

Marking the culmination of Elizabeth Ann Macgregor's commitment as President of CiMAM, its Annual Conference at the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia will discuss the theme *The 21st Century Art Museum: Is Context Everything?*

- CiMAM's 2019 Annual Conference will be held at the **Museum of Contemporary Art Australia (MCA) in Sydney on November 15, 16 and 17**, with discussions around the theme *The 21st Century Art Museum: Is Context Everything?* This will address the evolving relationship between core museological practices and values, and the necessary responsiveness of museums to context in their drive to remain relevant, innovative, and accessible.
- **CiMAM** is the **International Committee for Museums and Collections of Modern and Contemporary Art** and an **Affiliated Organization of ICOM**, that in the last triennial has brought together leading exponents in the field of contemporary art museums in three international conferences, where relevant issues concerning the development of museums have been discussed, generating previously unpublished and reference content for the profession.
- **Elizabeth Ann Macgregor, OBE**, Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, has been the President of CiMAM for this last triennial (2017–19) and will end her commitment on **November 17, 2019**, achieving important results in several development areas such as the endorsement of the **Museum Best Practices for Managing Controversy**, the growth in the number of CiMAM members as well as securing key program funders, facilitating the organization of three **Annual CiMAM Conferences** and the attendance of **91 young curators and museum directors** from emerging and developing economies through the **CiMAM Travel Grants Program**.
- The Board members have also identified and gave support to **13 specific critical situations** that impact museum professionals and not-for-profit institutions of modern and contemporary art within the **Museum Watch Program**.

Barcelona, September 12, 2019—Elizabeth Ann Macgregor began her commitment affirming: “*We are now in a good position to develop CIMAM further as a dynamic organization representing the interests of professionals working in modern and contemporary art museums*” and setting up targets that have been satisfactorily achieved throughout the triennial.

This year, the Annual Conference will be held in Sydney—hosted by the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, the institution directed by CIMAM’s President. The conference is titled: *The 21st Century Art Museum: Is Context Everything?* Over three days the topics of *Challenging the Narrative: Indigenous Perspectives; The Future of Collections; Beyond the Walls* will be debated.

The presentations and discussions will be influenced by the context of Sydney, acknowledging the conflicting histories of cultural ownership, indigeneity, and place that define the cultural landscape of Australia. Looking out from the east coast of Australia to the Asia Pacific region and beyond, the conference will reflect upon questions and topics that aren’t just local but urgent for museums globally.

Keynote speakers include: **Franklin Sirmans**, Director of the Perez Art Museum Miami looking at *The Future of Collections*; and **Sally Tallant**, Director of the Queens Museum, New York, examining how institutions can go *Beyond the Walls*.

All the content generated during the previous conferences has become key reference material for the research and production of knowledge about the contemporary museum sector and it is freely available in both video format and edited texts at cimam.org.

One of the achievements of the triennial is the endorsement of the **Museum Best Practices for Managing Controversy**, a comprehensive document co-produced by the **National Coalition Against Censorship’s Arts Advocacy Project** and six collaborating national arts organizations. This is an excellent guide for all museum and gallery staff committed to supporting artists in presenting work that deals with contentious issues. To spread CIMAM’s knowledge as a growing opinion leader in the field of contemporary art, CIMAM is supported by a community of contemporary art museum professionals who

benefit from the opportunity to be part of an association that ensures the adherence to best practices in art institutions. It is noteworthy that during this triennial, **community members have increased by 8.23%, and the contributions of program funders have done so by 8.33%**, making it possible to carry out the **Travel Grants Program** that promotes the curatorial and research development of individuals and their participation in the Annual Conference. In the last three years CIMAM has awarded support to **91 young curators and museum directors** from emerging and developing economies.

One of the most important tasks carried out by CIMAM is the development of the **Museum Watch Program**, established 2012 to serve as an advocacy program addressing specific critical situations that impact on the ability of museums, not-for-profit institutions, and individuals working in modern and contemporary art, to maintain their professional codes of practice.

Thirteen cases have been the subject of analysis during this triennial: the **call on the Aichi Triennial to reopen an exhibition cancelled** in 2019, **Ralf Beil's** termination of contract by the Board of **Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg** in March 2019; the CIMAM statement regarding **Osman Kavala** and Turkish cultural professionals in January 2019; in December 2018, the situation at the **Greek National Museum of Contemporary Art**; **Okwui Enwezor's** abrupt departure from **Haus der Kunst**; in November 2018, CIMAM's concern at the treatment of **Catherine de Zegher** in her capacity as Director of the **Museum of Fine Arts (MSK)** in Ghent; congratulations to **Beatrix Ruf**, former Director of the **Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam**, on the positive outcome of the investigations into alleged conflicts of interest; CIMAM's statement on the **US government sanctions against Iran and Syria**; in November 2017, the **Art and China after 1989: Theater of the World** show at the Guggenheim Museum; the statement of CIMAM's board on the **South Korean Government's blacklist of artists** in March 2017; the statement regarding the impact of the **US Immigration Ban on Artistic Freedom** in February 2017; and the letter sent by CIMAM asking **American University to refrain from censorship**.

The Museum Watch Program is intended to be a tool to assist modern and contemporary art museum professionals when dealing with critical situations that impact on their ability to operate under the standards set by ICOM. It does so with the aim of stimulating reflection by generating debate and by uncovering topics for future conferences.

In the near future, projects such as the ***CiMAM Outstanding Museum Practice Award***, which aims to promote excellence in innovation in modern and contemporary art museums, and the initiative ***Sustainability in Museum Practice*** to raise awareness about climate change and sustainability in museums, will be launched in 2019 and developed thorough the next triennial.

About CiMAM

Founded in 1962, CiMAM's **vision** is a world where the contribution of museums, collections, and archives of modern and contemporary art to the cultural, social, and economic wellbeing of society is recognized and respected. Its **mission** is to foster a global network of museums and museum professionals to respond to the evolving needs of modern and contemporary art institutions, taking a leadership role on issues of concern by generating new and unpublished work that anticipates questions reflecting on the needs of the profession. It does so by debating theoretical, ethical, and practical issues concerning institutional and museological activities, developing cooperation and knowledge by identifying and responding to the needs and issues faced by modern and contemporary art institutions.

Elizabeth Ann Macgregor, OBE, Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, is the President of CiMAM and Mami Kataoka, Deputy Director and Chief Curator of Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, is the Secretary-Treasurer of CiMAM.