; art is produced within the confines of an accepted definition, which is how mainstream patrons assume their role outside of our networked art circle.

Gallery spaces are becoming ambidextrous and are easily transformed from selling spaces to non-profit spaces. I haven't made up my mind on this practice yet. I do recognise that in the absence of legislators, of governing bodies such as boards of directors or boards of advisors that regulate the use of these spaces, the switch becomes easy because the community you serve is not represented in the decision. And not all patrons have the same listening skills. Are commercial gallery spaces and non-profit spaces patrons of the arts? Are commercial galleries using this ambidextrous skill to validate themselves as patrons? I think this can only be answered individually, based on their programming, library, community outreach, and this new multidimensional patronage to the artists. Meem Gallery in Dubai holds a library, the Noor Library of Middle Eastern Art, that houses a collection of sixteen thousand publications relating to art and culture in our area. This is an extraordinary patronage from a commercial gallery that gets absolutely nothing in return. And if I may take this comment just one step further, the director of Meem Gallery lives in Dubai on a renewable residency, which means nothing guarantees even his leave of stay to safeguard either his gallery or the library.

Art fairs are limited in number in the Arab world. I will refer to the one with the highest visitor numbers and internationally the most recognised branded art fair of the Arab world: Art Dubai. Art Dubai is ambidextrous—free-to-attend programmes known as the Global Art Forum (GAF) run parallel to the fair and commission works, which, interestingly, will sometimes be only within metres of the fair selling the art works. From my experience, Art Dubai is a patron and its patronage is extensive and includes curatorial counselling. The fair's director Antonia Carver is actually from the left, having worked on non-profit cultural initiatives before taking up the role of fair director. Artists are selected and given grants to make work that is relevant not to the fair, but to the contemporary dialogue which often borders on material deemed sensitive but not sensational. In 2013 GAF provided a platform for redefining the term MENA, as in the MENA region, and re-coined it Middle East Nervous Anxiety. They certainly have a sense of humour! Art Dubai is a commercial fair first and foremost, but to me it is sending a clear message about the role of patronage in the art-world food chain.

Which leaves me with another type of patron in this vast cultural infrastructure that is being built in our area: auction houses. Yes, auction

houses must be patrons; they function to elevate the status and visibility of artists. Or do they use artists to raise their own visibility, which is what sometimes motivates people to become patrons? This form of promotion of artists should not be confused with the promotion of their artistic production, because at auction houses it is artists' names are brands that stir interest, and not necessarily the art that they produce. Many successful artists at auctions are heavily promoted by auction houses. Some of the promotion tools are publications focused on the artists with documentation of the studios and studio practices, reaching as far as collaborations with museums to produce solo shows before unleashing these works on to the market. And when auction houses have leverage with museums, the benefit to artists is exponential. Indeed, auction houses play the role of taste-makers and patrons to the arts.

Are art collectors patrons? Tricky question. As a generally accepted concept, yes. To me though, it just doesn't cut the mustard to buy the image from the cover of Christies. To enjoy being referred to as a patron, I'm always looking for the other dimension: is there something the collector does tirelessly and benefits the collection, or extends beyond it and bears some kind of fruit? This would include commissioning work and donating works to institutions. Did this collector initiate a dialogue, or make a difference somehow, somewhere, to become a patron? Kamel Lazaar is a collector who, among other initiatives, via his foundation carries the platform for Ibraaz, a critical forum on visual culture for the Mena region. In an interview, when asked about Ibraaz, Lazaar said, "I like to think of these initiatives as a series of small actions that have collateral benefits that cross-pollinate one another over time.' It is Lazaar's patronage that was more visible to me than his collection, but it is his collection that spawned ideas and initiatives that validate it, not vice versa.

Hot on the heels of Qalandya International, the Palestinian Biennial that is being held now, is the Jerusalem Show. It's more than just a show—it's a biennale within a biennale. Interestingly enough, Jack Persekian, the curator of the show, did not create the sphere for his production for artistic practice; he did not develop the spaces or confines of his patronage to artistic production in Jerusalem. The local, political, social, economic, and cultural context of being in Jerusalem created the sphere. On the subject of being situated in Jerusalem, Jack says, "Politics is a fertile ground for artists to draw ideas and topics from. So, in this framework, I think that

politics is no constraint. On the contrary, it provides an abundance of issues and concerns to deal with, address, or at least, take a position on."

Let's touch on museums. There are a number of contemporary museums in progress in the area. A museum is a highly sought position for patrons and collectors. A museum's patron is on the top of the patron's hierarchy pyramid. Museums are also highly aspirational venues for artists and curators. In this legislative void that exists in protocol formalities, will there be a role for the private patron in the museum? If I read regional and local protocol correctly, then I think museums have no chairs for private patrons. Private patrons in the context that we are discussing here, people who reside in countries but are not necessarily citizens, will often have spent most of their adult life as residents. Without private patrons on museum boards, who are usually the most instrumental stakeholders in museums, the horizon for relevant and artistic production and reception to initiate change or document narratives moves even further away, removing representation of minority communities, who may not exist as community members in the legal framework but who are certainly physically there, and the opportunity to open relevant engaging dialogue via patrons and patronage diminishes. Whenever I'm presented with a new proposal, I always look to see who are other prospective patrons. Who are the others who will lend their support and confidence? Before committing to a project, I bind its initiators to the notion that I expect accountability as much from the executors as I do from the other patrons.

These are my own thoughts on patrons, patronage, and spheres for production and reception. Some of this discussion could be taken to other panels and still be relevant.

I would now like to talk about the legal registration of my own venture, MinRASY Projects. I am, to date, a lifelong, short-term, subject-to-renewal resident of Kuwait, which means that every five years I will resubmit for a residency permit. I have registered MinRASY Projects in the UK because of the nature of its activity and because in the UK I can become the sole owner of the entity, therefore I can protect its interests under the law of that country and can open a bank account for this entity. But boy, is Uncle Sam watching over the activities I fund! I'm trying to pay my exhibition designers for a recent project in Ramallah. This is the content of an e-mail the bank sent to me: "What connection does X have with 3 PLUS Design and Architecture? Why is USD being paid to an account in

this individual's name? Are these likely to be transferred elsewhere? Which exhibition does the work relate to, and is there a little more detail on this? Is there a contract which describes the work which X has carried out? If so, can we see a copy? Apologies for this. However, our compliance department requests this information in order to comply with the regulatory expectations in relation to monitoring payments into high-risk jurisdictions. They should not have any questions beyond this." They did. Are compliance departments and banks becoming inadvertently part of a patron's psyche when trying to fund projects? In a world filled with sensitivities over religion and politics, and in projects open for interpretation, what effect will this have on patrons? I think the monitoring of bank compliance departments may affect spheres of production in high-risk jurisdiction. Let's take this back to Jack for a minute—not only is he working under a physical occupation, but the financial constraints are equally challenging, and the movement of money into Palestine is not a guarantee. By the way, it's the U.S. Treasury that defines high-risk jurisdiction.

In regions where rule of law is subjective, there is a high level of assumed risk for patrons. Patrons have to think very carefully not only of the material proposal but also of its sociocultural environment (I do this all the time). And what are the boundaries that they are willing to push? Or, how much of the project should be reigned in?

Before finishing, if you allow me to flip this coin of patrons and patronage over quickly, on the other side we find an idea that is widely debated in the Western world and has not yet surfaced in Arab art patronage, which is the acceptance or rejection of corporate patrons based on their company profiles, track records, or principles. Admittedly, our regional corporations have not yet used the tools of marketing themselves aggressively through art. And, to be frank, I don't think that this will happen soon because of the previous issue I discussed, which is state visibility and profile versus art patrons and patronage. I would imagine that corporations would tread carefully here, because they don't want to upset the balance of their relationships. I think there are indeed quite a number of alternative patrons and forms of patronage around us, bearing in mind that classic patronage plays no role in a bigger cultural state agenda. In fact, often these activities and spaces become the cultural events of the places identified with certain cities, such as Beirut, Dubai, Amman, Cairo, or Jeddah. Certainly, this lack of legislation is promoting critical thinking

outside of the state frameworks, but I question the sustainability of patrons, patronage, and spheres for cultural production in the light of immigration laws, U.S. banking regulations, social politics and protocol, and risk aversion. Thank you. [Applause]

Questions

Bartomeu Marí: My name is Bartomeu Marí, Director of MACBA in Barcelona. I have a friend, Karel Schampers, who was Chief Curator at the Museum Bojimans in Rotterdam and then directed the Frans Hals Museum in Haarlem, who used to say that art history is not written by art historians or by museum professionals but by collectors. And that was said twenty years ago and it seemed very provocative; today it doesn't seem so provocative, but I would like to ask you what you think the future role of professionals, specialists, museum curators will be.

Frances Morris: Is that a question to everybody, one by one?

Bartomeu Marí: To anyone who would like to answer.

Graham Beal: Well, I was actually interested in what Olav was saying, because, anecdotally I suppose, I'd always thought of the defeat of the critic happening around 1870, 1880, and being sidelined. Having been a curator of contemporary art for seventeen years, I always felt that we were very much behind the vanguard of the entrepreneur dealer and the private collector. I have a wonderful colleague who's from Spain, and when he describes his job as a curator in the United States it's very different from those of the people who stayed in Spain with whom he went to graduate school. And the same can be said for me as a director, when I compare my daily life with those of my colleagues in Europe. It's a very difficult thing; it's much more tied up with patronage, much more engaged at the social level of the higher echelons of society. The curators at the Detroit Institute of Arts privately would tell you quite quickly, most of them, that they're not very happy about the way we do business at the DIA; that we have essentially taken away a considerable amount of executive power, because some of my curatorial colleagues used to say, "My galleries, my collection." Curators in museums similar to the DIA, at least in the States, are going to have to become much less like feudal chieftains running their own shows, and will have to learn rather than to instruct, to learn to negotiate with other people whose values are determining what is shown to the public.

Maria Lind: A crucial question is, then, how art history is going to be written, whether it is still primarily through the big institutions. It seems to me that a vast majority of large art museums today do programmes that can be described as canonmaking, with the ambition of writing the new canon. But the canon being the principle model, it's only rarely to do with thinking about context, thinking about other parameters through which we can experience and discuss art. And one of the things that is of concern, I think, is what happens to the kind of art that is not entering the art museums at all. At this point, many of the artists with whom I've worked for twenty years, as was mentioned by Olav, are not part of the commercial circuit at all—they're part of other circuits and, of course, they're brilliant artists, so how does that work survive and how is it written into history? I'm interested in thinking about models whereby this kind of work can actually survive within collections, or rather archives. And maybe that is not the archive of the art museum, maybe that is the archive of the city where the institution is located. And how can it be taken care of there? How can this kind of work be described, documented, debated, and so on? I think that could be a big question for the next generation of curators.

Frances Morris: So, two answers and two deferrals—maybe that's deferred value—for later. Any more questions?

Reema Fada: Hello, my name is Reema Fada. I write for Ibraaz and I'm also doing a PhD on Cultural Politics in Palestine. I guess this is probably more for Rana. You spoke about the biases and restrictions that present flows of funding into Palestine, as well as the physical limitations facing practitioners and curators. But I wanted to know what you think about the role of civil society pushing back on these cultural restrictions, the cultural boycott in Palestine or, more generally, the cultural boycott in the arts field. Thank you.

Rana Sadik: What do you mean by cultural boycott? I didn't understand the question.

Reema Fada: Oh sorry, it was more about what do you think about civil society's role in pushing for a cultural boycott to readdress the restrictions and biases facing the region, in Palestine particularly?

Rana Sadik: I don't live in Palestine, so I can't really comment on that. I live in Kuwait. I don't think there should be a cultural boycott of Kuwait.

Reema Fada: No, no, not the cultural boycott of Kuwait, more what is the role of a cultural boycott within arts practices? It's not specific to a

region, but more generally, as a form of civilian action to readdress these kind of political biases or restrictions on funding flows that you spoke of.

Rana Sadik: Okay, I still didn't understand the question, but in terms of restriction of funding there's really nothing you can do. Who are you going to boycott, the banks, the U.S. Treasury?

Reema Fada: I mean that the boycott generally works in terms of putting pressure on the occupiers in the case of Palestine, so pressure is applied so that you can make these changes in terms of funding.

Rana Sadik: I understand. I don't live in Palestine, so I really can't answer that question. I'm sorry. Thank you.

Reema Fada: Okay.

Frances Morris: Any more questions? Fourth row from the back?

Varda Nisar: Hello, my name is Varda Nisar and I'm from Pakistan. My question is for Olav. Firstly, what were your criteria for selecting the countries you mentioned and your researching? Secondly, how does the validation of museums clash with what Hito was talking about in the morning? With free ports, and art being buried behind walls, how does that clash with her research? Thanks.

Olav Velthuis: On the selection of the countries I can give an honest answer, or a practical answer. The honest answer is for funding reasons; it's a project that is funded by the Dutch Research Organization and I guess that terms like these, which of course came from the financial world. The term BRIC Countries [Brazil, Russia, India, and China], as you probably know, was invented by Goldman Sachs. It's easier to get funding like that. That's the honest answer. Then there's an answer as to why I think it's a fair selection. They are probably the four countries that have the largest emerging art worlds. Perhaps they are not the largest, but among the five or six countries outside of Europe and the United States, these four are the most dynamic. At the same time, for me it's interesting as a researcher. There is a lot of diversity; there are different models. Brazil for instance—people in Brazil have been developing their art world according to a very different model to the one in China or in Russia. That's what makes this group of four particularly interesting for me. Then, coming to the other question about the free ports and the museums, again the free ports are there, and I won't deny they're an important development, but they're very much confined to a very specific group of collectors and a very specific group of artists. The type of art that is being stored there is not representative

of what is going on in the art world in China, for instance. In the free ports you will find all the commercial artists who have been auctioned. They are completely conflated: auctioned artists will be in free ports, and all the other things that are happening in China — there are so many different circuits, Conceptual art, Performance art, and commercial art that is not being sold for these astronomic prices, that you will not find there. So, this is just a fragment of what is circulating in the market, and even more so in the art world.

Olga Sviblova: Olga Sviblova, Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow. I would just like to pose a question regarding your method, how you study what's happened between the institutions and the market in these emerging countries. I saw your diagram of Russia, showing that the galleries had a higher influence than the institutions. You had five galleries for Russia, but I don't understand how you can study this. We have only just begun to have private institutions. Institutions need money; so all directors everywhere do the same job in different ways. I'm just trying to understand your method, how you study, how you produce your statistics, because the case of my country seems to me a little different.

Olav Velthuis: No, you're absolutely right, I mean the picture for Russia is very different to, let's say, that of China or India. The involvement of institutions in Russia is much bigger and the market, as you just said, is very weak. What we do is we count galleries, institutions, based on monthly or bi-monthly gallery maps, so there will be many galleries included that don't have a high profile, that are just starting, that don't have a very active exhibition programme (there are definitely more than five in Russia). But you're absolutely right — the balance in Russia is very different to the balance in China or India.

Frances Morris: Sorry, could I just intervene? Maybe that's a discussion to continue over lunch, because obviously it's a complex one. Any more questions?

Rachel Dedman: Hi, my name is Rachel Dedman and I'm an independent curator working in the Middle East. My question is really for Rana. I was wondering what you thought about patronage from its other side, so to speak, because while your definition of patronage seems broad, and I think for many places is true, there's something to be said about Ashkal Alwan, which was one of your examples. You said that their big space in Beirut is an extraordinary opportunity for them to help artists and

curators, and I totally agree, and you quoted Christine on this. But I wonder if there's something to be said about the way it was before, because, arguably, before Christine had such a space, she, and other curators and cultural practitioners who were coming up in Lebanon after 1990, at the end of the civil war, were doing very radical things in public space in Beirut, on the Corniche, interventions, working with artists. And of course, now that generation has matured it serves another function. I wonder if you could talk a little bit about what might be lost with that kind of patronage, because obviously patronage in many ways is positive, but perhaps there's something to be said about its institutionalizing force, and maybe there's something lost in that process. What would you think?

Rana Sadik: I don't think there's anything lost in that process. I was giving the example of Ashkal Alwan in terms of patronage of space, making available that much space. In comparison, for example, I don't have any physical space, whereas the National Council has thirteen artists' studios. So, there are different types of interaction, but from what I see from Ashkal Alwan affording that kind of space, and the amount of mentoring that is given to people who walk through those doors, and the amount of open space that is available, I think that it's a successful process.

Rachel Dedman: I totally agree, I'm one of the people who have been mentored there!

Rana Sadik: Okay, okay! But I wonder whether actually having a physical place or a physical location changes your relationship to the environment in the city in which you operate. Maybe there's something, particularly in Beirut, where there was—and still is, in a way—a lack of infrastructural support and physical environment that has then prompted an energy in the city that is quite unusual. All these were really grass-roots entities and, particularly in the nineties, generated work that was unusual. Maybe, by the fact of having the space, something has been lost or changed.

Rana Sadik: I think that definitely something has changed, but I still think that both things are happening. I think there still is a grass-roots movement and I think having spaces is great. I think that there has to be (and there still isn't, although we're working very hard and very quickly towards this) is creating more complete infrastructures, having the full diagram. So, I'm just talking about Ashkal Alwan as a patron in terms of the kind of space and mentoring that it offers, but that's as far as it goes.

Rachel Dedman: You need both. Thank you.

Frances Morris: So, I think we've got time for two more questions. There's one over here and then one in the front.

Luiz Augusto Teixeira de Freitas: My question is for Olav, and is based on a statement that he quoted in his presentation. You mentioned that the process of value creation these days is mostly the result of the influence of galleries and collectors. I think that there's an important issue that we have forgotten in this discussion, which is the role of the artist. A great part of this boom in the contemporary market would not exist, in my opinion, if artists could refrain from producing works following market demands. It's my own research and not scientific, but take the example of three or four artists who are really considered by critics and curators, who are each represented by four, five, or six galleries, and each of these galleries take part in six, seven, or eight fairs a year, they are also requested to produce works for two or three, sometimes four or five public exhibitions every year. If you multiply all these figures, you get a huge amount of works that are produced. So, wouldn't it be reasonable to expect that the artist is also responsible for this boom, this craziness in the art world?

Olav Velthuis: Yes, I agree with that. The classical way of this validation is in terms of widening circles—an artist creates a work and first of all it circulates among other artists, and then the circle slowly widens to include critics, curators, and then widens further to include collectors. What seems to be happening now is that the collectors are moving more towards the center, they are coming into the process earlier than they used to. Having said that, and this is in part a response to Bartomeu's question, it's very hard to generalise about these processes. The type of artists that you're talking about, the fair-producing artists, are definitely under pressure, but again, a gallery will always take a selection of artists to a fair, those who are more commercial, that people can appreciate and have a opinion about during the few seconds that art-fair visitors have to make judgements about works. Galleries usually leave out those artists who don't have that type of work, and luckily people don't receive the pressure of opinions generated at that kind of speed. Again, we can't generalise, not even for one gallery, and say that all the artists have the pressure of producing works for the demands of fairs. Let's leave it there.

Frances Morris: One final question.

Albert Groot: Albert Groot, from The Netherlands. Isn't public-funded art a form of education and indirect subsidy?

Frances Morris: Who'd like to answer that? Maria Lind: If it's a subsidy, a subsidy to what?

Albert Groot: In The Netherlands, public institutions like museums are often funded by local governments, provincial governments, or the state government, and one of their jobs is to promote education; they get money for that. But there are also institutions that educate artists who later come onto the market, but as they've been educated, wouldn't you consider that an indirect subsidy?

Maria Lind: In that case it would be a subsidy to the whole field of art, because everybody's working with artists and most of them have received an education, so yes, I would say so. Maybe what's more interesting, to me at least right now, is the kind of value creation which is not based on usual econometric values as I mentioned, but on other values. So, if the commercial art system has something like Droit de Suite or resale royalties for auctions, where in certain contexts artists obtain a little money when their works are resold, what would happen if there was something like that in place in relation to smaller visual arts organisations doing the groundwork that large institutions and commercial galleries eventually benefit from? This would be the deferred value, and not only monetary value, that I was speaking of. What would happen if we had a slightly different system, or at least a different mentality in terms of crediting what has happened, the people who did the research twenty or thirty years ago on subjects that are being picked up and then bring in large visitor numbers, a lot of media attention, and occasionally also sales? What would happen if we could think about paying back to the community, as it were, in terms of that kind of investment?

Frances Morris: I think that's an incredibly positive note on which to finish, because it's really the first question that we might think about this afternoon. Brains and muscles need food and that's next on the agenda, so thank you very much. And thank you to our speakers! [Applause]

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AMERİCA İS HARD TO SEE

DONNA DE SALVO

2017

I am going to speak about the inaugural installation in the Whitney Museum of American Art's new downtown building, *America is Hard to See* and give you a bit of context and somewhat of a timeline of how we got there. So, some background about the new Whitney Museum of American Art.

For more than three decades, the Whitney has been trying to expand its building on Madison and 75th Street. This was largely driven by the growth of the museum's collection. There had been several attempts over many years, some of you probably know the different architects, but each of those plans had met with tremendous resistance from the neighborhood and the Landmarks Commission, regarding demolishing the buildings next to the Marcel Breuer building, which would have allowed the museum to maximize the space.

In the end, the trustees took a very courageous decision and decided to go elsewhere. They abandoned the expansion project uptown and looked for a parcel of land to purchase and found here, on the west side of Manhattan, a disused site owned by the city of New York in what is still known as the Meatpacking District. This is our new building that was designed by Renzo Piano and opened on May 15, 2015.

You can see in the architecture, there is a porosity that I think in many ways, we hope, signals the ethos of the institution… Inside, outside,

windows that open out, look out west, look out east, terraces that you can walk via the exterior stairs. We run parallel to the High Line.

One of the great things that Renzo Piano did, and I had the great privilege of working with him along with the Director on the design of the building, was the engagement with the neighborhood. Because one of the things we asked was "Why do you want to put the terraces on the east side and not look out on the west side and the river?" and Piano said, "You don't turn your back on the neighborhood."

We opened this new building in May 2015 with a presentation that was drawn from the museum's permanent collection; I would say there were two loans amongst the 600 works by 400 artists that occupied the whole building.

The exhibition ran throughout all floors of the building, including the 5th floor, which is the museum's main exhibition space and included works principally from the 70s up to the present (fig. 1). On the right is a work by Félix González-Torres called *America* which we decided would look fantastic in the stairway but also be symbolic. And we titled the presentation *America is Hard to See*. I will tell you a little bit more about where that title derives from in a minute. Today I would like to talk about this multi-year initiative that we engaged in, which really got us to this point.

A little bit of background about the history of the Whitney, some known, some not as well known: the Whitney really began as a studio for Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, yes that Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney of the Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney lineage. She was an artist herself and had little interest in living the kind of life that might have been expected at that time of a woman of her position. She chose not to be a society lady but instead moved down to Greenwich Village where she had a studio to pursue her own work. In that studio, she eventually presented the work of other artists, principally, American artists.

It seems very far away now, but at that time, in the 20s and early 30s, there was no great affinity for American art or for collecting American art. In fact, many American collectors were drawn more to European culture and had little interest in supporting the work of American artists and this motivated Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney to begin supporting artists.

Their club had 400 members, which included Edward Hopper, Alexander Calder, Agnes Pelton, Stuart Davis—many of the great American artists—and she supported their work by purchasing works from them, some of which she donated to American museums. She was also a supporter



Fig. 1. İnstallation view of *America İs Hard to See* (Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, May 1-September 27, 2015). From left to right: Louise Lawler, *Does Marilyn Monroe Make You Cry?*, 1988; Charles Ray, *Boy*, 1992; Lari Pittman, *Untitled #16 (A Decorated Chronology of İnsistence and Resignation)*, 1993. Photograph by Ron Amstutz.

of the Armory Exhibition. Mrs. Whitney had no intention of founding a museum and so, having amassed this sizable collection, offered it as a gift with a major endowment to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The offer was promptly refused by its then director Edward Robinson who responded, and I quote, "What will we do with them, my dear lady? We have a cellar full of those things already."[1]

So, in 1930 she decided to turn her studio club into the Whitney Museum of American Art which opened its doors in 1931. This building on 8th Street is now the New York Studio School; it looks pretty much the same now except it doesn't have Whitney Museum over the doorway.

1 Adam D. Weinberg, "From the Artist's Hand to the Public Eye," in *Whitney Museum of American Art: Handbook of the Collection*, Dana Miller (ed.). New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 2015, p. 12.

At the time of its opening, the critic Henry McBride said, "The freedom and lack of convention that has guided these purchases are the greatest possible auguries for the future liveliness of the Museum. A contemporary museum that is stilted and pedantic is—well, it is not a museum but a morgue."[2]

Over time, the Whitney outgrew the 8th Street location. At one point, it moved to 54th Street, on the other side of MoMA; later in a campaign led by Mrs. Whitney's granddaughter, Flora Biddle Whitney, a new location was secured on Manhattan's Upper East Side which at that point was home to many galleries. The architect Marcel Breuer was commissioned to design the building, which opened in 1966.

The Whitney is quite distinct among New York museums as it was founded by an artist—the only one in the city—with that mission or point of view behind it. Again, she had not intended to create a museum and so prior to this opening of the Breuer Building, Mrs. Whitney, along with Juliana Force, who had become the first director, began to look at what they had acquired because it was a rather idiosyncratic group of things.

Sometimes, Mrs. Whitney didn't even buy the best work, but she wanted to support the artist. Together, they began to work more systematically to fill in gaps of the collection. The biennials that started very early on were defined by medium. And I will tell you that many works entered the collection because they had been in biennials, and of course. the Whitney Biennial that exists today has its roots here. This approach was unlike some places such as MoMA which had a more formal methodology and was also mapping international modern art, as demonstrated by Alfred Barr's famous diagram.

The Whitney's collection was not only more idiosyncratic, but of course, it was also defined by the term "American." It also worked very closely with artists, and in our thinking we looked a lot at this Ad Reinhardt's cartoon, which is in the collection, which has a very satirical view of the art world; and of questions such as "where does influence come from?" Reinhardt's famous tree that branches out includes a weight that holds down the branches. I encourage you, if you have never looked at Ad Reinhardt's cartoons, to check them out. They are still very relevant today. This precise definition of American art still remains a complex and

2 *İbid*, 13.

unsettled one for the Whitney. We looked at previous attempts at the Whitney and what it had done. At the close of the 20th century, of course, there was a major series mounted called *The American Century*. But when we began our work, we felt that this organizing principle was no longer relevant. We also looked very closely at some of the landmark exhibitions that the Whitney had presented. In many ways, these exhibitions helped establish narratives in the collection as some of these works were acquired.

I think many of these exhibitions, from Marcia Tucker and James Monte's *Anti-Illusion: Procedures/Materials* (1969) to Thelma Golden's *Black Male: Representations of Masculinity in Contemporary American Art* (1995) to Elisabeth Sussman's 1993 Whitney Biennial, punctured the monolithic read of American art. The museum acquired some of these things, including Fred Wilson's *Guarded View* where you see the museum guards, the headless museum guards— are all people of color. Daniel Joseph Martinez's piece sparked enormous controversy in 1993: the buttons you were given added up to "I can't imagine ever wanting to be white." Because the museum didn't have a dedicated space for showing the permanent collection, to a large extent, it has had a more kunsthalle way of operating and part of the work that I found myself faced with was how to move from being a kunsthalle to being a museum, but to not lose the kunsthalle attitude—to maintain a certain degree of openness.

While we were still in the Breuer Building, I asked the curators to test out ideas they were interested in. We basically used the galleries as a sort of laboratory and this included varying methods of display. *Singular Visions*, just had one work per gallery, and *RealSurreal*, tried to blur the lines between -isms such as Realism and Surrealism.

Over a two-year period, I then asked a group of curators of different generations to join a team. We called ourselves the "core team," we never really knew what to call ourselves, but somehow that seemed to work. It really was a team to research the collection, the history of exhibitions and to engage in a very, very thorough analysis of it.

I will say that I learnt much in my time at Tate Modern: the displays teams had a very dynamic approach to looking at the collection; more on that later. This lack of a clear narrative, and without having permanent collection displays where there was an established story, a canon that we would be burdened by, was quite liberating, but it was also somewhat destabilizing because we were figuring out "What do we do?"

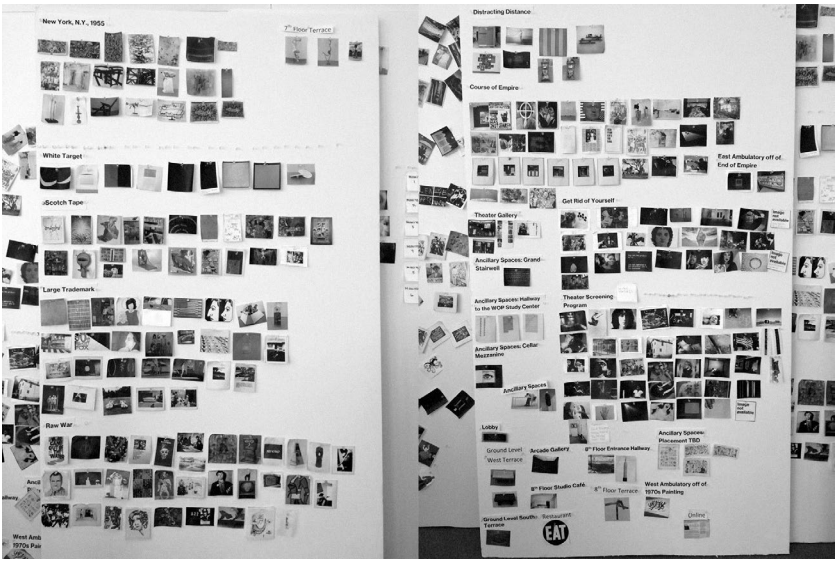


Fig. 2. Working boards of *America Is Hard to See*.

We started in a very, very simple way. We made little pictures of all the things in the collection, pinned them up on a board and had discussions about what they were (fig. 2). There were many things we had never seen, we went to look at them. Some of them were discoveries when we saw them, we were so excited by some of the themes that began to emerge. (There were also some things that we thought "Well… it's probably why it's still in storage"—we all know that story.) We also invited scholars, many of them people passing through town, to come and look at these boards and to ask in very informal conversations, often over lunch, what they thought in the collection was of greatest interest.

It was quite interesting that we had some people who said "Well, really you mostly have Calder and Hopper right?" The complexity and the depth of the collection was not well known; and then there were others who focused on certain areas of the collection who said "But you have this, and you have this."

It was just a way for us to gauge the external perception of what people thought of this collection. We also held a roundtable conversation, which was incredibly revealing, with Robert Slifkin from NYU, Negar Azimi, Senior Editor of Bidoun, the artist Paul Chan, and long-time

Whitney curator Barbara Haskell; which focused again on the term "American," what do we mean by it and who's an American artist: really trying to dig down on, "What is the guiding force here?" And you know, over the history of the museum, it has changed so often in terms of what the requirements were to enter the collection. I'll talk a little bit more about that as we go forward.

One of the things we came to acknowledge was what we did not know. And we retained three outside consultants—Thelma Golden from the Studio Museum, Alexandra Chang from NYU, and Rita Gonzales from LACMA, all experts in particular areas—and we asked them to do an analysis of our holdings, to submit written reports about its strengths, its weaknesses, and where the gaps existed. For where the gaps existed we asked them to be as specific as possible and to identify artists and if possible, even identify specific works.

I will tell you that these finding, their findings, constituted a roadmap for us and continues to be as we move forward. We worked with all of our museum acquisition committees in a very concerted effort to determine what we absolutely had to have when we opened this museum. Although we had just completed a major building project which would enable us to display more of the collection, we were faced with the Whitney's limited acquisition funds, and growing those funds is now the next stage for us.

By working across committees—our committees are defined by media—by joining forces with everyone, first of all it was a great way to get buy-in from the curators because they could really feel part of something. The second thing is we could maximize our funds, some works came as gifts, some from co-purchases between, say, the Film, Video, and New Media Committee and the Painting and Sculpture Committee. We just barreled forward—it continues to this day.

I want to take you through the exhibition, and one of the things I think all people here who are working with permanent collections and exhibition displays grapple with—is how do you present these things, how do you contextualize them, what are the labels that you put on these sections. And so coming back to the title, we thought long and hard: there was no way we would call this show "American Visionaries," "American Masters," these were a few titles that were suggested to us—not by my colleagues, I might add.

America Is Hard to See is a title that we felt really signaled something: there are two sources for the title. One—and the one I knew—was from the political film maker Emile de Antonio's film about Eugene McCarthy's failed bid for the democratic nomination in 1968 and of course is associated with a very, very powerful—not just in the U.S. but globally—year of dissent and revolution. This was the name of his film, which I later learned he had borrowed from Robert Frost's poem of the same title, in which Frost talks about Columbus' failure to really see America. And so with that as a title it sort of left the question open and I still think it is a valuable title in many ways.

We decided, given the Whitney's great history working closely with artists, that we would choose chapter titles derived from works in the collection. Each work had a symbolic meaning within the section, but also was broad enough to encompass many of the other works in the section. For example the "Rose Castle" section takes its name from a Joseph Cornell work, "Racing Thoughts" from a Jasper Johns painting, and "Guarded View" from a work by Fred Wilson.

We needed to decide the methodology: was this going to be a thematic display? A chronological display? We had a lot of debates around that topic and we thought it was very important to keep it loosely chronological. This was a first—for many people the first time—to see this much of the collection and certainly the first time to see it in a new building. The chronology was useful in navigating through a new building, it was something of a thread, the breadcrumbs you could follow, and that felt like the right thing to do for the public.

Beginning on our lobby level, "Eight West Eighth" (fig. 3) contained references to the Whitney Studio Club. The interesting thing about Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney is that she was very attracted to aspects of the American avant-garde and in particular the Ashcan School, collected the work of John Sloan whose realism was quite radical when considered against the backdrop of much academic painting.

But we also have a very big collection of animal figures which reflect the influence of folk art on the evolution of early 20th-century art. If you go to our storage facility, you see them—of course we have many people who said, "Are you really going to show the animals?" We felt that it was very important because there is no single read. To show process, to show how things evolve, it's important to do a kind of warts-and-all story;

I will tell you that at the end of this show we had many people who said, "When are you going to show the animals again?"

There is a wonderful show that will open very soon in January at the National Gallery of Art that Lynne Cooke is organizing that looks at the influence of folk art on the development of the American avant-garde. As I said earlier, our research process took us through this collection and this is where we really learned a lot about how different administrations had defined who an "American artist" was. In the work of artist Stuart Davis you see this great precisionist style that looks at an American landscape; but then we also saw a work by Yasuo Kuniyoshi.

Both of these works were included in the museum's founding collection and we were surprised to learn that Kuniyoshi, who was born in Japan in 1906 and attended school in Los Angeles and later the Arts



Fig. 3. İnstallation view of *America İs Hard to See* (Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, May 1 – September 27, 2015). From left to right on pedestal: John B. Flanagan, *Elephant*, 1929–30; William Zorach, *Bunny*, 1930; John B. Flanagan, *Chimpanzee*, 1928; Paul Fiene, *Fish*, 1929; Reuben Nakian, *Seal*, 1930; Paul Fiene, *Snail*, 1929. From left to right on wall: Carl Walters, *Bull*, 1927; Duncan Ferguson, *Squirrel*, c. 1930; Wharton Esherick, *Goslings*, 1927; Emma Lu Davis, *Cock*, 1932. Photograph by Ron Amstutz.

Students' League, was not an American citizen when Mrs. Whitney acquired his work in 1931. She was less interested in geography and more interested in the art. He was working in New York, and she liked his work and she felt that it should be in the collection. And in fact as a Japanese immigrant, he was prohibited by a variety of laws and the Exclusion Act from becoming a citizen. His wife, who was American, was stripped of her citizenship when she married him. And sadly, by the time the ban was lifted in 1952, Kuniyoshi had died, while waiting for his application to be processed.

We discovered that Mrs. Whitney has done a series of exhibitions in the early days of the museum that looked at the immigrant in American culture. She had a great interest in looking at this new generation of immigrants coming to the U.S. At the top of the building was the section on "Machine Ornament." This encompassed many works by artists such as Joseph Stella, Elsie Driggs, Charles Demuth, Charles Sheeler; who were looking at ideas of the American landscape in terms of war, industry, development of commerce.

And in this section, we were able to insert one of our new acquisitions—a work by Toyo Miyatake. This was one of the artists that our consultants brought to our attention and we were very fortunate to be able to acquire the work.

Miyatake was born in Japan and he'd come to Los Angeles where he worked under the pictorial photographer Harry Shigeta and then later Edward Weston, and had a studio in little Tokyo. In fact, if you go to Los Angeles, there is a little marker that shows where his studio had once been. And he made portraits of many notable figures, such as Thomas Mann and the dancer Michio Ito; but with the U.S. declaration of war in '42 he was, along with more than 100,000 Japanese Americans, relocated to internment camps.

Miyatake and his family were taken to the camp in Manzanar, California. There have been many documentary photographs made of Manzanar by photographers, though of course not in the camp. This was an opportunity to look at a work made from inside the camp. Immediately the point of view is a very, very different one. By adding this to our section, by incorporating him into the collection, we have taken on another idea of American art and of course what is so interesting is that he was an American citizen. We also get the great complexity of the U.S. and its changes politically and its attitude toward those who were not born here.

For a section about early 20th-century modernism, also on this floor, we had a very serious debate about a painting by Max Weber. I think one of the great things about the displays team that we had at Tate, and certainly our core team at the Whitney—and I think it was something highlighted over the past couple of days [of the CIMAM 2017 Annual Conference]—is what is actually discovered through debate and a certain negotiation. Meaning is not a fixed thing but, to a large extent, really depends on the people debating what the meaning is.

Now, (fig. 4) by Max Weber, is regarded by some of my colleagues, as well as many people associated with the museum, as one of the Whitney's great paintings. But there was a faction of colleagues—I must confess I was one of them—who thought it was a kind of second rate cubism. Our discussion centered much on Weber and the merits of this painting. Was it derivative? Was it really American? Was it radical? What was it?

And I think what it led us to, was to look at the subject matter of the work. The subject matter is a hybrid of forms from Cubism, but also from Russia, which was where he was born, along with some native folk traditions, and the Chinese restaurants that had opened in New York at the beginning of the century as a result of new waves of immigration.

Marsden Hartley's is one of the great works of our collection that was not made in the U.S., but, as many of you know, was made while the artist was living in Berlin. He was quite enthralled by the pageantry of the city, the artists in Der Blaue Reiter group and also his love for a German Royal Officer; as witnessed by his inclusion of the officer's badge.

This raised the question of "Well, what do you do about works not made in the United States but made by an American artist?" Every time we encountered something, it problematized what American art was, and this is exactly what we wanted and we did it, in many instances, through the works that have been in the collection for many years, including a work by Richmond Barthé. This is a work that was part of the founding collection purchased by Mrs. Whitney. Barthé is an extremely important figure in African-American art and we have one of his major works.

Barthé, like many black American artists, looked to Africa for subject matter and his nude female has this expression, an African dancer responding to music which could be compared to works by Stanton Macdonald-Wright, Georgia O'Keeffe—other artists who were associated with synesthesia. We have this opportunity—and whether these -isms stay

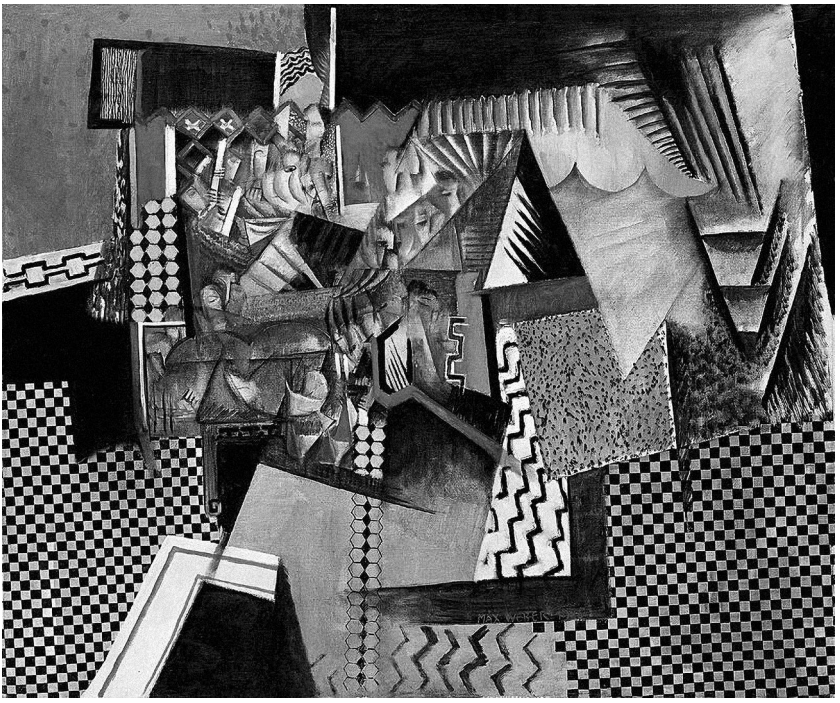


Fig. 4. Max Weber, *Chinese Restaurant*, 1915. Oil, charcoal, and collaged paper on linen, 40×48 1/8 in, (101.6×122.2 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase 31.3.82.

or not, they're guideposts in a way—to once again, expand, to rethink and to give artists their place in history.

We were also very intent on looking at how to create context for visitors as they went through the exhibition; and the great thing about our collection is that we were able to do it with the works we had. Moving down to the 7th floor of the building, and once you went past Calder's *Circus*—you came to a section called "Fighting with All Our Might" that examined the U.S. in the 1930s and between the two World Wars.

Ben Shahn's *The Passion of Sacco and Vanetti* depicts the two after they had been executed for their radical work as anarchists; we also found in the collection works on the right by Alice Neel. Most people identify with her work, or many people identify with her work, with her later portraits. There's a work that depicts Pat Whalen, a major union organizer in 1935, and he's holding a newspaper that talks about the miners' strike.

On the left we found a big cache of works by white artists who made prints in support of anti-lynching legislation before Congress at the time. These were searing images to see, especially the one that shows a man who has been castrated and crucified—a black man. I'm sad to say that that anti-lynching legislation was not passed by the American Congress.

Another artist that had been identified for us by our consultants was Chiura Obata who was born in Japan and came to the United States to San Francisco in 1903. And his work presented another interesting question. He was trained in Japanese sumi ink and brush technique and produced more than one hundred watercolors of the American West, which was a major subject for him. These prints were then made in Japan at the Takamizawa Print Works. So, here you have an American subject as articulated in a technique that is distinctly Japanese. Is it a hybrid? Is it Japanese? Is it American? Does that matter? They're beautiful, absolutely stunningly gorgeous works.

And the important thing then is how you use these works. So, we decided to install them, and it may feel a little didactic, but we showed them with Ansel Adams' view of *Yosemite Moonrise, Hernandez, New Mexico*; because right away it sets up a dialogue and disrupts expected notions of the American artist's view of the West.

Of course, Abstract Expressionism is one of the major moments in American art and certainly the moment that made American art of greater interest on an international stage. We have terrific holdings of artists in this area and yet this was probably one of the most difficult sections for us to figure out. We thought long and hard and looked at works in the collection and this is where the use of space—what I would call "real estate"—has real impact. There is a fantastic work by Lee Krasner, called *The Seasons*; it was the anchor for a room that then had Franz Kline and Mark Rothko and Jackson Pollock. The simple gesture of where the work is positioned immediately conveys something that can't necessarily be put in a text panel.

Another thing was our interest in a work by Hedda Sterne. Sterne was an interesting artist who was working as a contemporary to all of the Abstract Expressionists. There is a famous photograph called "The Irascibles" that pictures Newman and all the major male artists of Abstract Expressionism, and she was the only woman who is pictured. What was interesting was how amazingly contemporary this work started to seem because of the way it was made with spray paint.

One of our curators wanted to purchase a work by Michelle Stuart, an amazing piece, *Moray Hill*, made by rubbing the actual paper on a rock surface—and we were able to insert her work into a gallery called "Rational Irrationalism" that pursued ideas of post-Minimal art. There we had Richard Serra, a neon piece by Rafael Ferrer that had been included in the Anti-illusion show; we do not think it had been shown for more than 20 years; and then of course the Michelle Stuart piece.

Continuing on that thread of politics and context, on the 6th floor that introduced Pop and Minimalism we featured a salon wall with work by Charles White, Peter Saul, and of course this great Warhol "Vote McGovern" campaign with a very devilish looking Richard Nixon.

In this section, we juxtaposed two works; Andy Warhol's *Before and After, 4* based on a diagram for nose surgery, and a very potent image for discussing certain ideas about American assimilation, and Malcolm Bailey, an African-American artist who had been shown at the museum in the 1970s.

In Bailey's work, which is similarly based on a diagram, his source is an abolitionist tract with a diagram of how slaves were transported in the hold of a ship. And so, seeing these two works together already poses questions: was Bailey a Pop artist? Was he part of a more conceptual movement? I didn't know and that's the great part of it. You start questioning "known" things. We installed it on a wall that also featured Jasper Johns' *Three Flags*, one of the more iconic images in the Whitney's collection.

Carmen Herrera was also an artist we began to pay attention to; even though she has lived in New York since the 1950s, she was born in Cuba and lived in Paris at the same time as Ellsworth Kelly. This was a work we were able to purchase through the museum's Painting and Sculpture Committee, and we were very excited to be able to install it in a great room about non-composition called "White Target," and to unite her with Ellsworth Kelly, her one-time neighbor.

When we get to the 5th floor, this was particularly challenging, because we were coming closer to our own time. And the culture wars in the U.S. (as is seen in much of the work in the '93 Biennial) was something we wanted you to see immediately as you came out of the 5th floor elevator. So, we had Barbara Kruger's *We Don't Need Another Hero* and on the other side, David Salle and a print turned into wallpaper by Donald Moffett, which calls out Reagan's unwillingness to acknowledge the AIDS epidemic that took away a generation of creative individuals that are not here—we have

no idea how our culture both nationally and internationally may have changed had we not lost them.

We had a room that explored the AIDS epidemic with works by Peter Hujar, Felix Gonzalez-Torres; also a gallery that looked at the Pictures Generation; we also looked at American painting in the period after Minimalism.

By looking at our history, we saw that the Whitney had done a series of exhibitions in the late 60s and early 1970s organized by a curator named Robert Doty. Now, these exhibitions of black artists were done after protests that happened at the museum and much has been stirred by a show done at the Metropolitan Museum of Art called *Harlem on My Mind*. This was an attempt by the Met to look at the community of art and artists in Harlem. However, there was not one work of art. It was all done through photographs and it was much more of an ethnographic presentation, as if Harlem were some far-off country. Jack Whitten was one of the artists that was included in the show with the Whitney and we were able to purchase one work; a work that had actually been shown at the Whitney Museum.

Beyond context, and issues of biography etc., we really looked at the formal properties in these works, and what became apparent was how each of these artists (Alma Thomas, Cy Twombly, Elizabeth Murray) explored the notion of surface in paintings. They each had very different approaches, but we could unite them in terms of their approaches to painting.

Another group, the collective ASCO, a Chicano Group that was working in Los Angeles, was identified to us and we were able to include this work in a section that looked at performance that had Martha Rosler, Hannah Wilke—and much Conceptual photography. *Guarded View*, which I mentioned earlier, had a major piece by Fred Wilson, and along with David Hammons, this was the section that looked at issues of representation and cultural identity in that 90s moment.

Here we were going back to a history that had already been written, but had never been fully absorbed into a sustained narrative of the museum. As I said earlier, the hardest section was the end—so to speak—or the beginning. This was a tough one to talk about and to decide "what do we do," and particularly in a post 9/11 world.

And so we had a lot of discussion about this moment and luckily we had a number of works in the collection that addressed Hurricane Katrina

and that showed a certain degree of political activism on the part of the artists. We had a section called "Course of Empire" and the title comes from a series of paintings by Ed Ruscha that references Thomas Cole's series, "The Course of Empire," based on the rise and fall and of the Roman Empire. It included a work by Glenn Ligon, featuring the word "America." and another by Aleksandra Mir that pictures Osama bin Laden (fig. 5).

What was the outcome of all this? We had not done a handbook for many years and so we produced a new handbook. And we made a big change, a subtle one that was quite big. The Whitney in the past had on its labels always listed artists as American, with their birth date—and their death date (if they were no longer alive). We made a very subtle change to indicate where the artists were born and then where they died. What we began to see was the number of artists in the collection that were foreign born. In our new handbook, we featured artists that came from 42 states, 31 countries, and more than 70 of the artists that were in the handbook were actually born outside the United States.

I don't think we realized at that time how symbolic the exhibition was going to be. For those of you who work with national collections—the Whitney is a private museum, we're not a national gallery —we have "American" in our title and so there is a level of responsibility we feel that comes with this, because we have an opportunity to message a view about the elasticity of that term "American."

Paul Chan said in our roundtable that for him (and he was born in Hong Kong), "America is an idea." And that became a very, very interesting way to think about how elastic that term can be and how much artists could participate in that conversation, as well as the public.

When we opened the building, it was inaugurated by then First Lady, Michelle Obama. And it was a very powerful moment when she spoke and talked about the exhibition and what it would mean for many people who did not feel that they belonged in the museum. She spoke as someone who grew up on the South Side of Chicago. Now it's easy to rest at this moment of great celebration and think we've accomplished it; but really the work has just begun. And I think it's a lot of the work we have tried to continue and are doing now. It garnered also—very unusual for the *New York Times* to devote an editorial to an exhibition—an incredible piece written by the editorial board that looked at the way the Whitney was positioning American art, and particularly the acknowledgment of where American art

came from and the back-and-forth flow that has happened between the U.S. and other parts of the world.

Continuing along those lines of exploration through our exhibition program, and of course through our collection, we've collectively organized many exhibitions of artists such as Sophia Al Maria; many artists who have come from outside the U.S., we have people in the collection who've lived in the U.S. and then they left. We often would say "Does that mean we get rid of them from the collection?" Or, what about artists who are more nomadic? One of the projects is part of a five-part series we did, where we gave the entire 18,000 square foot 5th floor of our building to a single artist and they had up to two weeks to present a work.

And the one I worked on was with the British-born artist, Steve McQueen. What was so compelling about this work is that it comprises the FBI file of the actor and singer, Paul Robeson. Robeson was very sympathetic to communist teachings, went to Russia on many occasions



Fig. 5. İnstallation view of *America İs Hard to See* (Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, May 1-September 27, 2015). From left to right: Glenn Ligon, *Rückenfigur*, 2009; Aleksandra Mir, *Osama*, 2007. Photograph by Ron Amstutz.

and he had a voluminous FBI file. McQueen projected the entire scanned file on each side of the floor, and you can see redacted material, and listen to voices reading from the files. The voices were out of sync with the text on the screen, which added a degree of discord and destabilization; it gave a tiny idea of what it must have been like for Robeson and his wife to live this life—being followed—which eventually led to the failure of his career, the blacklisting that destroyed his life.

It's working it through, it's the process of doing it; that's where you learn. We can be abstract, we can think about it, we can write about it, but it's getting your hands into it all, I think, where much becomes possible; and it's the exciting work.

Now I'd be remiss if I didn't talk about what happened in January or in the November elections. After all the excitement of opening the building and this sense of openness, we had the election of Donald Trump as President. On the day of the inauguration, an organization called J-20 wanted to disrupt or call attention to this. They called for museums and galleries to close, but we decided to remain open and become a place for people to come: the museum was open free-of-charge; it was packed that day.

We had protests going on, people brought their banners, we had discussions, we also hosted a series of discussion groups on different topics such as immigration, and many people came. And I will tell you there was not always agreement: there was some heated debate; we worked with people who were experienced in dealing with conflict negotiation—it was a very powerful day.

And most recently, we have an exhibition on view inspired by a gift of posters we received from the Vietnam War era. It's called *An Incomplete History of Protest*. It was timely in ways—you plan these things well in advance—but it's interesting to see how timely it is.

We continue our work, we continue to learn, we learn from others, and I think that the elasticity and openness of how we define American art is really a way we think. And I think that's also what art allows us to do; this incredible space to negotiate, to debate, to get excited, to get enjoyment—all those things, I think, is probably what brings us all together here.

Donna De Salvo has spent more than three decades in curatorial and senior leadership positions in museums in the United States and the UK. As the Whitney's first Chief Curator & Deputy Director for Programs, she was instrumental in the design of its new building and future program of exhibitions, collection displays, and acquisitions. She led the team for its inaugural exhibition, *America İs Hard to See.* After fifteen years at the Whitney, she rejoined the Dia Art Foundation, where she had been a curator in the 1980s.

WHY SO MANY WALLS?

WESLEY ENOCH

2019

As I look out at this gathering and see the great wisdom in this room, I notice the telltale signs of the wise—the greying hair, the colored hair, and the absence of hair, these signs that tell me we are a gathering of wise, well-worn souls who gather here to add to our wisdom and pass on our experiences.

I am then enticed into an understanding of the walls that hold us, both new and old: the sandstone cladding and the more modern concrete and steel, the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries meeting in argument and conference to express a cultural ambition for the future. Of loud voices of art that ask for over attentive senses— for listening eyes and watching ears— these artistic calls and responses within that argue and confer through these walls with the memories of long-forgotten measurements and navigation, of views out to the maritime edges of the world, and telescopic eyes cast further afield to ports of imagination and hopes. For many here, your homes lay there; places where you dream. A listening building of silent reflection and ambition.

I now feel my way down the walls into the foundations and try and to feel the building's footprint. These base rocks that once groaned under the weight of stock and grain and lumber and steel. Of provisions that fed the colonial narratives and their storytellers. The rocks have memories they may never tell, on which all stories are formed. The stony footings on

which we balance today have been here for millennia. With each turning of a sod, each stone on stone, each building on building on building—the wise people, in the listening walls sitting on the groaning stones of history. I am struck quiet as the rocks grind and groan their story to me.

I am now drawn beyond the walls to this extraordinary vista that seems clearer today than the past few days. Smoke clearing. Harbor breathing. I am excited by the blue skies and the reflective shimmer of the water. And I am caught in a memory of sorts.

The image of women balancing on their *nawis*, a child on their breast, a toddler teetering too close to the edge, as the women catch fish and cook them out on the water. The burning embers of a fire held in clay pans at the front of each canoe for warmth and cooking. Their song wafting back to shore on the waves. The waves, the flames, the song, the fish, the laughter of children, and the gentle breeze.

This is not my memory exactly but a layering of time that co-exists with now. Watkin Tench wrote about this image in his 1793 publication *Sydney's First Four Years*. A book where he laid out the dramatic and triumphant stories of this place in which we now sit close to 230 years later. Joined by other diarists they document the smallpox epidemics that wiped out huge populations, stories of early exchanges with Eora, of personalities, expansion, starvation, and failed farming. Neglected knowledges and suppressed truths.

There is a story of how, in the early days of the colony when the fish were plentiful, the overzealous colonists netted 4,000 fish, far more than the colony could eat or preserve. A sign of fear, ill faith, and over-consumption. Four thousand fish removed from the waters because they could, not because they had a need to feed more hungry mouths. Four thousand fish that would not go on to breed, an unimaginable greed the likes of which the Eora could not fathom. The story goes that these unfortunate fishermen then preceded to offer the fish to the Eora men, hence undermining the dominance and economy of the women, their fishing, and their family. The colony faced starvation at many points in those first few years because they could not read the landscape or trust the natural rhythms of the fish and eels and wattle blooms. These nervous sunburnt childlike men and women who whipped their own and had no ears to hear the story of the stones, no way to witness the wonder of the waters, and who go on to put rock upon rock and never go home from whence they came. I'd like to add my acknowledgement of the Gadigal people of the Eora, the

men and women who are the traditional custodians of these lands and waters and pay respects to their survival. Their knowledge and unbroken connection to these unceded territories

Worimi Ngani—is hello and greetings in the Sydney languages of the people from this place. *Worimi Ngani*.

Welcome to Country is an important ceremony that says to the spirits and stories of a place that these people, these visitors are welcomed and pose no threat, should move safely through the landscape to undertake their business. When a clan or group of travelers were moving through a territory that was not their own they would seek the blessing of those who had ceremonial custodianship of a place. Ownership is a not an accurate description of the relationship between land and people. Uncle Bob Randall Yankunytjatjara, elder and a traditional owner of Uluru, says: "We don't own the Land. The Land owns us." Which means the way we navigate the landscape is as custodians for this moment in time. We are charged with the preservation of the stories of a place, the meaning-making that explains the unfolding of history, and looking after the land for future generations. Unlike the colonists who thought of the land as a commodity to clear and fence, to call your own, and do with as you wish, the First Australians like many First Peoples across the globe found sustainable ways of living in a mutually beneficial relationship with the Land. More about this later.

Ownership is really connected to stories and familial bonds to landscape. There would be no need to wage war against another clan/tribe/language group to conquer and acquire their lands as you had no story of that place. The stories of creation, stories that bonded you into relationships with place, the story of the river, mountain range, valleys are all a way of understanding survival in that place and helps you care for it and connect deeply to it. Not that the First Australians never fought or had wars… it's just that these acts of war or violence would not be about Land. More likely there would be retribution for acts of transgression like coming onto your country without permission or a Welcome to Country. We should be grateful for Yvonne for giving us that welcome this morning.

İntroduction

I am not from here. I moved here five years ago to be the Artistic Director of the Sydney Festival. The story of my family is a wonderful mix of

pathways. The Aboriginal side of my family comes from the Kandu mob in the far North Queensland but on my grand-father's side I claim the Noonuccal Nuughi clans of the Quandamooka peoples of Minjerribah and its surroundings. Stradbroke Island, Moreton Island, and the collection of small islands just off the coast of Brisbane is where I call home. The story goes that at the time of creation a huge fishing net was cast out from the mouth of Maiwar/Meanjin (Brisbane River) and the islands were dragged up from the depths of the ocean to surround the mouth of the river. To protect it. And these islands were host to many visitors who would come and go. A quarantine station, a mission community, a benevolent asylum, a mining company, commercial fishermen, tourists, but always the Aboriginal presence.

This is a picture of my family. I think I am 6 or 7 in this photo. It might be 1975. My father who is 27 in this photo, holding me down as I was not always a well-behaved young man. My mother who is 26, I think, at the other end holding my brother who must be about two. I look at my father and I can see in the shape of eyes and face my great-great-grandfather, Fernando Gonzales, who was a Filipino fisherman who came to Stradbroke Island and married into the Aboriginal families there. I can also see another great-great-grandfather, Faathiacci, who came from Rotumah Island in the South Pacific in search of work and a new life. And my mother has the mixed features of my Spanish great-grandfather and my Danish great-grandmother who came to Australia after the First World War, where they met at a young age and were married. We are an amazing combination of all our histories.

This is a picture of my parents when they first met. I think this is 1967. Within twelve months of this photo they would be married and my mother pregnant with my sister. 1967 is an important year in this country: the year of the referendum that gave the First Australians full rights as Australians in the eyes of the constitution. Before 1967, Indigenous Peoples of this country were not governed by the federal government instead were administered through the state by state network of laws that saw us counted under the Flora and Fauna Acts, Aborigine Protection Acts, and Land Management legislation. No two states had exactly the same laws governing Indigenous Australians—the right to travel, gain employment, marry, buy property, vote, serve in the army, would all be at the discretion of a local policeman, mission manager, or local agent or Protector of Aborigines. This all changed in 1967 when the people of Australia voted overwhelming

to change the constitution and give the federal government the right to make laws for Aborigines. It would not be until 1993 that First Peoples of this country got their Native Title recognized. That's still 26 years later than this picture.

There has been a long history of neglect of the stories of the First Australians. From the early days of the colony in this place there was the fiction of Terra Nullius—that this continent was an empty place, unoccupied, unowned, and we have been dealing with this forgetting and denial ever sense.

My father died five years ago at the age of 65, but he would tell stories from when he was growing up. Eating fish and crab and oysters, eugaries, watching the migration of the whales up and down the coast that marked the change of seasons and the way to manage land with fire.

This is a timely reminder.

My father would tell us stories of how my grandfather would teach Dad to use fire to manage the grasses and undergrowth near their house. Dad would be entrusted with a box of matches and would walk along the winter blanketed path throwing lit matches into the grass as he walked to school. I'm not encouraging nine-year-old kids to do this today, but the logic was that by burning off in a controlled way at the right time of year you did two things. The fire created a cool smoke and the animals knew to rise up the trees into the branches to seek shelter while this fire moved through the undergrowth. The flames moved slowly and at a pace that was right for animals and trees: though singed and blackened, it did not burn through the outer bark. The trees would survive but the undergrowth would be cleared. If this was not done regularly the buildup of fuel would mean that when a fire came in the dry warmer months it would burn with a hot intensity that would see gum trees and melaluca tea trees, which could be full of flammable oils and resins, literally explode, creating a devastating, fast-moving fire that ripped through the tree tops and created its own weather pattern. Literally a fire storm.

The animals move up the trees and burn there.

If you haven't had the chance to read Bruce Pascoe's *Dark Emu* or Bill Gammage's *The Largest Estate on Earth*, reach out and take a look. Over millennia the landscape has learnt to be in sync with fire. The landscape is designed to burn. Certain eucalypts and banksias actually need fire and heat to assist in their germination; grass trees have evolved to germinate after fire.

The second purpose of the burning is to encourage this new growth that would entice animals to feed on the fresh juicy shoots of grasses and trees. Hence, it made it easier to know where the kangaroos would gather. No need to fence them in or chase them all over the place; they would be attracted to you.

Aboriginal people have been enacting farming with fire for thousands of years and this is just the tip of the knowledge that those who have recently arrived still have to understand. When I hear someone say that their family has been here for five generations and feel a deep respect for the land and its needs, I reply, "Imagine what it will feel like when your family has been here for over 1,000 generations."

Deficit Models

There is a deep need to change the narratives around Indigenous Peoples from one of disadvantage and deficit to one of knowledge and sharing wisdom.

History has created a situation across the globe where colonial privilege has led Indigenous People into disadvantage. The massive disruption brought about by the British colonial project in North America, New Zealand, and Australia, though different in structure and timing, has brought about systemic disadvantage and we can see uniform patterns of outcomes in health, poverty, and incarceration.

In New Zealand, Maori represent 50.7% of prison populations whilst only making up 15% of the overall country population. 57% of white New Zealand's own their own home, while only 28% of Maori do so, and Maori children are twice as likely to live in poverty.

In Canada, First Peoples make up 4% of the population but 25% of the prison population and 40% of the juvenile detention population. In Australia, we make up close to 3% of the population but 27% of the prison population and close to 60% of those in juvenile detention. In the child welfare system, both in Canada and Australia, roughly 50% of those involved are Aboriginal Peoples. In all three countries, life expectancy is between 8-12 years less than non-First Nations Peoples. Employment, health outcomes, suicide rates, education… you get the picture.

The overturning of traditional subsistence economies and wealth modeling and the disallowing of access for Australian First Nations People into the colonial power sharing for at least two centuries have embedded

disadvantage. But this has led us to a situation where the disadvantage has been used as the dominant narrative around Indigenous Peoples. In this country we have the Closing The Gap program that has been used to monitor and address this disadvantage. Over recent years, we have not seen a uniform improvement of outcomes for Aboriginal People and in fact there has been a decrease in an allocation of funds and services.

We understand where the disadvantage comes from but I put forward that we are dealing with symptoms rather than the root cause of the disease. Engaging with these root causes is the clearest way to change the discussion.

First Nations Peoples are the originators and prototypes for living in this landscape. The model for many of the things we are facing as a society can be found in Indigenous community structures—arts and culture as the center of a society, caring for the elderly and the young, over consumption, farming techniques, land management and land care, water care, and disaster mitigation in terms of flooding, storms, and fire.

Tom Simonite talks about the stories from First Nations Peoples of North America that mapped out the Cascadia subduction zone or fault line that runs from Vancouver into California. This traditional story was knowledge that was ignored in the building of the cities of Vancouver, Seattle, San Francisco, and other places.

Architect Peter Myers writes about the third city of Sydney. The first city being the natural city that was dictated to by the natural flow of seasons, animal rhythms, plants, and waterways, that was consumed and affected through the actions of the Aboriginal inhabitants to create the second city of middens, path ways, fire farming. Aboriginal people modifying behavior in response to the actions of the first city. Fishing at different places, feasting and creating middens of discarded shells and bones, carving into the stone the shapes of fish and animals that a particular site as sign of plentiful hunting. Then there is the coming of the colony and the sense that they consumed the second city by copying the pathways and tracks that would become George St., Pitt St., and Oxford St., and literally the consumption of the middens of decarded shells and bones to be burned down to create the lime mortar that bound the Sydney sandstone into the first colonial buildings. The modern city of Sydney is in the shape of the Aboriginal city in many ways because the relationship with the landscape was already mapped out. We are walking in ignorance of the 1,000 footfalls already preceding our time here.

Story—Rhoda Roberts—Middens and Sydney Opera House

The stories of cultural burning like the one my father told me. Too often the living knowledge of the land is ignored and dismissed due to the prevalence of the disadvantage narrative. A general sense that First Peoples are unsuccessful people in the modern world and our knowledges and insights are best relegated to a long dead "stone age time." This is not true. We are here and we have knowledge of how to step forward. We can share with you so much that can help you understand the world differently and potentially save you. But it might mean letting go of a few things you hold dear.

Story—all the stories in the world being created in the time before time, laid out in the landscape and there needing to be an act of remembering rather than creation, New dreaming to explain the world around us.

Detritus

The power of storytelling is built into the landscape and the biggest set of concerns I have within the gallery and museum world when it comes to promulgating Indigenous perspectives is the search for permanence and collection over the deeper engagement of story and practice. In this world, I see the desperate need to hold on to time through objects or the awarding of status and financial reward for the permanent over the ephemeral and transitory.

By the very nature of erecting a museum, you are saying that what is inside the walls is collectable and what finds itself outside is not. What happens when you accept that art/object is the detritus of culture not the embodiment of it? That the things left behind are a cultural memory of an action, a practice, a ceremony that has been designed to be discarded and disposed of, having fulfilled its purpose, rather than collected to adorn the walls. This is an Indigenous perspective.

The walls attempt to make things solid and impermeable when a lived culture is malleable and ephemeral. The walls set out to control and protect moments in time so that the future can glimpse the past, but they can also hold us back. Museums create anchor points to tie down with a weight something that floats and these anchor points, these fragments of culture we call art/object are meaningless without the song that forged them, the dance that animated them, the story that connected them, and the place that created them.

I am reminded of the history of bark painting that was one response to the need of anthropologists and their like to find a way of permanently recording the body art and sand paintings that might be used in a ceremony. This then led to an economy of exchange and recompense for providing more and more permanent records of designs that were traditionally worn to tell particular stories and then discarded or allowed to wear away on the body or ground. This has created a huge international art market. I am not saying that this should not have happened, but more a sense that there has been a transition in the purpose of some of these works. Some are work for ceremony and others work for money. Accepting that these are not mutually exclusive. Often there is a very clear distinction in the minds of the makers of the work, but I am not so certain that the viewer can distinguish the nuanced understanding of the role the work and the processes that sit behind its making. How can we instill more of this understanding beyond the more informed and educated people within these walls? How can we counteract many of the powerful assumptions and public narratives that wish to put more stock in collections and these historical reference points rather than conceding that true authority and sovereignty for Indigenous Peoples lies with the people.

Celebrated Canadian First Nations artist Beau Dick famously retrieved almost 40 masks from an exhibition and destroyed them in a ritual burning to help create a new process of creation and remembering in a community of carvers. These masks, which are regarded as sentient beings with lives and spirit, were carved by Beau Dick and his collaborators for the purpose of keeping alive culture through dance and ceremony. Dick recounted this story to me saying he felt that the masks had lost their spirit, effectively died through too much exhibition and in fact neglect from the community. The masks had not been danced or "fed" through the cultural processes. Candice Hopkins writes: "Dick's actions were a means to short circuit the commodification of Northwest Coast ceremonial objects, preventing them from becoming fetishes in the service not of ritual but of capital." Keeping the culture and the processes of making alive was seen as important for Dick and his community, challenging the community to remake afresh the masks from memory rather than slavishly copying what had gone before.

Indigenous perspectives are often focused on these processes, skills development, and reclamation. Seeing the object or art piece as a transitory

manifestation of spirit, not something to be collected or maintained, but rather something that has it's time and can then recede into memory, to be re-manifest in a different shape if the community needs it.

The need to record, study and collect could be seen as a corruption of the intent of the work and nonacceptance of the true purpose and process of its making. Robyn Archer in her 2005 essay "The Myth of the Mainstream" outlines her detritus theory where she speaks of the end result of what artists do as the *detritus* of the creative process: we misread this detritus as the point of importance, overlooking the process that went into making it. Though Archer is talking about all artistic practice, I think it has even more relevance for Indigenous Peoples

Story—İnvestiture of Dr Marika 2009, Garma in Arnhemland

At times, collected objects and records can have an ossifying effect on dynamic cultures, creating reference points that go on to be used as the authority by anthropologists and the like, pointing to historical collections to judge the validity of contemporary cultural expression as more or less authentic. Making external judgements that insist Indigenous cultures remain within a tightly held frame of what was collected decades earlier using the detritus, the things we would throw away, discard, or modify for the Western gaze as the new norm. Instead of fully comprehending the making process and the room for innovation and new dreaming.

The use of these collections as the true and valid record of culture does not take into account the use of humor and sarcasm and the subtle forms of subversion that First Nations can enact instead of trusting the lived experiences of the members of that culture.

Story—Moomba Bill Onus in 1950s—Let's Have Fun Together

But in contrast, what has been seen on multiple occasions is the use of historical records to assist in the reclamation of cultural expression. Language, iconography, context, and recorded stories have been relied on by many communities to counteract the effects of colonialism and to help piece together the fragments from shattered histories, but I argue we should not be seduced into ceding our cultural authority to objects and historical reference points alone. We should be keeping alive and adapting the

cultural practices and exciting them to manifest in new and different ways. Story— Jonathan Jones' Barrangal Dyara project, Garden Palace, completed in 1879. This edifice of culture burned down in 1882 and with it much of the collection of Indigenous artefacts and objects from South East Australia. The removal of these objects from the collective settler memory has does much to feed a myth that "real" Aboriginal culture was from somewhere else because of the lack of material evidence on display in museums and galleries. The walls were removed and people found it hard accept the people as evidence of their own existence.

W.E. Stanner in his 1968 Boyer Lectures coined the phrase "The Great Forgetting" when referring to this country's understanding of Indigenous peoples' perspectives and history. That the country has a vested interest in forgetting and denying our dynamism as a culture or if there is an acceptance of our history and presence there can only be a narrow range in which our authority can be recognized. From skin color, the color palette, materials, technologies, geography, education levels, and political beliefs are just a few ways in which historical collections can be used to attempt to invalid contemporary cultural practice— referencing the things that were collected to place inside the walls.

Wiradjuri artists like Jonathan Jones, Brook Andrew, Larissa Behrendt, Anita Heiss, or artists further afield like REA, Julie Gough, Megan Cope, and more have found ways of navigating the disjuncture of historical collections and records and contemporary life.

Walls And Museum Cultures

Let no one say the past is dead.
The past is all about us and within.
Haunted by tribal memories, I know
This little now, this accidental present
Is not the all of me, whose long making
Is so much of the past.

But a thousand thousand camp fires
In the forest
Are in my Blood.
Let none tell me the past is wholly gone.

> Now is such a small a part of time, so small a part
> Of all the race years that have moulded me.
>
> — Oodgeroo Noonuccal

Oodgeroo Noonuccal, who is, in fact, my great aunt, wrote this poem as a sense of the time that we need to make for ourselves to connect our past and our present on our terms.

Gregory Philips says: "First Peoples are not a cohort, we are a paradigm." To think in the ways of our expression and to give us a sense of the future, beyond the rigid walls of galleries and museums.

And to end, I'll leave you with a quote by David Suzuki: "We need to have a paradigm shift; to me the paradigm shift is that we have to see the world as indigenous people see it… It's urgent that we empower Indigenous people everywhere to look to their leadership and into the future."

Thank you very much.

Wesley Enoch AM, is the former Artistic Director at the Sydney Festival. He has written and directed iconic İndigenous productions: *The 7 stages of grieving, Black Medea and the story of the miracles at Cookie's table.* He has directed productions of *The Sapphires, Black diggers, İ am Eora, The man from Mukinupin, Yibiyung, Parramatta girls, Appropriate*, and *A Raisin in the Sun.*

THE DRESDEN "BİLDERSTREİT"

HİLKE WAGNER

2022

It was at the end of 2017 when, with unexpected emotional force, the decades-long "Bilderstreit" (art controversy) erupted once again in Dresden. The debate was about much more than the presence of art from the GDR in Dresden's Albertinum. Almost 30 years after the fall of the Wall—which had not simply "fallen down"[1]—the pent-up experience of disillusionment and humiliation, or of a simple lack of interest in the East, explosively vented itself. The local AfD (the party calling itself the "Alternative for Germany") quickly sought to exploit and twist the issue for its own populist agenda.[2]

I arrived in Dresden, Saxony, Germany in November 2014 to run the Albertinum museum, a prestigious collection of Romantic to Contemporary Art, and part of the Dresden State Art Collections. A month before my arrival, an anti-Islam protest movement, *Pegida* (Patriotic

1 On this subject, see: Thomas Oberender, "Die Mauer ist nicht gefallen,", *Die Zeit*, No. 40/2017, September 27, 2017.

2 This was analyzed in an article by Eliza Apperly in *The Guardian*: Eliza, Apperly, "How to fight the far right. İnvite them in. The German Museum taking on hate," *The Guardian*, January 7, 2020 and in the online version of the newspaper https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2020/jan/07/how-to-fight-the-far-right-invite-them-in-the-german-museum-taking-on-hate. İn 2019 the topic was included in the AfD's manifesto for the local elections under the heading "Culture and İdentity": https://afd-dd.de/kommunalwahlprogramm-dresden-2019/

Europeans against the Islamization of the Occident), appeared on Dresden's streets, "rapidly swelling in size and extremism, morphing from a crowd of beige-coated frustrated pensioners into a mass of young, black-clad Identitarians, as at the same time the Alternative for Germany (AfD) party lurched from opposing the euro towards a flagrant ethno-religious nationalism," as Eliza Apperly described the situation in *The Guardian*.[3] Now, some years later, with around 25% the AfD is the strongest party in most parts of Eastern Germany.[4]

On my appointment, I set out to energize Dresden's contemporary arts scene and to insist on the pluralist learnings of the Albertinum's collections. I wanted to make it clear that our own culture is the result of a cultural mix. "But outside the Albertinum's sandstone walls, the ascendant



First Podium Discussion "Wir müssen reden. Bilderstreit mit Blickkontakt," at the Albertinum, November 6, 2017 with 600 participants. © SKD, Photo: David Pinzer.

3 Eliza Apperly (2020), *loc. cit.*

4 The AfD (Alternative for Germany) is monitored by the German Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution due to signs of strong right-wing convictions, especially their biological-racist or ethnic-cultural definition of "the German people." Certain radical wings of the party are mainly comprised of former neo-nationalists. A major strategy of the party consists in casting its supporters as martyrs fighting for Germans who feel confused and left behind in this increasingly multicultural society.

far right had very different ideas. Keenly focused on the arts and their effect on society, the AfD railed against any multicultural programming in favor of a predominant German culture," as Eliza Apperly continues in her above cited article. "In Dresden in particular, the party committed itself to the preservation of classical German art, objecting to 'marginal, minority-oriented' projects."

In September 2017, the culture war turned personal. The trigger was an opinion piece in the regional newspaper, criticizing me, who grew up in West Germany, for my treatment of East German art. The author stated that the "unloved art from the GDR era" had been "disposed of in the storerooms" of the Albertinum "with a colonial gesture."[5] It is—of course—important to stress, that the article raised important and overdue questions: "Over three decades after Germany's reunification, more than 90% of the country's leadership positions are held by individuals who grew up in the former West Germany."[6] I was nevertheless startled how swiftly and viciously the far right used the discussion. Only two days after the article was published, the local AfD quickly sought to exploit the issue for its own populist agenda. A local AfD politician in the Saxon *Landtag* filed a parliamentary request demanding information surrounding my appointment and my intentions to expand the museum's contemporary program as well as a list of the East and West German paintings currently on display in the

5 c.f. Paul Kaiser, *Wende an den Wänden*, Sächsische Zeitung, 9.18.2017. This was a shortened and updated version of an essay the author had written a few years earler and was not a new argument, as this controversy continued to get reinflamed over the last decades, mostly on the occasion of overview exhibitions of "German art," which are accused of failing to equally present art from the GDR. "İn crucial contrast to these past controversies, the current debate takes place in a completely changed political landscape. Today, there is an official and outspoken right-wing political party, which forms the majority-opposition in the German parliament. (...) For them, a debate like the one around the lack of art from the GDR in the Albertinum—which is perceived by a general audience ultimately as an argument about the value of cultural production from the GDR and thus an East-German identification with this culture—can perfectly be used to strengthen the party's argumentation of victimhood in the current political system, and can serve their presentation of themselves as the only possibility to protest, revolt, and reclaim a cultural heritage. The ongoing "Bilderstreit" in this new political climate is thus central to an understanding of past and present-day Germany, because it is an attempt to publicly renegotiate all of the uneasiness and the continuing rupture caused by the reunification. İt is employed as a substitute discourse through art, where the artworks representing GDR history, culture, and identification function as symbols for how a complete declassification and re-evaluation of actual lives lived took place from the outside and from above after the peaceful revolution." See Reinhardt, Kathleen (2019), *op. cit.*

6 Eliza Apperly (2020), *loc. cit.*

Albertinum. The count revealed that at that time a total of 77 works produced in East Germany between 1949 and 1989 were on display in the Albertinum. (By comparison: there were 24 items of "West German art" from the same period, including Dresden artists who had migrated to West Germany, such as A.R. Penck, Gerhard Richter, etc., and 46 works dating from after 1989).

"At that time the Albertinum showed an extended version of the Goethe-Institute exhibition *Genial Dilletantes. Subculture in East and West Germany in the 1980s*, highlighting the East German alternative music and art scene. (Extension cur. by Christoph Tannert and Mathias Wagner). In 2017, the Albertinum also presented Dresden concrete art master Karl-Heinz Adler, whose geometric work didn't fit the official GDR art doctrine of figurative work, and who consequently worked in architecture. The aim was to make visible a vivid art scene in the GDR that developed parallel to an official one, thereby contributing to an art history of synchronicities and entanglements."[7]

Nevertheless, people were understandably incensed by these assertions, which triggered old resentments and rekindled negative experiences, so that this perceived "truth" quickly proliferated—and there was nothing to be done against it. This was followed by a flood of hate mail and phone calls, at best demanding my immediate dismissal, and a back-and-forth in the local and national feuilletons, creating a climate of hardened fronts. People started recognizing and confronting me in the streets. One evening deeply hurt by the tone of the most recent letter I received, out of anger I picked up the phone and called one of the senders whose phone number I had managed to track down. But then—surprise—it turned out to be a really positive conversation! We listened to each other, and while we did not always reach a point of agreement, the indignation on

7 See Reinhardt, Kathleen (2019), *op. cit.*: "But alternative underground art and abstraction was decidedly not the art from the GDR that the local museum audience sought for comfort and consolidation. This tapped back into the core of this ongoing art historical back-and-forth, where the issues of official and dissident art, of figuration and abstraction, and what is considered conformist and not is a grey zone, with the artists themselves rightly denying categorization." The postwar collection presentation of the museum, which consists mainly of European art from 1800 to the present, occupies a very limited space. The museum works with art made in the GDR inclusively, by not marking these works as artworks made during the time of the GDR, but—in line with the aestheticized presentation principle of the museum—rather looking for aesthetic and formal points of connection to artworks with a West German or international background.

both sides gradually subsided. Encouraged— indeed elated— by this experience, I continued: One after the other (incidentally, they were all male and over 60, some of them not having been in our museum for decades), I called up each individual who had targeted me with hate mail and that I had managed to track down, and had (almost) exclusively good experiences. People were surprised that I had got in touch. They talked, and listened. I understood some of the grievances better. (Of course, I do not believe that all those who contacted me were far right sympathizers. But I have to recognize the uneasy proximity between the assertion of local cultural heritage and the AfD agenda. Clearly, the AfD grabbed this as a populist theme, trying to deepen the divide between East and West Germans, to destabilize society and to keep institutions intimidated and busy with permanent "parliamentary requests.")

If mutual listening, direct dialogue on a small scale, i.e., one-to-one, was capable of breaking a spiral of hurt and anger that could only lead to increased polarization, then the same should also be possible on a larger scale. Hence, the challenge was now to see the situation as an opportunity and to explore the matter in more depth.

So, in November 2017, we organized a first public discussion under the title "We Need to Talk" ("*Wir müssen reden. Bilderstreit mit Blickkontakt"*[8]*)* in the Albertinum. The title was intended to express a sense of urgency—and it did indeed feel like a relationship crisis between East and West, museum and local public. More than 600 guests took up the invitation and participated in a discussion with representatives from all kinds of fields of culture and politics.[9]

Beforehand, however, it was necessary to devise a suitable format, as it would not be appropriate to conduct these discussions only among a panel of experts, over the heads of the audience. But how might it be possible to facilitate dialogue on an equal footing, with the emphasis being on listening to each other? Assistance with finding a suitable format was

8 *We need to talk. İconclastic Controversy with Eye Contact.*

9 Among the guests were: Susanne Altmann (art historian, freelance curator and writer, Dresden), Matthias Flügge (Rector, Hochschule für Bildende Künste Dresden), Else Gabriel (artist, Berlin), Paul Kaiser (cultural studies and art scholar, Dresden İnstitute of Cultural Studies), Thomas Oberender (Artistic Director of the Berlin Festspiele), Dr. Gisbert Porstmann (Director of the Dresden City Museums), Prof. Dr. Karl-Siegbert Rehberg (sociologist, TU Dresden), Dr. Eva-Maria Stange (State Minister for Science and the Arts), and Christine Schlegel (artist, Dresden).

provided by the GDR civil rights activist and former director of the Saxon State Agency for Civic Education (*Landeszentrale für Politische Bildung*), Frank Richter, and the Artistic Director of the Berlin Festspiele, Thomas Oberender. In the end, it was decided to have the guests, who came from a wide variety of fields and of course included the author of the mentioned article, seated on a long panel at ground level in the atrium, with the audience seated in a circle around them. The topics were submitted by the audience alone. The event, for which it was decided not to set a time limit (it ended up lasting more than three hours) was moderated by a radio journalist. He laid down clear rules of etiquette at the beginning and engaged with the audience in a spirit of empathy and humor, thus helping ensure that the event proceeded in a constructive way—even though it was palpably clear that this first event could initially be little more than an outlet for pent-up anger and could only touch on issues that would subsequently have to be taken up and discussed in more detail in what ended up as 24 follow-up events.[10] These follow-up events were initially turbulent: We had shouting, door slamming, a lot of arguments and accusations. Our curator for Contemporary Art, Kathleen Reinhardt aptly described the atmosphere in *Mezosfera:* "Notably, during the public events, former officials of the powerful Artists' Guild of the GDR, members of the extensive unofficial informant network of the GDR's secret service (the "Stasi"), and artists who were persecuted and incarcerated shared the same room. For these unofficial artists, this gave rise to extremely emotional moments, especially because the whole debate, its tone and argument— mainly driven by these conservative voices— was (again) solely interested in the inclusion of a certain official art of the GDR into the museum's canon."[11]

10 The documentation of this event and all talks and programming that followed can be watched online at https://albertinum.skd.museum/en/programm/wir-muessen-reden/archiv-wir-muessen-reden/. Parallel to the exhibition *Focus Albertinum: Ostdeutsche Malerei und Skulptur 1949–1990*, the Albertinum organized a dense program of artists talks and scholarly presentations on various topics of GDR art, and continued the public discussions about different topics of art made in the GDR, its visual culture, and the society these works existed in. Experts from East and West were invited to present on a wide range of topics— from art education in East and West Germany, to a general introduction to Socialist Realism, to female performance art, and Mail Art in the GDR.

11 Reinhardt, Kathleen (2019), *op. cit.* "When the secret police archives of the GDR were opened in the 1990s and people could gain access to their files, which contained detailed descriptions of their lives and contacts, the identities of their informants were also revealed to them. This was often highly traumatizing."

But it did develop in a positive direction. We had participants from across the social and political spectrum, with a range of attitudes. And we learned a lot from each other.

As already became clear in this first even, it was ultimately a dispute between East and West, in which repressed, unresolved traumas and frustrations experienced during the post-reunification period were articulated[12]; it was a dispute between the generations, even between the sexes, yet ultimately it was also a dispute about conceptions of art and the expectation of "respect," even "humility" in the face of an established canon that was perceived as untouchable.

After this initial event, the museum staged an exhibition of its collection of art from the GDR. This cross-section through the holdings of East German painting and sculpture provided an insight not only into the collections but also into the various changes in acquisitions policy during

12 "İn his 2017 Reunification Day article in the German weekly Die Zeit (40/2017), Berliner Festspiele director Thomas Oberender, himself one of the few East Germans in a position of significant nationwide cultural leadership, described the shortcomings of German reunification and its continuing effects on the East German mindset. 'The economic side of these shortcomings is especially visible, leaving a lot of East Germans with ongoing traumas of unemployment, (...) and often multiply interrupted work histories, which today plays out in significantly lower pensions for East Germans, and no inheritances for a younger generation. This fuels feelings of betrayal and injustice. (...) The unfamiliarity with the workings of a capitalist system and the resulting "missed chances" to reorient and profit from the reunification play out today in deep frustration and anger towards West-German capital in the East, and a pervasive East-German fear of further economic downfall. The continuous trend of younger generations leaving the East to seek opportunities in the West has also left many smaller cities ghost towns. Sociologically and psychologically, this has taken a major toll on East Germans, for whom everything changed in 1990, while for West Germans, nothing changed.' See Reinhardt, Kathleen (2019), *op. cit.* where she speaks of 'a symbolic debate, standing in for the political shift in Germany over the past two years, which is indeed only the culmination of a radicalization rooted in the silent rage of the past three decades. This shift was articulated most visibly when the AfD party was elected into German parliament in 2017, and voting statistics projected an all too familiar image onto TV and computer screens: the contours of the two Germanys. The AfD had the highest results to the right of a thin line whose importance has often been diminished in the past 30 years—the old threshold between East and West (...).' "

and after the GDR period.[13] The scheme selected for this exhibition, with the works being presented chronologically according to the year of purchase, reflected not only the changes in acquisitions policy during GDR times but also invites critical scrutiny of the power of museums to establish a canon, from the time when museums were first founded down to the present day. It made clear that a canon is always formed as a result of purchasing decisions and must be regarded as a reflection of its time and hence as temporary. And so at the end of the exhibition there are a number of proposed acquisitions, for the aim is still to close gaps in the collection of "Art in the GDR." What the exhibition also aimed to show was the gaps that remained in the collection due to the official collecting policy and the failure in the 1990s and early 2000s to look at alternative art from the GDR to complement its collection. "As an official museum of the GDR, the Albertinum's collection is devoid of art that functioned outside of the official artworld of the GDR, art that created its own structures. This is the type of art that the museum's special exhibition program of the past years has focused on, with a view toward expanding the understanding of art made in the GDR and introducing largely unknown practices to a wider audience. This art was not widely known, as it could not be officially exhibited, and was produced and existed in underground networks, where many of the artists were spied on and suffered repression and prison sentences, resulting in the ultimate flight of many from the GDR."[14]

But the messages we received made clear that the writers were seeking old and familiar art from the GDR in the permanent exhibition and were indeed looking for an affirmation of the values of their lives in the

13 "İn the immediate post-war period works were acquired which took an allegorical approach to dealing with the impact of the war. Soon after the foundation of the GDR, these stylistic tendencies were rejected as 'formalistic,' and artists were subsequently obliged to produce works of Socialist Realism. Some of the paintings (...) that entered the collections in the 1960s were created in connection with the 'Bitterfeld Way,' a project initiated in 1959 in order to introduce workers to art and eliminate the division between art and daily life. Programmatic images entered the Albertinum when it was decided to establish a department of 'Socialist Contemporary Art'—the works of art exhibited there were intended to illustrate the concept of Socialist Realism and its role in shaping an ideal society based on Marxist-Leninist principles. From the 1970s onwards, the acquisitions encompassed a broader range of pictorial motifs and painting styles. Landscapes and portraits were one focal point, and scenes of private everyday life were also to be found. Finally, the purchases made in the 1980s illustrate the diversity of styles and standpoints of a young generation of artists whose works ranged from abstraction to vibrantly coloured Neo-Expressionist painting." *ibid.*

14 Reinhardt, Kathleen (2019), *op. cit.*

GDR in an increasingly confusing world. What is interesting about the result of a visitor survey carried out in 2018 is that places 1 and 2 in the list of works people miss seeing in the permanent exhibition were occupied by popular pictures that were reproduced millions of times in the GDR in the form of posters, art prints, postcards, or in school textbooks. The paintings most frequently requested to be shown again were two paintings which played a major part in the visual culture of the GDR and thus tap into a collective memory and (n)ostalgia, as positive and simple everyday images that many people growing up in the GDR associate with their home and childhood: Walter Womacka’s *Am Strand*, (1962) (At the Beach) (fig. 1) and Harald Hakenbeck’s *Peter im Tierpark*, (1960) (Peter in the Zoo).

Through the visitor survey it also became clear that our public wanted to see more paintings depicting the wartime destruction of Dresden. This presented a dilemma: both genres have been leveraged by the AfD to goad a sense of civic victimhood. Our solution was not to deny our visitors’

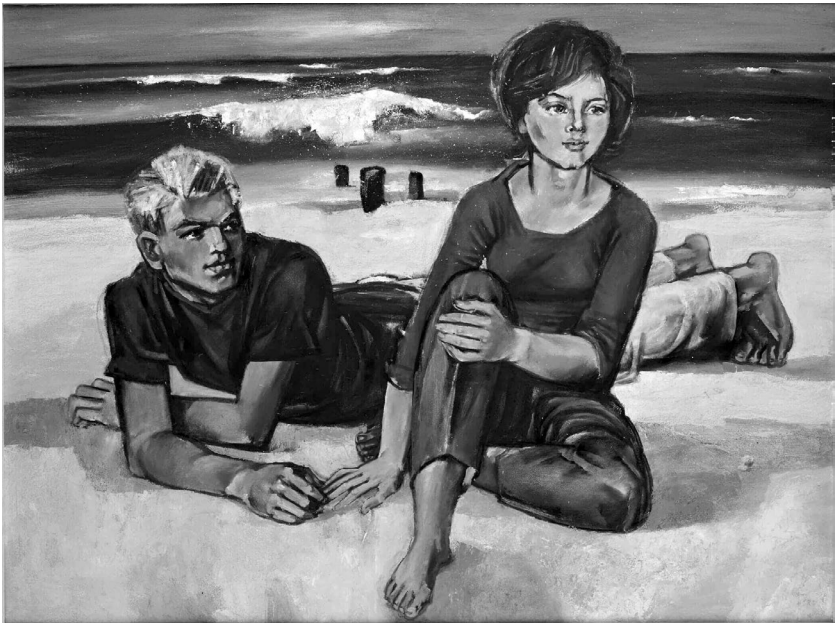


Fig. 1. Walter Womacka, *At the Beach*, 1962. Oil on canvas, 94 x 113 cm. Loan from the Federal Republic of Germany in the Albertinum | Galerie Neue Meister © Photo: Albertinum | GNM, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Elke Estel © VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn.



Fig. 2. Andreas Angelidakis, *Demos*, 2016. Foam and vinyl seating modules, dimensions variable © Photo: Albertinum | GNM, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Elke Estel/Hans-Peter Klut.

wishes, but to challenge any simplistic victim narrative with additional nuance and context. Paintings depicting Dresden's destruction are now presented alongside international anti-war works by Maria Lassnig and Marlene Dumas. An installation by Wolfgang Tillmans shows the destruction of Dresden alongside that of its twin-town Coventry.

Like many places prone to far-right extremism, Dresden's identity is punctured by experiences of erasure, as Eliza Apperly points out: "Capital of the state of Saxony, the city was once a major economic center, flush with trade and baroque architecture. In February 1945, 90% of the city center was destroyed by allied air raids, killing up to 25,000 residents. Then, after a period of architectural and industrial revival under the East German government, reunification saw Dresden lose much of its employment, ownership and young people to the west."[15]

Our most important exhibition following (and response to the debate) was a show curated by Susanne Altmann entitled *The Medea Insurrection. Radical Women Artists Behind the Iron Curtain*, which impressively conveyed the resilience, courage, and inventiveness of Eastern European female artists before 1989 and that tried to deflect the patriarchal

15 Apperly, Eliza (2020), *op. cit*.

discourse. In the same year the Albertinum acquired Mario Pfeifer's nine-hour video work *On Fear and Education, Disappointment, and Justice, Protest and Division in Saxony / Germany* (fig. 3). In this 2016 work, Pfeifer shows interview material of various people without any commentary or evaluation. In this way, he confronts the complex realities of life in East Germany immediately before and after the Peaceful Revolution of 1989.

The nine one-on-one interviews reflect a range of individual forms of political and social engagement and express the irritation and disorientation associated with the "Wende" and the reunification of Germany, which are still felt to this day.[16]

Another central acquisition in that year was Andreas Angelidakis' *Demos* (2016) (fig. 2), a modular system of large-format foam blocks, which can be flexibly arranged into forums; it was originally created for documenta 14 in Athens and references not only the founding steps and public speaking rituals of the cradle of democracy, but also the ruins of neoliberalism with its pixelated mock-concrete appearance. You can stand on the individual modules to speak, or sit on them to listen. Thus, "Demos" can be understood as a platform on which a great diversity of relationships can be negotiated: that between stage and audience, participation and performance, and ultimately democracy and freedom, so that it was the ideal basis for what followed: a long process of mutual listening and learning, with large number of events and a mutual coming together in empathy.

Then there are attempts to widen the field, to experiment with art from the GDR and their continuation, and to connect them to a global art history or other art historical narratives in new ways, as Kathleen Reinhardt did with the show *For Ruth, the Sky in Los Angeles. Ruth Wolf-Rehfeldt and David Horvitz* at the Albertinum in 2018 or 2020 with *1 Million Roses*

16 This piece, which documents a specific and important historical moment, was part of a presentation under the title As far as İ know—effective immediately…, without delay on the occasion of the 30th Anniversary of the fall of the Wall during the Peaceful Revolution https://albertinum.skd.museum/en/exhibitions/as-far-as-i-know-effective-immediately-without-delay/. After a year of public programs with emphasis on active engagement and actual employment of heritage, of putting the past to work as a way to keep it alive and use it to the fullest, we were back at the beginning. The journey of extensive and serious exploration of the potential of art arrived where it had started.

for Angela Davis.[17] For 2023, she is preparing a thematic show under the title *Revolutionary Romances*, emphasizing East Germany's inclusive ideals and exploring its allegiances with the so called "global south," e.g., Mozambique, Cuba, or Vietnam.

What remains—today, years after this of course also painful and confusing experience—is the motivating certainty that museums are not mausoleums, but that debates about what moves our society at its core can and must be conducted here, and that breaking the spiral of hurt and anger can succeed in the microcosm that is the museum. It is worth fighting for each and every individual to bring him or her back to the middle of society. We must acknowledge that the Cold War, our collective conditioning, and the accompanying resentments, still have an effect on us, whether we like it or not. Likewise, we have to appreciate that even after 30 years of reunification, prejudices held by each side about the other are still very much alive.

It is disheartening to realize that West Germans' lack of interest in East German culture remains widespread— hand on heart, dear West German readers, what do you know about subcultures in the GDR, about jazz, punk, experimental film, fashion and design, composers, and authors behind the Wall? It is time that we learn to see the good aspects of the otherwise failed and dictatorial state: for example, the extensive cultural education that reached all social classes in the GDR and which still means today that Dresden's museums are home not only to an educated bourgeois

17 Few East Germans over the age of fifty fail to remember the state-organized solidarity campaign calling for the release of the U.S. philosopher, communist and Black Power activist Angela Davis. "1 Million Roses for Angela Davis" was the motto of a postcard campaign in 1970–72 in support of Davis, who at the time was being held under terrorism charges. The large-scale campaign firmly anchored the activist within the cultural memory of the GDR, which—in this critical phase of the Cold War—sought to position itself by asserting its commitment to the comrade. İn the GDR, the media spun Davis as the "heroine of the other America" and after her acquittal she was welcomed as a state guest. For her part, Angela Davis had hoped for an internationalist movement promoting a socialist, feminist, and non-racist democracy—the antithesis of her experiences of violence and oppression as a Black woman in the U.S.A. This moment of hope provided the historical starting point for the exhibition, which featured contemporary works by international artists, like Yael Bartana, Sadie Barnette, Melvin Edwards, Angela Ferreir, Bernhard Franke, Coco Fusco, Lawrence Abu Hamdan, Arthur Jafa, İris Kensmil, Hassan Khan, Kapwani Kiwanga Kiwanga, Raja Lubinetzki & Petra Schramm, Senga Nengudi, Ahmet Öğüt, Slavs and Tatars, Julia Phillips, Alex Martinis Roe, Elske Rosenfeld, Anri Sala, Willi Sitte, Strawalde, Gabriele Stötzer, Nasan Tur, Carrie Mae Williams, Christoph Wetzel, and Charles White. For more information see: https://lipsiusbau.skd.museum/en/exhibitions/a-million-roses-for-angela-davis/

elite, but that a broad population representing all strata of society and all basic convictions is still prepared to wrangle over the contents of museums.

Ultimately, however, this affair is only one example of how the AfD tries to hijack issues and exploit them for promoting themselves and their political agenda—and how this party occupies, twists, and instrumentalizes even an art discourse. Polarizing and destabilizing society wherever possible seems to be one of their goals. Museums are also becoming a plaything of competing interests, as can also be seen from another current example from Dresden. In its database, the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden have decided to give additional alternative titles to some works in the collections whose traditional titles are now seen as racist or discriminatory. This evoked great, great outrage among the local population after the AfD published a press release. What is even more frightening here, however, is not the mere fact of a press release issued by the AfD stirring up the people, but rather that this press release was, in some cases, taken up by the media without reflection and disseminated as perceived truth, without consulting the museum. And we see it again in the discussions around a gender sensitive language. The political center, which is otherwise reflected in cultural matters, is increasingly proving to be no longer a reliable partner: the fear of acting against a supposed mainstream is too great. In addition, the persons holding offices of political responsibility themselves appear too uncertain about content-related issues to take a stand.

Hilke Wagner, since 2014: Director of the Albertinum (State Art Collections Dresden). 2007–14; Director of Kunstverein Braunschweig; 2006–07: Head of *Situation Kunst*, part of the art collections of the Ruhr Universität Bochum; 2003–06: Curator at the Kestnergesellschaft in Hannover.



Fig. 3. Concluding discussion round with artist Mario Pfeifer and guests Petra Köpping (Minister for İntegration, Saxony), Jana Hensel (author), Stefan Locke (journalist) and Albertinum director Hilke Wagner on Pfeifer's work *On Fear and Education, Disappointment, and Justice, Protest and Disunion in Saxony / Germany*, January 10, 2019. © SKD, Photo: Oliver Killig.

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- Maria de Corral (Spain)
- Renilde Hammacher-van den Brande (Belgium)

President and Secretary-Treasurer 1962–65

- Jean Cassou / President (France)
- Renilde Hammacher-Van den Brande / Secretary-Treasurer (Belgium)

President and Secretary-Treasurer 1965–68

- Franz Meyer / President (Switzerland)
- Renilde Hammacher-Van den Brande / Secretary-Treasurer (Belgium)

President and Secretary-Treasurer 1968–71

- Helmut Leppien / President (Germany)
- Renilde Hammacher-Van den Brande / Secretary-Treasurer (Belgium)

Board Members 1971–73

- Helmut Leppien / President (Germany)
- Renilde Hammacher-Van den Brande / Secretary-Treasurer (Belgium)
- Eugenia Georgievskaya (Moscow)
- Vladimir Pouchkarov (Leningrad)
- Pontus Hultén (Stockholm)
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Board Members 1974–77

- Thomas Messer / President (U.S.A.)
- Renilde Hammacher-Van den Brande / Vice President (Belgium)
- Waldo Rasmussen / Secretary-Treasurer (U.S.A.)

Board Members 1977–80

- Pontus Hultén / President (U.S.A.)
- Richard Oldenburg / Vice President (U.S.A.)
- Ryszard Stanislawsky / Vice President (Poland)
- Suzanne Pagé / Secretary-Treasurer (France)
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Board Members 1981–83

- Pontus Hultén / President (U.S.A.)
- Eugenia Georgievskaya / Vice Chairman (Moscow)
- Richard Oldenburg / Vice Chairman (U.S.A.)
- Suzanne Pagé / Secretary-Treasurer (France)
- Marja-Lisa Bell (Finland)
- Alan Bowness / (England)

- Helen Escobedo (Mexico)
- Pierre Gaudibert (France)
- Jürgen Harten (Germany)
- Knud Jensen (Denmark)
- Angel Kalenberg (Uruguay)
- Alexander Khaltourine (Moscow)
- Jiri Kotalik (Czech Republic)
- Zoran Krzisnik (Yugoslavia)
- Ole Henrik Moe (Norway)
- Margit Rowell (France)
- Marc Scheps (Israel)
- Rosa Maria Subirana (Spain)
- Evelyn Weiss (Germany)

Board Members 1983–86

- Richard Oldenburg / President (U.S.A.)
- Alan Bowness / Vice President (England)
- Eugenia Georgievskaya / Vice President (Moscow)
- Waldo Rasmussen / Secretary-Treasurer (U.S.A.)
- Suzanne Pagé / Secretary-Paris (France)
- Marja-Liisa Bell (Finland)
- Wim A. L. Beeren (The Netherlands)
- Cario Bertelli (Italy)
- Michael Compton (England)
- Helen Escobedo (Mexico)
- Pierre Gaudibert (France)
- Olle Granath (Sweden)
- Marc Scheps (Israel)
- Jürgen Harten (Germany)
- Knud Jensen (Denmark)
- Youry Korolov (Moscow)
- Jiri Kotalik (Czech Republic)
- Zoran Krzisnik (Yugoslavia)
- Ole Henrik Moe (Norway)
- Margit Rowell (France)
- Evelyn Weiss (Germany)

Board Members 1987–1990

- Olle Granath / President (Sweden)
- Marja-Liisa Bell / Secretary-Treasurer (Finland)

Board Members 1991–92

- Margit Rowell / President (France)
- Maria de Corral / Secretary-Treasurer (Spain)

Board Members 1993–95

- Rudi Fuchs / President (The Netherlands)
- Jan Debbaut / Secretary-Treasurer (Belgium)

Board Members 1996–97

- Rudi Fuchs / President (The Netherlands)
- Frits Bless / Secretary-Treasurer (The Netherlands)

Board Members 1998–2001

- David Elliott / President (United Kingdom)
- Tuula Arkio / Secretary-Treasurer (Finland)
- Maria de Corral (Spain)
- Irma Arestizabal (Argentina)
- Kevin E. Consey (U.S.A.)
- Yuko Hasegawa (Japan)
- Lyn Kienholz (co-opted member) (U.S.A.)
- Zelimir Koscevic (Croatia)
- Suzanne Landau (Israel)
- Jeremy Lewison (United Kingdom)
- Jean-Hubert Martin (France)
- Declan McGonagle (Ireland)
- Alfred Pacquement (France)
- Margit Rowell (U.S.A.)
- Gijs van Tuyl (The Netherlands)

Board Members 2002–04

- David Elliott / President (United Kingdom)
- Tuula Arkio / Secretary-Treasurer (Finland)
- Manuel Borja-Villel (Spain)
- Katharina Gregos (Belgium)
- Stijn Huijts (The Netherlands)
- Glenn Lowry (U.S.A.)
- Sheena Wagstaff (United Kingdom)
- Irma Arestizabal (Argentina)
- Kevin E. Consey (U.S.A.)
- Yuko Hasegawa (Japan)
- Alfred Pacquement (France)
- Jean-Hubert Martin (France)
- Gijs van Tuyl (The Netherlands)
- Zelimir Koscevic (Croatia)
- Kasper König (Germany)
- Fumio Nanjo (Japan)

- Lyn Kienholz (co-opted member) (U.S.A.)
- Sabine Breitwieser (Austria)

Board Members 2005–07

- Alfred Pacquement / President (France) Manuel Borja-Villel / Secretary-Treasurer (Spain)
- Zdenka Badovinac (Slovenia)
- Sabine Breitwieser (Austria)
- Lars Nittve (Sweden)
- Yuko Hasegawa (Japan)
- Kasper König (Germany)
- Robert Fleck (Germany)
- Glenn Lowry (U.S.A.)
- Jean-Hubert Martin (France)
- Fumio Nanjo (Japan)
- Lars Nittve (Sweden)
- Gijs van Tuyl (The Netherlands)
- Sheena Wagstaff (United Kingdom)
- Li Xiangyang (China)
- Lyn Kienholz (co-opted member) (U.S.A.)

Board Members 2008–10

- Manuel Borja-Villel / President (Spain)
- Sabine Breitwieser / Secretary-Treasurer (Austria)
- Zdenka Badovinač (Slovenia)
- Kasper König (Germany)
- Fumio Nanjo (Japan)
- Stijn Huijts (The Netherlands)
- Lyn Kienholz (co-opted member) (U.S.A.)
- Sheena Wagstaff (United Kingdom)
- Lars Nittve (Sweden)
- Ivo Mesquita (Brazil)
- Robert Fleck (Germany)
- Hendrik Driessen (The Netherlands)
- Tihomir Milovac (Croatia)
- Neal Benezra (U.S.A.)
- Christine Van Assche (France)
- Kian Chow Kwok (Singapore)

Board Members 2011–13

- Zdenka Badovinac / President (Slovenia)
- Bartomeu Marí / Secretary-Treasurer (Spain)
- Ivo Mesquita (Brazil)
- Robert Fleck (Germany)
- Ann Goldstein (U.S.A.)
- Madeleine Grynsztejn (U.S.A.)
- Elizabeth Ann MacGregor (Australia)
- Sabine Breitwieser (Austria)
- Natalia Majluf (Peru)
- Vasif Kortun (Turkey)
- Chris Dercon (Belgium)
- Christine Van Assche (France)
- Kian Chow Kwok (Singapore)
- Kathy Halbreich (U.S.A.)
- Mohammed Djehiche (Algeria)

Board Members 2014–16

- Bartomeu Mari / President (Spain)
- Patricia Sloane / Secretary-Treasurer (Mexico)
- Charles Esche (The Netherlands) Resigned in November 2015
- Ann Goldstein (The Netherlands, U.S.A.) Resigned in November 2015
- Madeleine Grynsztejn (U.S.A.)
- Kathy Halbreich (U.S.A.) Resigned in November 2015
- Philipp Kaiser (Germany)
- Abdellah Karroum (Qatar) Resigned in November 2015
- Mami Kataoka (Japan)
- Vasif Kortun (Turkey) Resigned in November 2015
- Kian Chow Kwok (Singapore)
- Elizabeth Ann Macgregor (Australia)
- Frances Morris (United Kingdom)
- Marcela Römer (Argentina)
- Jaroslaw Suchan (Poland)

Board Members 2017–19

- Elizabeth Ann Macgregor OBE / President (Australia)
- Mami Kataoka / Secretary-Treasurer (Japan)
- Bart De Baere, (Belgium)
- Saskia Bos (The Netherlands)
- Suzanne Cotter (Portugal)
- Calin Dan (Romania)
- Corinne Diserens (Belgium)
- Sarah Glennie (Ireland)
- Sunjung Kim (South Korea)
- Frances Morris (United Kingdom)
- Ann-Sofi Noring (Sweden)
- Agustín Pérez Rubio (Argentina)
- Suhanya Raffel (Hong Kong)

- Jaroslaw Suchan (Poland)
- Eugene Tan (Singapore)

Board Members 2020–22

- Mami Kataoka / President (Japan)
- Suzanne Cotter / Secretary-Treasurer (Luxembourg)
- Bart De Baere (Belgium)
- Saskia Bos (The Netherlands)
- Calin Dan (Romania)
- Rhana Devenport (Australia)
- Sarah Glennie (Ireland)
- Malgorzata Ludwisiak (Poland)
- Frances Morris (United Kingdom)
- Victoria Noorthoorn (Argentina)
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CIMAM Annual Conferences since 1962

The first CIMAM Annual Conference took place on July 5, 1962 in The Hague. Since then the Committee has celebrated over 50 conferences that have been held in over 30 different cities around the globe. CIMAM's Annual Conference has become an important meeting point for contemporary art professionals and an essential resource for the collaboration between museums, visual art professionals, artists, and other institutions concerned with modern and contemporary art.

2022 — Palma, Mallorca (the Balearic Islands), Spain. *The Attentive Museum. Permeable Practices for a Common Ground*

2021 — Lodz and Gdańsk, Poland. *Under Pressure. Museums in Times of Xenophobia and Climate Emergency*

2020 — Postponed to 2021. *Rapid Response Webinars*

2019 — Sydney, Australia. *The 21st Century Art Museum: Is Context Everything?*

2018 — Stockholm, Sweden. *The Museum in Transition*

2017 — Singapore. *The Roles and Responsibilities of Museums in Civil Society*

2016 — Barcelona, Spain. *The Museum and Its Responsibilities*

2015 — Tokyo, Japan. *How Global can Museums Be?*

2014 — Doha, Qatar. *Museums in Progress: Public interest, private resources?*

2013 — Río de Janeiro, Brazil. *New Dynamics in Museums: Curator, Artwork, Public, Governance*

2012 — Istanbul, Turkey. *Museums Beyond the Crises*

2011 — Ljubljana, Slovenia and Zagreb, Croatia. *Museums and the City*

2010 — Shanghai, China. *Common Ground for Museums in a Global Society*

2009 — Mexico City, Mexico. *Fair Trade: The Institution of Art on the New Economy*

2008 — New York, U.S.A. *The Shape of Memory: The Museum and It's Collections*

2007 — Vienna, Austria. *Museums and Universal Heritage: Contemporary Institutions as Producers in Late Capitalism*

2006 — London, United Kingdom. *Contemporary Institutions: Between Public and Private*

2005 — São Paulo, Brazil. *Museums: Intersections in a Global Scene*

2004 — Seoul, Republic of Korea. *The Shifting Landscape of Contemporary Art and Asia*

2003 — San Francisco, U.S.A. *Articulate Museums In a Digital Age*; *Games, Pirates, Communes: Digital Technology's Impact on Art and Material Culture*; *When Art Meets Genetics: Challenges and Innovations*; *Moving Images: From Theater to Gallery and Back*

2002 — Berlin, Germany. *The Museum as a Statement. The Erosion of the Public Role of the Museum*

2001 — Barcelona, Spain. *The Role of the Museum & How It is Affected by Changes in the XXI Century*

2000 — Budapest, Hungary. *Does Contemporary Art Need Museums Anymore?*

1999 — Jerusalem, Israel. *Art in Divided Communities*

1998 — Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney, Australia. *Museums and Cultural Diversity: Ancient Cultures — New Worlds*

1997 — Barcelona, Spain. *Shifting Visions*

1996 — Houston, Texas. *Texans Talk; Surf's Up!: Museums on the Internet*; *Regionalism/ Racism: Geography, Ethnicity and the Museum Agenda*

1995 — Oslo and Stavanger, Norway. *Dialects in Contemporary Art — The Norwegian Contemporary Art Situation*

1994 — Tokyo, Japan. *The Museum of the 21st Century — New Possibilities and Prospects*

1993 — Antwerp, Brugge and Ghent, Belgium. *Towards an Ethical Code*; Ghent, *Problems of Working Relations Between Museums*; Brugge, *Museum Collections and De-accessioning*

1992 — Montreal and Quebec City, Canada. *Defining the Territory of Art and of the Modern Art Museum*

1991 — Havana, Cuba. *Primer Encuentro de Investigaciones Sobre el Arte del Tercer Mundo*

1990 — Los Angeles, U.S.A. *Perspectives on the State of Culture at the end of the 20th Century*; *Realities of the California Scene*; *Enlightened Sponsorship*; *Present Day Developments*.

1989 — The Hague, The Netherlands. *Power, Money and Museums*

1988 — Helsinki, Finland. *Problems Concerning Exhibition Making*

1987 — Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia. *Being Between*

1986 — Buenos Aires and Rosario, Argentina. *Museums and the Future of Our Heritage: Emergency Call*

1983 — London, United Kingdom. *Tradition and Innovation: Interaction Between Traditional and Contemporary Art in a Developing World*

1982 — Humlebaek, Denmark. *The Future of Large International Exhibitions*

1981 — Düsseldorf, Germany. *Post-Modern or Contemporary? Modernity in 20th Century Art*

1980 — Mexico City, Mexico. *The Museums and Their Responsibility Towards The World Patrimony*

1979 — Paris, France. *Towards an Architecture for Modern Art Museums*

1978 — Oslo, Norway. *The Work of Art and Its Context*

1977 — Moscow and Leningrad, Russia. *Museums and Cultural Exchange*

1976 — Prato-Bologna, Italy. *Centralization / Decentralization / Noncentralization*

1975 — Amsterdam and Rotterdam, The Netherlands

1974 — New York, U.S.A. *Museums of Modern Art and Their Public*

1972 — Warsaw, Lodz and Kraków, Poland. *The Modern Art Museum and the Artist*

1971 — Paris and Grenoble, France. *The Museum in the Service of Man Today and Tomorrow*

1969 — Brussels, Belgium. *The Museum of Modern Art and Contemporary Society*

1968 — Cologne and Munich, Germany

1965 — New York, U.S.A.

1964 — Paris, France. *Modern art museums and their relations with decorative art museums*

1963 — Paris, France. *Problems of Museums of Modern Art*

1962 — The Hague, The Netherlands

COLOPHON

MUSEUMS FROM THE İNSİDE
60 YEARS OF CİMAM

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Special thanks to	David Elliott, Oxford, Agnès Roche of ICOM Secretariat Paris.
Printed by	Tallinn Book Printers in Estonia
Published in	November 2022
Published by	CIMAM C/ Sant Adrià, 20 08030 Barcelona Spain www.cimam.org An Affiliated Organization of ICOM, International Council of Museums.
Distributed by	Hatje Cantz Verlag GmbH Mommsenstraße 27 10629 Berlin Germany www.hatjecantz.com A Ganske Publishing Group Company
ISBN	978-3-7757-5442-2
Supported by	"la Caixa" Foundation
Photo Credits	Ron Amstutz, Jodie Baker, Flor and Lieve Bex, David Elliott, Elke Estel, Cassandra Hannagan, Toshio Hara, HAWA, Oliver Killig, Hans-Peter Klut, David Pinzer, MOCA Shanghai, Rosa Maria Subirana. All efforts were made to identify the persons in the photographs. In case of queries, please contact info@cimam.org

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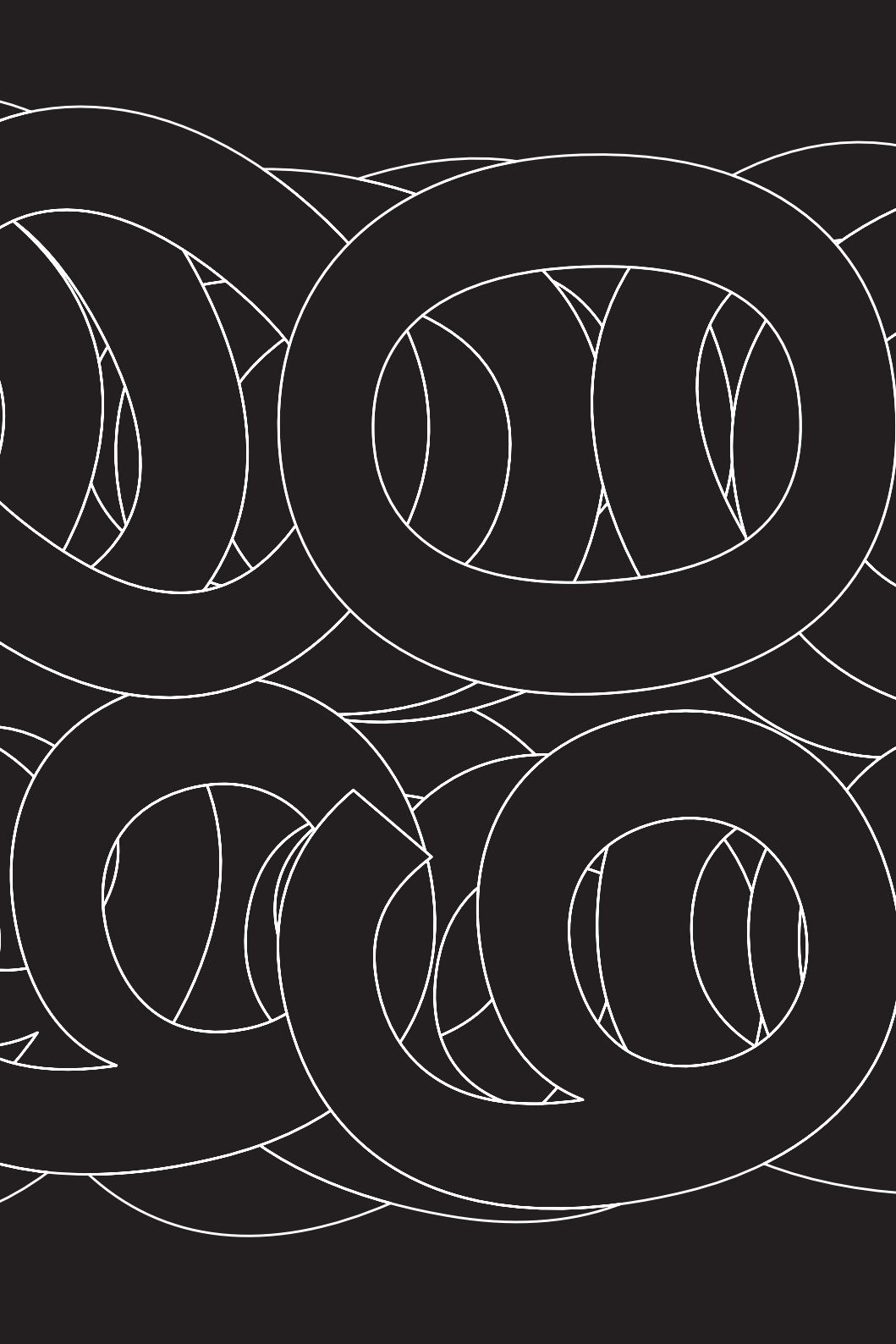
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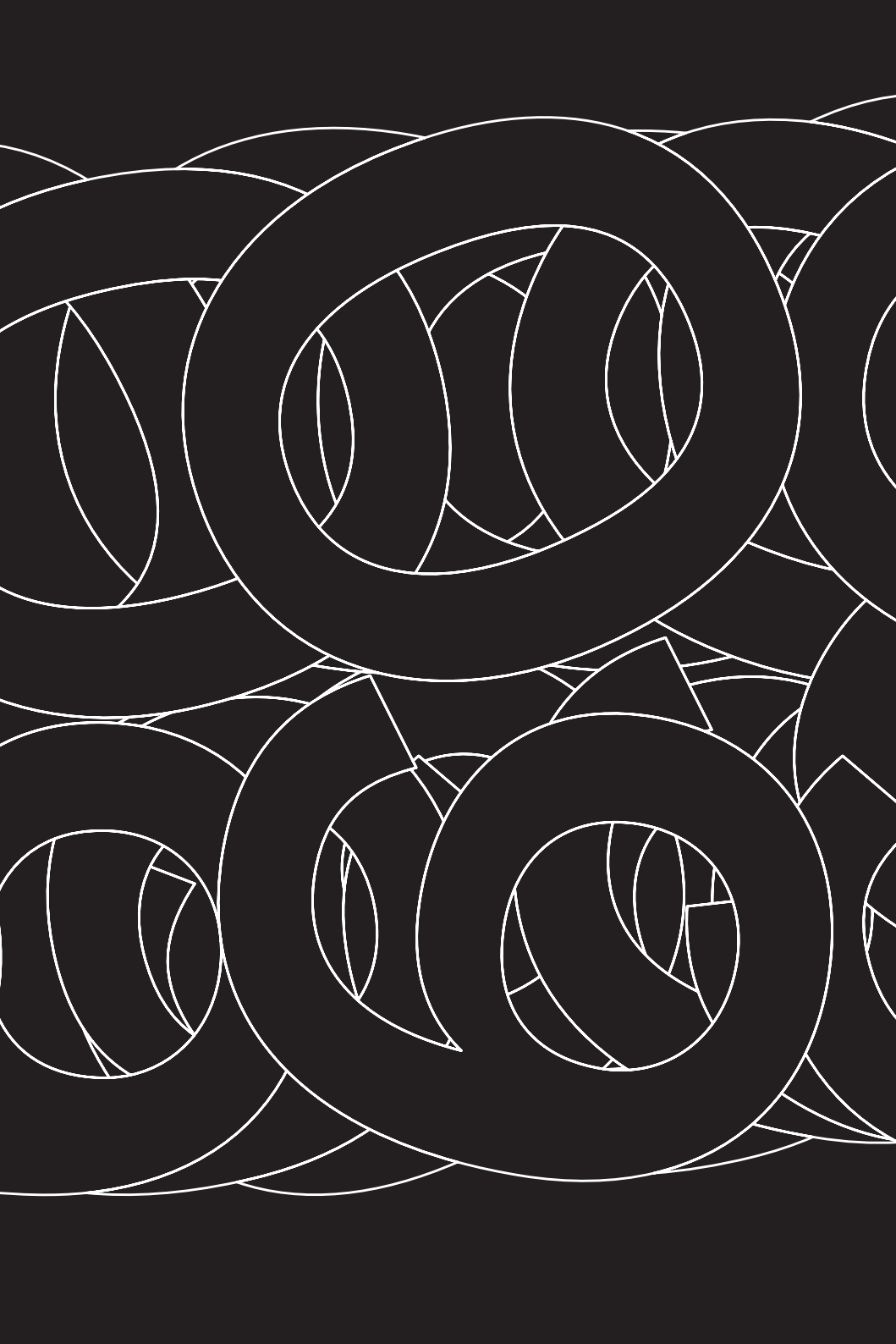
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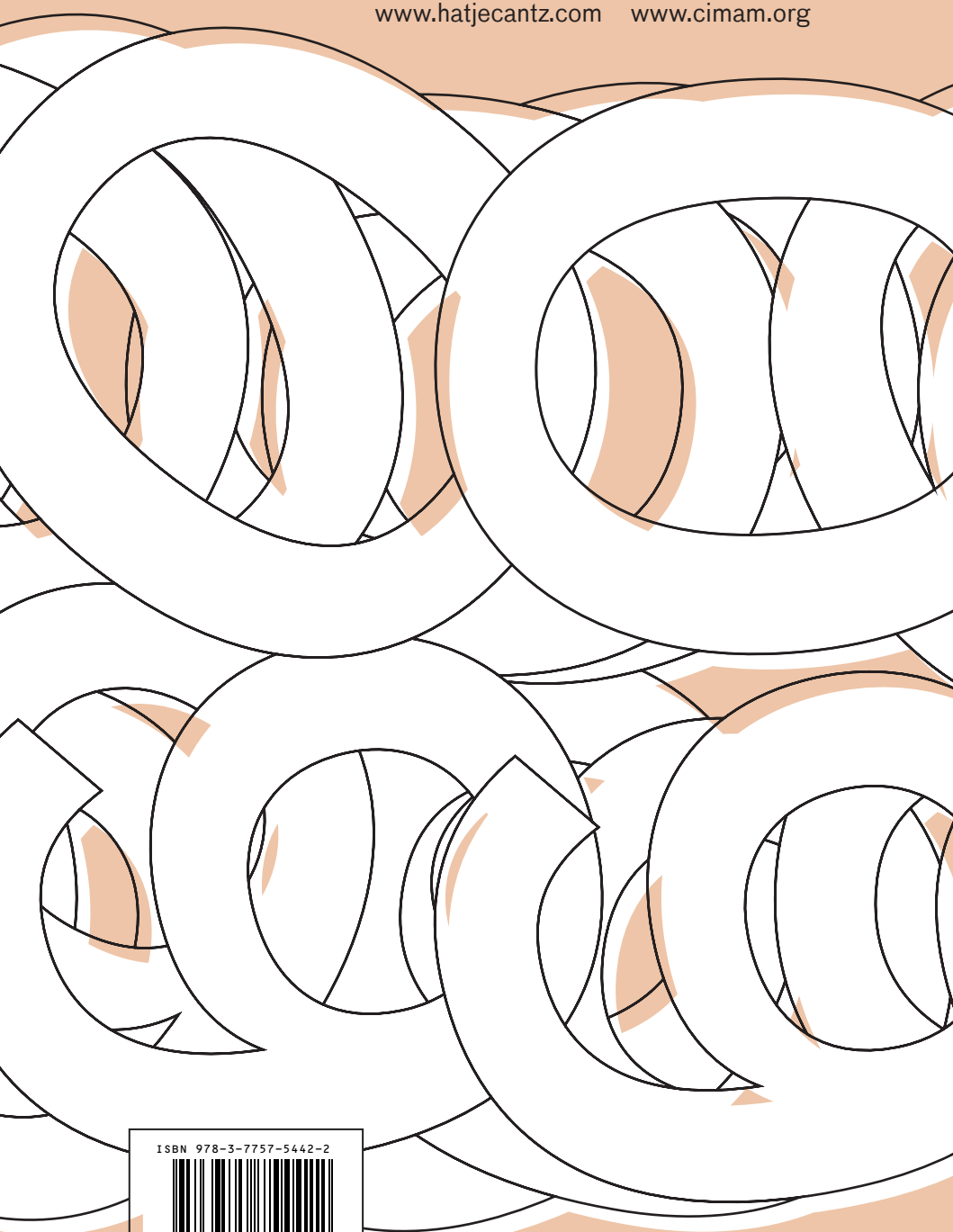




On the occasion of its 60-year anniversary, CIMAM, the International Committee for Museums and Collections of Modern Art, with its directors and curators, publishes *Museums from the Inside*. This publication contains more than twenty interviews, from Suzanne Pagé and Rudi Fuchs, to David Elliott, Toshio Hara, Maria de Corral, Ken Lum to Manolo Borja-Villel and Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, giving an insider's look at the 60 years in which modern art changed to postmodern art, and the term contemporary art, in turn, began to look almost obsolete. Following a historical introduction, looking back at the fierce debates and controversies, a selection of texts written since 2005 on decolonization, on Arte Útil, and on indigenous art gives insight into more recent fields of research.



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ISBN 978-3-7757-5442-2