

Welcome to the International Training Programme's (ITP) newsletter for 2019.

In order to stay relevant, museums need to share their collections, knowledge and experiences across countries and cultures. As part of an international museum and heritage community connectivity is crucial to the International Training Programme. It provides a platform to create and enhance partnerships and collaborations, generate projects that complement our alumni's ideas and goals, and seeks to influence and support the wider network.

This year the ITP team is focusing on engagement of all kinds and the newsletter – working with Andrea Terrón (Guatemala, ITP 2017 and Senior Fellow 2018), our guest editor – aims to reflect that through the news, views and stories being shared across our global network.

The theme of our Issue 6 newsletter is digital engagement and here Andrea tells us more about the inspiration behind her choice of theme:

'With museums and other cultural organisations looking to broaden access and make it easier for audiences to engage and interact with their collections, museums accomplish one of many roles: to share and interpret information.

The growth of museums' online presence gives audiences more flexibility in how they interact with collections. In return, this gives museums more collaborative experiences and encourages open communication with a wide range of potential contributors. One of the current goals for museums is to promote participation and engagement with both local communities and communities around the world, and access to digital platforms helps to achieve this.

Objects that were previously only available within a museum's walls are now available for anyone with an internet connection to see, hear, watch and interact with. Now, with the help of social media and the rise of user-generated content, visitors are able to access objects of their choice and share their favourite artefacts with their social community.

Digitising collections, exhibitions and catalogues aims to increase people's curiosity to visit museums and see the real objects. It can increase scholarly engagement, encourage audiences to share their stories about collections, support learning programmes and provide a platform for partnerships and collaboration. Museums can embrace this potential by finding new and more advanced ways to capture, store and provide access to their collections; in many cases, helping them preserve them for the future'.

But the conversations that arose within our international network raised interesting common themes and issues.

What happens when there is no internet connection? What if a museum's collection is not catalogued or online? How can museums cope with communication at a local, regional and international level? What can we do if a museum doesn't have a web presence? How can we all be better connected? Does making your collection available online necessarily increase the numbers of visitors to your institution? What level of engagement does digital encourage? And how do institutions monitor and fact-check user-generated content?

In the newsletter you'll hear from our fellows about their digital experiences and the challenges they face.

In *Connectivity in the 21st century: making collections accessible*, fellows will tell us how their museums are engaging digitally with their audiences and what the local and global reactions have been to their work. While in *Your collection in focus* they will highlight an object from their collections that has the potential for engaging digitally with their audiences in an exciting way.

In *Global perspectives* the network will share their thoughts and reflections on engaging digitally, looking at possibilities and suitability within their museum's context while discussing potential issues and challenges.

Finally, in the *bulletin board* and *global network news* we'll hear about our fellows' projects and programmes; the network's personal and professional news and their global networking.

We hope you enjoy sharing our ITP network's news and views.

Claire Messenger

International Training Programme Manager
British Museum



Digital networking: engaging with our ITP fellows and partners



Connectivity in the 21st century for international networks can be easy... so long as you have the buy-in from those who make up the network and someone who is digitally savvy! Thanks to our engaged ITP fellows and partners we have a group of people who want to stay connected despite living and working across the world; and thanks to former ITP Coordinator Emma Croft's WordPress 'know-how', the ITP team have been able to develop an improved WordPress blog site. The new site will be the central hub for network members to share information, resources and publications relating to the ITP and their own projects.

With 276 fellows from 43 countries (and counting) making up the ITP network, the team decided that members need more than a blog and Facebook page to keep all stakeholders informed about ITP activity taking place throughout the year. The new WordPress site will hold the blog plus additional features including:

- a fellows' database
- an interactive map of institutions
- UK Partner information
- a passworded resource hub
- publications – both ITP and fellow
- a media gallery – images, videos and press

The ITP team keeps a contacts database of fellows from the beginning of the project in 2006 to date, and regularly updates it with professional and logistical information. Since 2016, fellows and facilitators taking part in the annual summer programme or a legacy project are requested to contribute biographies to the overall programme and coursebook. By combining these documents to make a public database of fellows we hope that network members can more easily benefit and connect with members of the ITP alumni, relevant to their own field or the needs of their institution. We believe this will be an indispensable resource for all of you, with

search categories and word search recognition. We ask you to keep us up to date with your career progression and contact details to ensure the database is a reliable source of information.

A map of institutions will highlight the museums and institutions fellows work for, where the institutions are within each country, and an image and text to provide context. Fellows are constantly travelling across the globe for conferences, loans and training and we hope that this resource will increase 'meet ups' in ITP countries. We also realise that many institutions do not have a webpage and that the map function of our WordPress page will give increased digital visibility to many of the network's institutions. With this in mind, please search for your place of work on the map and share any extra images or text about your institution with us! We will happily replace or add text based on your advice.

Since 2016 we have been posting toolkits and resources resulting from conference attendance and legacy projects onto the blog. These so far include education in museums, photography and documentation and museum interpretation. On the new site a passworded area will hold ITP resources to date, and the ITP team will continue to work on increasing the breadth of information available to the network. If you would like to see any resources in particular feature on this page, or if you would like to contribute any resources, we look forward to hearing from you.

'Developing the new ITP WordPress site has been a fantastic opportunity. Not only is it great to be part of the ITP team again (with the wonderful Claire, Becca and Jess) but I also have the opportunity to support the growth of our global network in a wide-reaching and sustainable way!' Emma Croft, former Coordinator, International Training Programme

We hope the new WordPress site will be a useful resource for fellows, UK partners, programme partners, those about to embark on the summer programme and museum professionals interested in how the ITP network can support their work. As a result, information including UK Partner institutions, publications (both ITP and fellows'), images, press and details about how to get in touch with the ITP team can be found on the site. This has been a new venture for the ITP team – its content has been informed by the advice and input of the network and its construction driven by Emma Croft. We hope this is a useful resource for the network and beyond; if you have any suggestions to build on the first model, do not hesitate to get in touch!

Rebecca Horton

International Training Programme Coordinator
British Museum

The museum Twitterverse: using social media for professional development

The ITP's Twitter (@britmusitp) turned three on 10 November 2018, and so is currently the baby among our social media platforms. Although Twitter has suffered a drop in its user base, 'museum Twitter' is very much alive and well, and it remains an important platform for professional conversations. As such, it can be a fantastic resource for a training programme like the ITP, and for any museum workers interested in continuing professional development, like, of course, the ITPers.

Museums are not only using Twitter as a marketing tool for exhibitions and events, but are also tapping into a specialist-interest audience – which includes members of the public with a particular passion for seeing behind the scenes, but also other professionals within the sector. As such, museum teams have set up Twitter accounts that deal with particular aspects of their institution's work (see for example ITP UK partner Norfolk Museums Service's @ConserveNMS, @NMSCollMan, @NMSDesign).

Likewise, individuals within museums are showcasing their work through Twitter. The British Museum considers individual professional accounts a great way for staff to highlight their work and to interact with and develop a specialist online community interested in their subject area. The Museum has developed a set of social media guidelines that all staff must adhere to, making the clear distinction between official, professional and personal use of social media. One example that the British Museum considers as a well-executed professional account is the Twitter of Neal Spencer, Keeper of the Department of Egypt and Sudan (@NealSpencer_BM).

Conferences are a great time to get tweeting. Throughout 2018, whenever the ITP attended a conference or talk, we made sure we were tweeting, and the analytics show a clear spike in views, visits, retweets, likes and follows around any big event we attended. Organisers know the power of Twitter at their events, and the Museums Association (MA) conference even asks for delegates to provide their Twitter handles in advance, and prints these on their passes, along with their name and institution. The 2018 ITP MA conference course book included a list of appropriate hashtags for each day of the trip, and we started tweeting using the conference's official hashtag as soon as we arrived in Belfast, to give visibility to the ITP presence.

Museum Twitter highlights include @MuseumHour, which runs on Mondays from 8pm–9pm UK time, with a different theme each week, #MuseumSelfie Day, #MuseumObjectChallenge, #TeenTwitter, #TakeoverDay, #Museum30, #AskACurator Day and, of course, #MuseumWeek and #InternationalMuseumDay. @CultureThemes and @MuseumHashtag can help you keep track of the museum Twitter events coming up.



One thing that is striking is that the 'museum Twitterverse' is predominantly European and American. ITP fellows are in a great place to offer more diverse and global voices to these conversations, and showcase their museums, collections and work. ITP fellows Saeed Bayashoot (Yemen, ITP 2016) and Heba Khairy (Egypt, ITP 2017) wrote for the ITP blog back in September about the experience of participating in #AskACurator Day, as the only representatives from their countries' museum sectors. It was also great to see a number of ITP'ers take part in #Museum30 and even help out by translating the 30 themed days' hashtags into a range of languages.

In 2018, we retweeted posts from 16 ITP fellows on the ITP's Twitter feed. During the summer programme UK partner placements, it was so useful to have fellows tweeting from Glasgow, Bristol, Manchester and Norfolk. It is great to be able to keep up with and share fellows' news through this platform, and sometimes this is even the first place where we get to learn about exciting developments or ITP meet-ups from you! We also try to follow and retweet your museums' accounts. If your museum has a Twitter account but the ITP is not following it, or not retweeting your news, please let us know!

I will soon be creating a social media toolkit for the ITP network, and I really hope that the information contained will encourage more ITP fellows to make use of Twitter, not only for their own professional development, but also to highlight their work to others on this global stage.

Jessica Jukes

Assistant, International Training Programme
British Museum

Contextualising Guatemala's archaeological past



Last year I was involved in a project with the Regional Research Centre of Mesoamerica (CIRMA), in Antigua, Guatemala, curating a temporary and itinerant exhibition to promote the use of its archives and create awareness about their preservation.

The plan was to generate a temporary exhibition that was to be open for one year – 2018–2019 – at the National Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology (MUNAE) and, based on this script, to have a touring version that was to be placed in many institutions in different parts of the country such as universities with Social Sciences departments, cultural houses and regional museums.

The Centre received a collection from an important ethnographer, Georges Guillemin, who had worked on archaeological research and preservation of sites. On receiving the collection, they started with the digitisation process of photographs, field notes, plans and sketches – overall 11,000 pieces that enlighten a period of archaeological history that Guatemalans are not aware of. This collection is now online on CIRMA's webpage: <http://cirma.org.gt/glifos/index.php?title=ISADG:GT-CIRMA-FG-016>.

Another important aspect of this project was to have the exhibition at the National Museum, because it holds the objects that were excavated, documented and described in detail in this archive. For the first time, they are accessible to the public together. It is contextualising both collections (archival and objects) and the level of interpretation is helping reveal and preserve a small part of our history and patrimony.

For the touring version, we used the same content as written on the labels in the exhibition, but with the creation of panels there was a little more space to include more documents and photographs from the archive. This version will travel regionally across the country and provide a key element to the project in a country that is currently not connected digitally.

To further increase the accessibility of the project we worked on translating all the texts into Guatemalan languages and English, with the idea of connecting with more people from other communities. The other challenge was to use QR codes (machine-readable optical labels that contain information about a specific item) to support the delivery of these translations and to access the catalogue online of the material in the collection.

To finish, we decided to have a video at the end of the exhibition, in which the team interviewed important professionals who knew Georges Guillemin and who explained the value of good research professional practices in the academic world. We also took the opportunity to ask them about the new generations of professionals and what their role is in the academic world.

Andrea Terrón
(Guatemala, ITP 2017 and Senior Fellow 2018)
Professor, Faculty of Social Sciences
Del Valle University, Guatemala City

Temporary exhibit at National Museum, Guatemala City.

Digital in museums: mind the gaps

One of my university professors used to recall when photocopiers first arrived in his institution in the 1960s. They were seen by some as revolutionising learning and research, a tool to make students and researchers acquire and access knowledge more quickly. This now seems ridiculous – photocopiers would make easier the distribution and copying of books, articles and notes, but not change how the knowledge was created, understood or used.

How will we look at the current digital age in 50 years? Maybe with the same critical eye.

Digitisation projects allow museums to make their information and collections more visible. The British Museum's Collection Online was one of the first examples of a major museum making its whole collection catalogue visible to the world, in the early 2000s. At the time, it required a leap of faith, to recognise that it would never be complete, always changing, always in progress. Yet our online collection, like most, follows a 19th-century mode of organising knowledge, with the individual fields as digital echoes of old register books. It is not possible to record concepts, group objects by significant events or people, or other criteria, or connect to related objects or resources beyond the British Museum. Even within the British Museum, we record books, objects and archives in different systems. As a researcher, you hungrily seek all types of sources that might help answer your questions, in different types of institutions. Yet our digital projects and systems often create boundaries between these sources.

Online collections rarely offer an environment for different perspectives, nor for arguments or the weighting of evidence and different assertions. Similar limitations affect digital publications, typically a mere digital representation of the book format. So collection-focused online systems and e-publications have not really changed how researchers work.

There are exciting projects that are looking to address these questions, and it is crucial that such approaches are explored while collections are digitised, not after.

One example is ResearchSpace at the British Museum, supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which uses the semantic web to structure knowledge in a completely different way, and provide tools to document the thinking and intellectual processes within a researchers' mind. Crucially it is developed by researchers for researchers and is open source; rather than us using something developed by giant software companies for others.

Back in our galleries, we have not harnessed digital to its full potential. Screens offer enriched text, image and video information to support the displays, but it is still a system of (overwhelmingly) visual delivery and engagement. How can digital transform the visitor experience? We could look beyond the museum world for ideas that incorporate the digital. In London, 'immersive experiences' are a growing trend that engages young audiences in books or cinema. These experiences – for example around *Back to the Future* or *War of the Worlds* – integrate objects, actors, virtual/augmented reality and large-scale sets to plunge the audience into a rich and stimulating experience. Recent trends in archaeological research emphasise the five senses, with feeling, smelling, hearing and tasting joining sight. Can museums not unite these two worlds; using cutting-edge digital technologies and experiential moments to enhance our understanding of the objects on display?

I'd urge us all to question what more we can do – how can digital tools transform how we think and communicate? Only then will the digital revolution really be transformative, and offer a step-change to how researchers think. And it is not a revolution to fear: it can make the curator's job and the visitor's experience more relevant, fun and engaging.

For more on ResearchSpace, visit: britishmuseum.org/research/research_projects/all_current_projects/researchspace.aspx

Neal Spencer
Keeper of Nile Valley & Mediterranean Collections
British Museum



The Citi exhibition, Manga マンガ, British Museum.

Connectivity in the 21st century: making collections accessible

Is engaging digitally possible and suitable for all – what are the potential issues and challenges?

Bit by bit, the whole world is turning towards digital media. A lot of the content, news and entertainment that we consume on a regular basis is online, and much of our communication happens via the Internet. A positive outcome of this change is that museums and cultural institutions have embraced this wholeheartedly and are eagerly sharing their collections with the world. Museums like the British Museum and the Metropolitan Museum of Art have digitised their fabulous world-representative collections and share them for free on their websites. Museums in India have also started digitising their collections under the JATAN program, which is supported by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. The online collections offer viewers across the world the opportunity to study the vast number of artefacts housed in the museums. This kind of accessibility is something that couldn't have been imagined a few years back.

Another fantastic tool that museums have been using is the Google Arts and Culture project. The website/app allows visitors to access the collections of thousands of museums and cultural institutions either individually or through their thematic exhibits. Museo Nacional's collection (Brazil) is on GAC and after the devastating fire which obliterated most of their collection, viewers can still access their virtual collection on the website. The researchers working with the museum at that point reached out to people on Twitter asking to share any pictures they may have taken on their visits to the museum, therefore creating a crowd-sourced virtual collection. Initiatives like these are possible only if institutions are willing to engage digitally with visitors, and these not only keep the collections alive for future studies but also offer a chance to create a virtual database, which is just a click away.

Social media is a useful tool that is being used to engage with, disperse information to and get feedback from visitors. By using Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and YouTube, museums can reach out to audiences faster. It can help bring in visitors to the museums, encourage them to participate in various programmes, create awareness about heritage preservation and in certain cases raise money as well. The varied nature of each of these applications gives museums an opportunity to create varied content that can appeal to audiences of all ages. Videos would work well on certain channels while images work better on some channels. Depending on the geographical reach of the audiences, museums can decide which social media application and what kind of content works better for them.



The plus side of using social media is that it is probably one of the cheapest options out there, it doesn't require much in the way of investment and a lot can be done with pre-existing collection information. It also offers a chance to come up with creative campaigns to get audiences interested. Compared to traditional forms of media it also offers a faster response time. Visitors often let museums know about their recent visit and experiences via Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. The images that are shared by visitors are also potential content for museums. It also helps track their popularity on the web!

The biggest perk of digital media is that it allows for collaboration between institutions, museums and individuals. Blogging and vlogging is a great way to collaborate between institutions. It not only creates great content, but also forges friendships. Social media also reaches out to those audiences who do not live in the same city or country as the museum: they can follow updates and consume the digital content that is created, and henceforth be potential visiting audiences.

I feel that because of the varied nature of digital media it is possible for museums to engage with varied audiences and increase their visitor reach, thereby ensuring that no audiences get excluded.

Ruchira Verma (India, ITP 2016)
Partner, Culture Collective

Connectivity in the 21st century: making collections accessible

Late 19th-century caricatures become accessible worldwide in the 21st century

From January to June 2017, the ANAMED Gallery in Istanbul was home to an exhibition titled *The Characters of Yusuf Franko: An Ottoman Bureaucrat's Caricatures*. The exhibition focused on a caricature album by Yusuf Franko Kusa who was a bureaucrat as well as a witty and playful caricaturist. Belonging to the Ömer M. Koç Collection, the album and the colourful caricatures in it came to the daylight for the first time. Yusuf Franko's drawings were mostly charged portraits of his international entourage who were global locals of Istanbul: artists, businessmen, ambassadors, bureaucrats and more. Although there was almost no information online on Yusuf Franko and his caricatures before the exhibition, we now know that they are accessible across the world with only a few clicks.

The original album was in a showcase in the gallery and at the same time it was digitised and displayed on two large touch screens to give visitors the chance to engage with each caricature. This was only the first step of Yusuf Franko's digitisation story.

In May 2017, the exhibition went online at <https://yusuffranko.ku.edu.tr/> as a permanent resource. Thanks to the website, an Italian diplomat who was writing a book on one of the characters in Yusuf Franko's album – Austrian-Hungarian Ambassador Baron Calice – found out about the exhibition and approached us for the high-resolution photographs of the caricatures. As a result, two of Yusuf Franko's caricatures were published in a book in Italian, yet another contribution in print besides the scholarly book accompanying the exhibition.

A year after the launch of the website, the designer and ANAMED nominated <https://yusuffranko.ku.edu.tr/> for

a competition on an open platform called Visualizing Cities <https://cityvis.io/>. The indexing will be completed in due course which will eventually increase its global accessibility even more.

Lastly, the exhibition was invited to Ankara, the capital, within the context of 2018 European Year for Cultural Heritage. Hosted by the Çankaya Municipality Zülfü Livaneli Culture Center from 23 November 2018 to 25 January 2019, the exhibition went online once again, this time in 3D, in a virtual exhibition format at <https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=AEHzh6HQmWE>.

Although nothing could replace visiting an exhibition physically, a 3D virtual tour is the second-best option and provides an idea about an exhibition and its ambience. It is also noteworthy that a permanent virtual tour is a great recording method particularly for a travelling exhibition.

To have more solid ideas about visitor perception of our endeavours, we measured the traffic at <https://yusuffranko.ku.edu.tr/> via Google Analytics. Not surprisingly, we have observed a dramatic increase in the daily visitor numbers on the website during the exhibition period in Ankara. The 3D virtual tour has also been measured by the hosting company and reported to us.

I believe increasing accessibility is one of the core duties of exhibition professionals. Exhibiting is a powerful act to narrate a story and the more people access a story, the wider it is spread. What is the point in telling a story if it is not heard and shared, after all?

Ebru Esra Satici (Turkey, ITP 2015)
Curator, ANAMED Gallery



View of the Yusuf Franko exhibition at the ANAMED Gallery in Istanbul ©ANAMED.

Connectivity in the 21st century: making collections accessible Global Nepali Museum – a database of Nepali objects

After I joined the Taragaon Museum in 2013, I started to learn about our heritage, cultural sites, temples and stupas, and that led me to think about the objects that were housed inside the temples and also around the buildings and monuments. This was the moment when I started to look at the Nepali objects in museum collections around the world.

I have been to number of museums around the world and I have seen Nepali objects everywhere. Those objects have been well taken care of by the museums and institutions for many years and it means that every year millions of people from around the world visit these museums and learn about Nepali objects, their journey and history. But I also felt that those objects had not been seen by the majority of Nepali people, as they are unaware of these culturally and historically important objects, handcrafted by our ancestors. Therefore to make them also accessible to the Nepali audience, students, researchers and whoever is interested to learn about our art and culture, I took the initiative to make an online platform where all the Nepal-related objects scattered around the world can be recorded and documented. The platform has been named the Global Nepali Museum.

This museum project is my personal attempt to create a virtual museum and a web-based database of the objects that are displayed and kept in different museums around the world. The idea of this web platform is to bring all the details of the objects under one domain. This will also provide an opportunity to share new findings with other museums in the future.

The museum database currently has four categories in the first phase and two other categories are planned in the second phase as below.

Phase 1

1. Sculpture – 19th century and before.
2. Paintings and Manuscripts – 19th century and before.
3. Contemporary art – 20th century onwards.
4. Cultural objects (past and present) – endangered cultural objects from the Himalayan region of Nepal that are no longer being used or produced.

Phase 2

1. Stone and metal inscriptions (site-specific inscriptions from heritage and cultural sites).
2. Private collections in Nepal and abroad.

To date, these objects are not catalogued anywhere else. This is the first database of its kind where the objects, those that are away from Nepal, can be seen all in one place.

I have now started to communicate with different museums from around the world explaining the project and requesting them to share the digital materials. I am also emphasising that this platform was not created to encourage the repatriation of these objects. I believe these objects are beautifully displayed and well looked after. Nepal has been represented in many museums in their Asian and Himalayan sections and that is a source of pride for us. It should remain like that as it allows the world to know about this small country's heritage, history and culture.

The second phase of the museum will also aim to feature private collections and inscriptions (in stone and metal) mainly from the Kathmandu Valley. It is a huge task and also a big responsibility. I hope that museums from around the world will support me in this venture, which could become a good resource for future generations.

I am very happy that the British Museum has supported me in this process and have granted permission to use the related information and images of the Nepali objects in their collection.

Please do visit www.globalmuseum.com. It is still a work in progress so please do share your thoughts and feedback. As it grows and takes its shape, I will definitely share more information.

Roshan Mishra (Nepal, ITP 2018)
Director, Taragaon Museum



Figure of
Lakshminarayan,
17th century,
Kathmandu
Valley, Nepal.

Connectivity in the 21st century: making collections accessible Digital marketing at Egyptian museums

Egyptian museums are always looking for new ways to engage their visitors and using digital technology is a powerful way to take a topic with cultural value and make it visible and tangible for museum visitors. The recent proliferation of technological innovations has enabled Egyptian museums to act in a dynamic way in this aspect where a visitor's experience inside a museum has been entirely redefined.

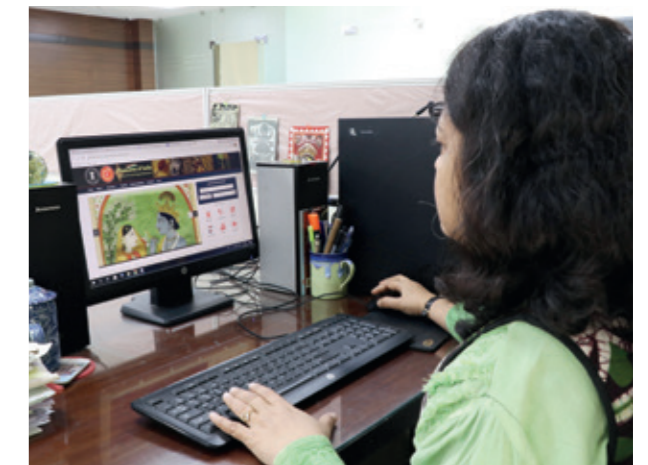
Digital technology drives the marketing approach of Egyptian museums and is used for promoting their programmes which are presented to engage visitors in learning experiences, enhance their curiosity and interest in their objects and collections, and to attract new visitors. The use of social media to support these activities has several advantages, and it is a great way to reach our target audiences and get them to visit Egyptian museums. The growth of a museum community on social media is the Egyptian museums' way to speak the same language as the museums' local community. Marketing Egyptian museums through digital marketing and social media represents a topic with major significance. Digital marketing enables users to gain more knowledge about the museums and their services, citing issues, objects and surroundings they may be interested in.

Egyptian museums' marketing and the digital age are closely linked. In Egypt social media has an important role to play and can have a profound effect as Egyptians increasingly search for the content they need among ever-expanding digital media. But Egyptian museums' digital marketing is a complex process since the 'product' is a cultural one. One of the significant cases in Egypt is the website of the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities (MoA) where they are using several technological interpretation tools linked with the Ministry's marketing procedures. The Ministry of Antiquities in Cairo is accomplishing its role to become an active partner with its actual and potential visitors and customers. The MoA website includes certain characteristics in order to be user-friendly, informative and effective and to engage with the visitors' whatever their age, cultural and educational background, profession, needs, interests, and abilities.

The link to the Ministry of Antiquities website is www.antiquities.gov.eg/DefaultAr/Pages/default.aspx – the Arabic version is almost finished and will address the local Egyptian community. The digital engagement framework of the MoA helps visitors to identify the opportunities that social media provides for museums and sites in Egypt.

Shreen Mohamed Amin Taher Abdel Megeed
(Egypt, ITP 2016)
Director, Children's Museum of the Egyptian Museum

Connectivity in the 21st century: making collections accessible Sharing collections in India



Connectivity in the 21st century: making collections accessible is an area which my team has been working in the last seven years, since I became Nodal Officer of the Jatan collection database at the Victoria Memorial Hall, Kolkata when I returned from the prestigious ITP in 2011. To engage audiences and expand access to the collection, digitisation is very much needed by every museum. Victoria Memorial Hall possesses 28,394 artefacts and around 22,492 have been digitised so far and are being entered into the Jatan database and published on the Ministry of Culture, Government of India website www.museumsofindia.gov.in. A total of 10 museums in India under the Ministry of Culture are involved in this repository. Through this website, audiences of all ages and different categories including researchers from all over the world can consult our collections, which is I think a great achievement for my museum. Around 10 virtual exhibitions from the programmes of the Victoria Memorial Hall have also been published through this repository as have all the educational programmes for children, including those with special needs and the under privileged. Curatorial talks, objects in focus and more are being shared through the site, which receives huge appreciation locally as well as globally. I am proud to be a part of this and it is hoped that Victoria Memorial Hall will be able to publish all its objects through this repository within the next year.

Joyee Roy (India, ITP 2011)
Head of Documentation & Photo Unit, Victoria Memorial Hall

Joyee Roy, India,
ITP Fellow 2011.

Connectivity in the 21st century: making collections accessible
Exhibition with no objects: *The Curious Case of Çatalhöyük* moves from Istanbul to London

The UNESCO World Heritage site of Çatalhöyük is a unique example of a well-preserved Neolithic settlement located in Konya, Turkey. For decades, it has been considered as one of the key sites for understanding human prehistory and also as a centre for pioneering archaeological methods and practices. In 2017, Koç University's Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (ANAMED) organised a major exhibition celebrating the science of archaeology and marked the 25th and last excavation season of the Çatalhöyük Research Project. Engaging and innovative use of digital tools attracted new visitors and the success of the exhibition has exceeded expectations (see ITP Newsletter Issue 5, Page 8).

News of this 'archaeology exhibition without artefacts' soon reached London, and ANAMED opened *The Curious Case of Çatalhöyük*, at the Brunei Gallery, SOAS, University of London, from 12 October to 15 December 2018.

The exhibition presented Çatalhöyük excavations through various experiment-based digital sections, including 3D prints of finds, laser-scanned overviews of excavation areas, immersive digital visualisation of the database and a Virtual Reality (VR) experience that brought the 9,000-year-old settlement back to life.

It is no coincidence that digital displays were applied in the exhibition *The Curious Case of Çatalhöyük*. Known for its fascinating, cutting-edge archaeological research methods and laboratory collaborations, the Çatalhöyük Research Project has collated a well-organised and accessible database over the course of 25 years of excavations. The structure of the database makes it accessible for future analysis and interdisciplinary interpretation projects.

This approach was reflected in the exhibition's interactive displays and is complemented by a digital installation. As part of the exhibition, an award-winning immersive digital sculpture was commissioned from the renowned media artist Refik Anadol. Anadol developed a digital installation using the Çatalhöyük Research Project's archive, which consists of 2.8 million data records tied to 250,000 finds. By employing machine learning algorithms to sort relations among these records, Anadol transformed this knowledge into a poetic media installation that transcends research, archaeology, art, and technology.

Thanks to the immersive and interactive capabilities of digital media, machine learning, mapping and geographic information systems, 3D modelling and VR in museums, new opportunities emerged for a more direct understanding of the lives of early cultures. *The Curious Case of Çatalhöyük* challenged conventional exhibition methodologies in order to have a greater impact on the user experience and explored digital interactive practices for future archaeological museums.

The Curious Case of Çatalhöyük was organised by Koç University's Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (ANAMED), managed by Şeyda Çetin, and curated by Duygu Tarkan, with contributions from Ian Hodder and other Çatalhöyük Research Project team members.

Şeyda Çetin (Turkey, ITP 2014)
Gallery Curator, ANAMED Gallery



Connectivity in the 21st century: making collections accessible
The digital story at the Institute of National Museums of Rwanda



The Institute of National Museums of Rwanda is a government institution that was inaugurated on 19 September 1989 with one museum in the southern part of the country – the National Museum of Rwanda – that later became the Ethnographic Museum. The Institute's mission is to collect, preserve, research and present Rwandese past and present cultural and natural national heritage.

After the genocide against the Tutsi, the Institute now has eight museums around the country. One of the effects of the genocide in Rwandan museums is that most of the personnel were killed and there was a loss of information. So in trying to reconstruct itself, the museum started by recruiting other personnel and trying to regain information about the collections.

From 2014 to date, the Institute has been making a manual catalogue of almost 17,000 museum collection objects and an inventory of museum collections was done in 2016–2017.

In 2007 the Institute's website was launched and between 2014 and 2017 it was updated. It shares information about

Rwandan Museums, visitor information such as our service charter, rates and opening hours, how visitors can book online, and also gives them access to our Ikambere newsletter – a quarterly newsletter sharing museum news. Apart from the website, the Institute also has Twitter and Facebook accounts where it can also share news.

Unfortunately – even if digitising collections, exhibitions and catalogues can increase visitors into museums – you cannot access the Rwandan Museums' collections online. The Rwandan Museums are facing many challenges. The budget is limited, there is no software for digitising the museum's collections and there are no personnel who can work on this kind of project. So the Institute would like to partner with universities, organisations and museums to be able to digitise its collections and make catalogues available online. This will help us to interact and share skills and expertise with more people around the world.

Chantal Umuhoza (Rwanda, ITP 2018)
Curator, Institute of National Museums of Rwanda

Connectivity in the 21st century: making collections accessible
Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia digital collections: working in partnership

The Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia (IAMM) officially celebrated its 20th anniversary on 14 December 2018. Throughout the years since its establishment in 1998, the museum has rigorously expanded its collection with the aim to gather and display artefacts and objects that represent the history and culture of the entire Islamic world. Currently, we have thousands of objects on display in the permanent galleries (and in storage) that range from as early as 7th- to 8th-century manuscripts, to a modern and contemporary collection. For a young museum like us, we see this undertaking as part of our achievement that we should be proud of. With the hope of presenting the best possible way of displaying our collection to the visitors, we also acknowledge that visiting the museum is not a privilege and preference for everyone. As much as we are glad that our collection can be shared with visitors who come to our museum, we also love to have our collection digitally accessible, so it can be reached by a wider audience across the globe.

One of our initiatives to make our collection accessible worldwide is by taking part as a contributor in one of the largest online museum databases in the world, Museum with No Frontiers (MWNF). MWNF is an international non-profit organisation founded in 1995 that aims to create a platform affording partners the opportunity to interact productively and be part of a multinational presentation of history, art and culture without physically moving the artefacts, but rather by presenting them in a simulated environment. Our involvement with the programme allows us to share images and information of our finest artefact collection with others. Selected collections featured in the database include: manuscripts and miniature painting; architectural elements such as tiles and woodwork; ceramics; textiles; ceremonial weapons; scientific instruments; jewellery; painting; metalwork objects and many more. These objects are located under the section *Discover Islamic Art* on the MWNF website and are grouped in *Explore Islamic Art Collection*. Currently, almost 50 important objects from our collection, along with general information, provenance, date, physical features, a brief description and selected references about the objects are openly accessible from anywhere in the world. Our museum is honoured to be part of the MWNF programme and to be the pioneer Asian museum to contribute to its Islamic collection database.

Other than this platform, IAMM is also actively sharing its collection via social media and e-publication. Social media in particular is a handy platform that can be utilised by museums and heritage institutions across the world before they are able to produce a grander method of digitising their collection. IAMM started with this humble endeavour on Instagram where we regularly post selected artefacts from the museum collection and the IAMM e-newsletter (published quarterly) that usually highlights our latest acquisitions. Considering digitising the collection is important in the long run as we are continuously improving our efforts to make our collection accessible digitally.

Digitising the collection is important in the 21st century as it is not only a platform to share the museum's collection with the rest of the world, but it also serves as a record and documentation for future generations. It opens windows of opportunity for museums and heritage institutions to engage with specialised audiences such as scholars, researchers as well as the general public. Additionally it will encourage institutions to collaborate and to share their collections, in order to come up with various kinds of interesting exhibitions and projects in the future.

For more details about our museum and collection, please visit www.iamm.org.my and follow us on Instagram @islamicartsmuseummalaysia, and Facebook www.facebook.com/islamicartsmuseummalaysia

Zulkifli Ishak (Malaysia, ITP 2017)
Curator, Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia



This 11th-century astrolabe from Cordoba, Spain is among the highlights featured on the online database and the museum's social media.

Your collection in focus

An old form of password protection!

This is a good opportunity to share with the ITP network some ideas about digital engagement with audiences, focusing on an object in the Abdeen Palace Museum. The object is a jewellery box dating back to the 18th century that was made in France and brought to the Abdeen Palace in 1948 by the last king who ruled Egypt, King Farouk (1936–1952), from one of the auction houses in Paris.

The most interesting thing about this box is how it works because it has two openings for the key – one is fake and one is original. The owner knew the 'password' to open it, which was to turn the key seven times to the right and the same number to the left, but if anyone else tried to open it and they didn't know the password, they would be shot immediately by four guns at the same time which were hidden inside the box. There is also an alarm bell inside the box to warn the owner that someone was trying to steal it.

To hear this story always engages our visitors so much with the object so I believe if we support the display with sound effects and allow people to listen to the story narrated by the first 18th century owner of the box, the visitors' experience and feedback will be much better.

I showcased this object and its label during the ITP+ course in Aswan in November 2018, because of its engaging story, and enjoyed sharing it with other ITPers!

Mohamed Mokhtar (Egypt, ITP 2015)
Curator, Abdeen Palace Museum



Jewellery box made from wood and bronze, 18th century, France.

Your collection in focus

Matequenha: acoustic study from traditional to contemporary



This is an interesting object by a young artist named Faizal Omar, whose artistic name is Matequenha. Designated into the museum's category of sculpture, the drum installation was made from local natural and recycled materials such as animal skin and ceramic. The drums have variable dimensions and therefore they create different rhythms and sounds and have an African origin typically from Mapico, Chigubo, Maputo and Tofu.

This is a significant piece that reflects an experience of life in these African societies. As the artist himself said, his great motivation to produce this work was his passion for the sounds of African cultures. The main objective of this work is to have a different impact and to satisfy the different wishes of the public, so the drums here are used in all kinds of ceremonies such as receptions, weddings, birthdays, conferences and more.

The installation is located in Exhibition Hall No. 2 on the first floor for the National Museum of Art in Maputo. It acts as a beacon on entering the museum, and a sort-of trademark for the museum. I believe it would make an excellent invitation into the museum for new audiences, but it can also hold the interest of the existing audience too. It has the ability to connect online with new and existing audiences – particularly as it can resonate with their memories, as both the sight and sound of their heritage.

Gilda Jorge (Mozambique, ITP 2009)
Digitisation Officer, National Museum of Art, Maputo

The Matequenha's objects.

An exhibition of the emir of Zazzau and his guard supported by audio.

Your collection in focus

Digitally complementing an exhibition in Kaduna

In its efforts to ensure the enhancement of increased audience participation and interest in the museum's activities, the National Museum, Kaduna in its new exhibition, *Nok within the context of Nigerian art traditions*, devoted a section to *Kaduna in retrospect* which depicted the growth and development of the Zazzau Emirate, the largest old emirate in northern Nigeria, prior to Nigerian independence.

The new exhibition has on display various objects such as *kakaaki* (trumpet), *tambari* (large royal drum), *alkebb* (regalia particular to the Emir of Zazzau or royalty in the north) and a *babban riga* (large gown/uniform) from the Emir's palace guards.

A good use of audiovisual complements the exhibition and the activities of the Emir – for example, the coronation and the traditional Sallah durbar are shown on screens for the audience to view. Equally, a detailed documentary of the visit of Queen Elizabeth II to the Zazzau Emirate and Kaduna as the capital state of northern Nigeria in the 1960s is also being shown to the audience. The importance of the audiovisual display in the exhibition is that it is the first of its kind in a museum in the northern part of Nigeria. Equally, it portrays the long relationship between the Emirate and the British monarch.

The display has seen an increase in visitors to the gallery. Furthermore, lots of scholars (local and international) have shown interest in the research on how the Zazzau Emirate, being the largest emirate in pre-colonial Nigeria, evolved.

Ishaq Mohammed Bello (Nigeria, ITP 2012)
Assistant Chief Technical Officer (Education), National Commission for Museums and Monuments, Kaduna



Your collection in focus

A hyperinflation banknote from Iraq

The Reserve Bank of India Museum (RBI) strives to showcase the history of money across the globe and illustrates the various monetary concepts in a practical way to our target audience of young university students. One such monetary concept shown in our museum is hyperinflation. Hyperinflation is the drastic rise in prices of essential goods in a country due to various factors affecting the economy – like war, political unrest, mismanagement of the economy and so on. Hyperinflation leads to a need to issue big denomination banknotes to help people cope with the unusually high prices of day-to-day necessities.

Though our gallery has a number of such banknotes from different countries, the most eye-catching banknote is a 10,000 Iraqi Dinars note with the image of former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, issued in 2002 (AH 1423) just before his deposition from power. Between 1987 and 1995 the Iraqi Dinar rose from an official value of 0.306 Dinars per USD to 3,000 Dinars per USD. This rise meant an approximate tripling of domestic prices every year until the end of this eight-year period.

The banknote would be an ideal digital object from our museum as it serves to illustrate two important truths for the young visitor. Firstly that war is bad for a country's economy, and secondly that the central bank of a country cannot issue banknotes as per its liking without consequences, like inflation spiralling into hyperinflation.

This banknote from our collection would be the best for engaging the digital visitor in view of the immediate attention brought to it by the personality featured on it, Saddam Hussein. It would also make it easy to explain hyperinflation in a simple manner as it is connected to various economic situations, but war is the easiest to explain as any person can comprehend the economic consequences of war and its effects on a country's economy.

Mahesh A. Kalra (India, ITP 2013)

Curator, Reserve Bank of India Museum



10,000 Iraqi Dinars (Ashartun Alaaf Dinar) issued by the Central Bank of Iraq (Al-Bank Al-Markazi Al-Iraqi) issued in 2002 (AH 1423) with image of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein on the front and the *Monument to the Unknown Soldier*, a Baghdad monument to the martyrs of the Iraq-Iran War, in the background.

The reverse shows an Arabic astrolabe and also the historic 13th-century Mustansiriya Madrasah.

Your collection in focus

Object of the month: Institute of National Museums of Rwanda

From March 2019 I will choose an *Object of the month* at each of the Institute of National Museums of Rwanda's eight museums. The project will start with the Ethnographic Museum and the first object I have selected is an *agaseke* basket, which symbolises a secret.

Handmade baskets have been part of Rwandan culture for centuries and through cultural tourism, have more recently gained popularity internationally. In Rwandan homesteads, baskets were used for keeping most essential items like money, food, tobacco, oils, milk, ornaments, cloths, medicines and herbs, and today are often used for decoration.

Agaseke were woven from natural fibres and grasses (mainly papyrus). The traditional way of making a stitched basket could take up to six months for a single basket and there were so many designs through which the maker tried to show the beauty of nature. Originally young girls learnt how to weave *agaseke* from their parents and this was passed down from generation to generation.

This object has a potential for engaging digitally with new or local audience for three reasons. It is visually attractive; it has strong cultural values and the traditional skills and knowledge behind the object need to be preserved.

Chantal Umuhoza (Rwanda, ITP 2018)

Curator, Institute of National Museums of Rwanda



Photo of Chantal Umuhoza, Rwanda, ITP Fellow 2018.

Your collection in focus
A Malay manuscript on travel

Travel tales have a special place in history. Pilgrims to holy places, curious and intrepid individuals, traders or government officials were among the groups of people who used to roam the world beyond their own and familiar surroundings. Often they left stories of their travels as guidance and amusement for others for posterity. A number of them are well known in history, from figures such as Marco Polo, John Mandeville, Friar Odoric of Pordenone, Ludovico di Varthema, Ibn Battuta and many more. In this section, I would like to introduce another traveller's tale from the Southeast Asian region. This is a 19th-century handwritten manuscript in our custody at the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, written in Jawi script (Arabic script that is adopted to write the Malay language) which I thought was worth documenting and had the potential to be exhibited digitally.

I came across this 33-page Malay manuscript years ago and decided to make an attempt to translate it. This manuscript tells the personal account of a Malay man who decided to take a journey by ship to Mecca to perform pilgrimage. The early pages of the manuscript give intimate records of the author who had to leave his parents in order to fulfil his journey and hoped this story could inspire others. He recorded his journey from the Malay Archipelago that took him around three months before arriving to the port of Jeddah, and further as he made his way to the city of Mecca by camel. His vivid accounts regarding the architectural structure of the mosque

in Mecca, its pillars and minarets, doors and gates, the black cube (Kaaba) – as well as the peoples and pilgrims from different parts of the world – are particularly astounding. The rest of his accounts served as guidance and advice for others on how to perform the ritual of pilgrimage in Mecca and Medina. This particular manuscript is probably a copy of an original work by a Malay pilgrim name Dawud who went for pilgrimage around 1830.

This old manuscript has gone through physical treatment by paper conservators and has the potential to be properly preserved in digital format in the future. Digitising manuscript collections allows for a convenient method for researchers from anywhere in the world to carry out their studies and makes potential collaborations between museums and heritage institutions much easier. In future, I would like to see the use of digital records in exhibitions to engage visitors through interactive displays.

This manuscript was one of the highlights of the exhibition *En Route to Mecca: Pilgrims' Voices throughout the Centuries* at the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia in 2009 and is currently on loan to an exhibition in Singapore until the middle of 2019.

Zulkifli Ishak (Malaysia, ITP 2017)
 Curator, Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia



First two pages of the manuscript written in verse (before and after conservation treatment).

Your collection in focus
Silk production in Assam



With digital engagement becoming a game-changer in the global south, museums cannot remain aloof on the subject and the institution I am presently working with, Assam State Museum, India, has been pushing towards taking its digital turn. The museum caters to a region that is a biodiversity hotspot with a very heterogeneous human demographic. Production of different types of silk (such as Eri, Pat and Muga) is part of the livelihood of the indigenous ethnic groups. Gandhi once said, 'Assamese women weave fairy tales in their clothes'. The textile gallery in Assam State Museum attempts to capture this heritage, and my object in focus is the silk attire worn by the royalty of the pre-colonial Ahom state in the region.

Digital mapping with geo-tagging and GIS (a geographic information system) will be the first step towards developing an exhaustive database about sericulture in the region. This may include a virtual walk-through of the industry, including different sites of silk production and arteries of circulation.

Apparels of the Royalty of the Ahom State (1228–1826), Assam, India.

There is a need to document silk-rearing practices and their historical and social connotations, including how they inform the livelihood, dietary habits and rituals of the local communities. This will assist in founding a digital archive of sericulture.

The textile gallery is being refurbished now, and there are possibilities for incorporating touch technology, barcodes and internet connection for better manoeuvrability. With mobile devices changing perceptions, developing apps about the exhibition can help provide information to the visitors through remote access.

In short, digitisation will not only provide a technological makeover to the gallery, but it will also provide wider, easier and more inclusive access to the museum's content.

Namrata Sarmah (India, ITP 2018)
 Project Curator, Assam State Museum, Guwahati

Your collection in focus

Safe Motherhood Day, India, 2018

As Head of the Collection at India's most visited museum, Victoria Memorial Hall, one of my key responsibilities is to spread consciousness about current social, ethical and political issues among audiences of different ages, backgrounds and abilities through gallery display as well as through digital platforms.

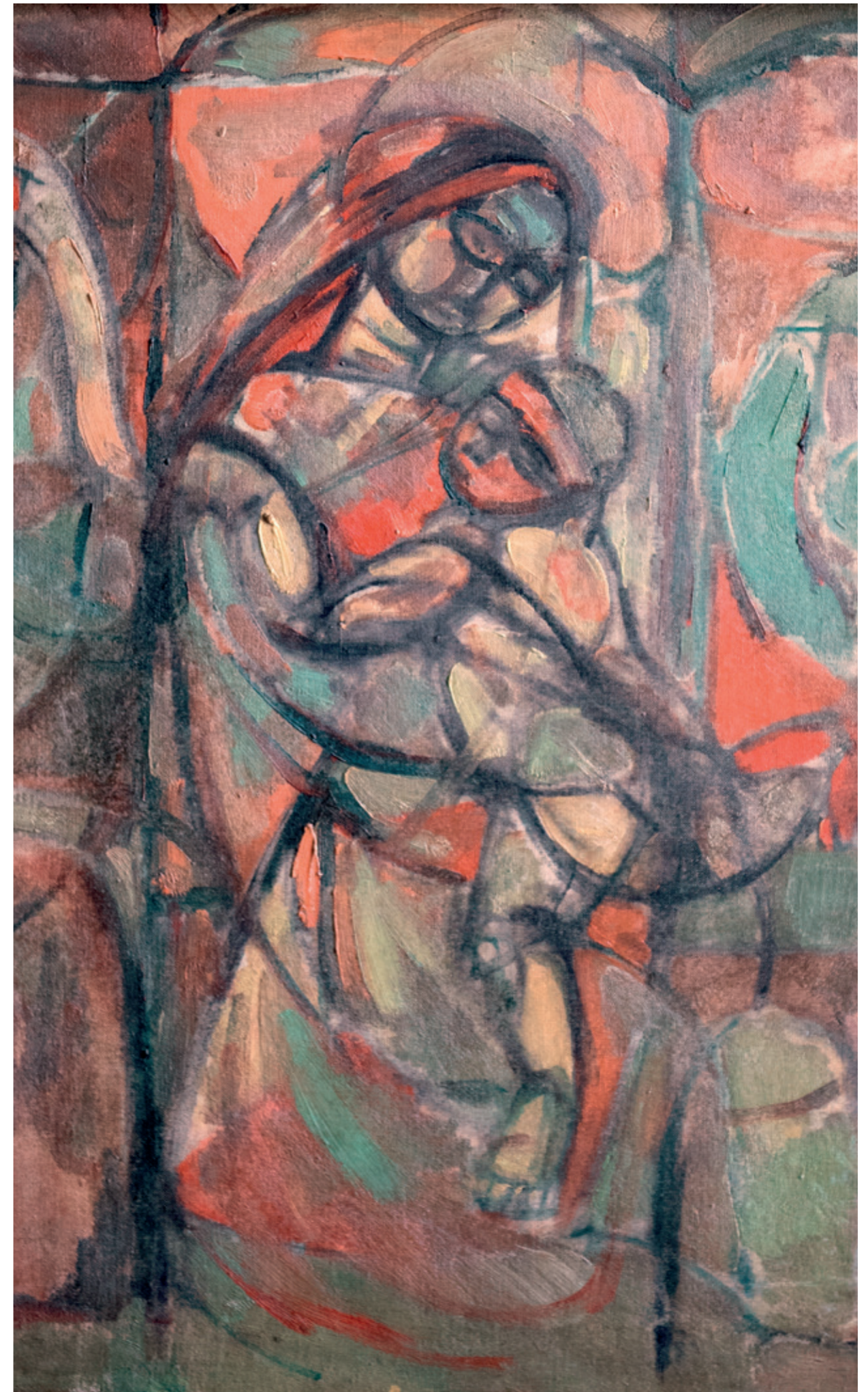
With this endeavour, on Safe Motherhood Day, 11 April 2018, in the category of *Object of the month*, I arranged to curate and display an oil painting: *Mother & Child*, 55.5 x 23.8cm, by Nirode Mazumdar (1916–1982). Mazumdar was an Indian painter from the first generation of Indian modernists and a key member of the Calcutta Group, which rejected the lyricism and the romanticism seen in the work of earlier Bengali artists, and expressed the need for a visual language that could reflect the crisis of urban society.

What is Safe Motherhood Day? In 2003, at the request of the White Ribbon Alliance India (WRAI), an alliance of 1,800 organisations, the Government of India declared 11 April – the anniversary of Kasturba Gandhi's birth – as National Safe Motherhood Day. India is the first country in the world to have officially declared a National Safe Motherhood Day and every year WRAI members select a nationwide advocacy theme and carry out activities and full-scale campaigns throughout the country. Safe motherhood means ensuring that all women receive the care they need to be safe and healthy throughout pregnancy and childbirth. The goal of these annual campaigns, launched on National Safe Motherhood Day, is to increase awareness that a woman's death is more than a personal tragedy – it represents an enormous cost to her nation and her community.

Our idea behind every *Object in focus/Collection in focus* event is to have it online and for that we use Victoria Memorial Hall's official website as well as the Museums of India website. We are sharing these social contemporary issues and describing the relevancy through our collection. Through the event – and using our website – we are making an impact and spreading awareness to diverse audiences.

Joyee Roy (India, ITP 2011)

Head of Documentation & Photo Unit, Victoria Memorial Hall





With the evolution of digital technology, people have been able to connect with the world around them because it has allowed a dramatic increase in access to information, cultural education and interaction.

In museums, digital technology has improved the consumption of culture. Museums that use digital media are more attractive and engaging and are using social media to share engaging interpretation, to increase motivation and awaken interest and curiosity for learning.

Engaging digitally can be beneficial to all museums, because it increases all categories of visitors (for example supporting disabled people to have greater access to museums' collections), but there are some challenges:

- This requires a very big budget, because the museums must be well-equipped with different tools that can help to handle issues that can arise; for example, when the internet connection fails or when the electricity is off.
- Another issue is how museums deal with an increased expectation, and remain sustainable and relevant in what they are doing or showing, and this requires qualified and dedicated personnel. For small museums there is a need in building capacity to keep the value of the content they produce.

- Museums need people to add value to the objects digitised, so having staff that are comfortable with social media to contextualise collections can be difficult.
- There are also other challenges, for example at some museums there are people who cannot access the internet, and those unable to use these new systems.

Possible solutions:

- Even if we do want to promote digital engagement in our museums, I think that we should integrate both the physical approach and digital elements as a key to a successful operation. This can help to optimise the allocation of resources for the museum.
- For museums with a limited budget, partnering with other institutions would offer the best way of digitising catalogues and collections – and perhaps even employing dedicated personnel.
- Using social media is the easiest way of reaching a very big number of people and connecting with the world. There are some universities that can provide volunteers that can help in this process.

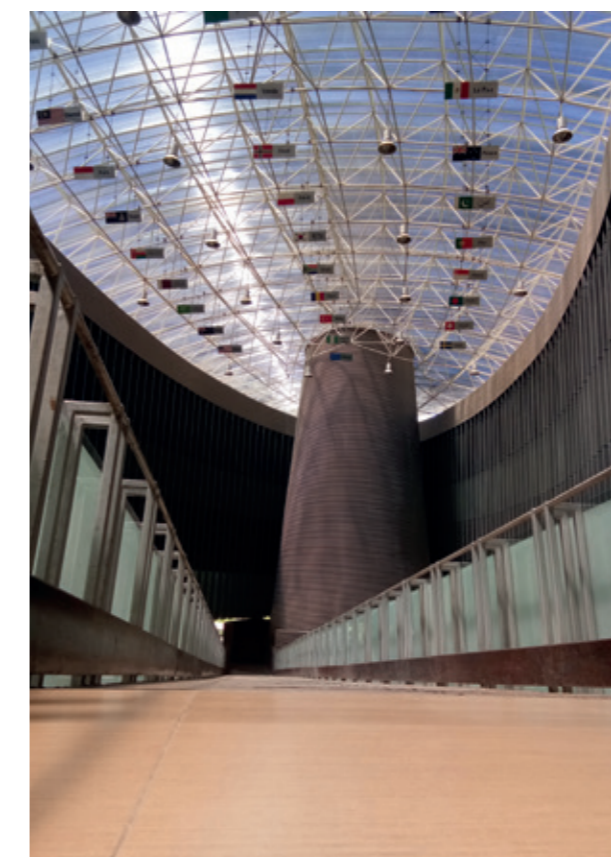
Chantal Umuhoza (Rwanda, ITP 2018)
Curator, Institute of National Museums of Rwanda

When I joined the ITP in 2017, I was still working in a general museum. Then in early 2018, I was promoted to be a leader for managing the Tsunami Museum. I remember when Claire Messenger, ITP Manager, asked me to express my dreams for my next career steps and I said that I wanted to be involved in managing the Tsunami Museum. The dream quickly became reality before I even realised it.

The Tsunami Museum was built in 2007 with the aim to be the world's collective memorial to the disaster in 2004 – which resulted in the deaths of 230,000 people, leaving 635,384 people homeless and 151,982 houses and schools damaged. Visitors to the museum increase each year, this year reaching 744,000 visitors, and in September 2018 the Tsunami Museum featured in the top five most popular museums in Indonesia.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to share experiences from the Tsunami Museum Disaster Digital Archive (DDA) project. The idea of the project has existed since 2015 but it did not develop at the time. The crucial thing that made me decide to reactivate the DDA project was because the Tsunami Museum is one of the potential places to share the knowledge and experiences of thousands of people, and to make sure every day that the world is aware of, and prepared for, potential disasters.

Although total visitor numbers are high, the number of young people visiting is low. The visitors experience needs to be managed and we need to create more relevant, interesting programmes. There are several digital displays, however the monitors and audio are not high quality. Overall it is a passive display while the 21st-century visitors want more. There is no history of the collection and the museum has not yet collected many stories about the 230,000 victims.



Tsunami Museum.

I knew I must immediately support new ideas and encourage creative thinking among my colleagues to revitalise the Tsunami Museum. We have already completed the concept for a new museum exhibition and designed educational spaces by combining manual and digital interaction techniques. But there are also other important tasks, as data and collections are at the core of the museum's work.

Therefore the DDA is giving special consideration to the younger generation; looking at how museums face visitors' needs for disaster information, knowledge and experience, and how the quality and quantity of data can be maintained. The data will facilitate the ideas that emerge in the form of museum education programmes and exhibitions, and it will encourage connected museums to collaborate in many different ways. Another thing about the DDA is that it will hold data about past disasters, indigenous local wisdom and current academic studies. Disaster events anywhere in the world will be stored on a free platform, accessible both at the museum and remotely.

So what do we want to do next? First will be to recollect and organise the original data and new contents in Aceh, especially the oral history of survivors who tell the story of their disaster experience. Second, based on stored contents, we can create an exhibition specifically for the younger generation. Third, we can look at programmes or actions; looking at what visitors have learnt at the museum and see if they can create their own evacuation plan to protect themselves, family and their friends. And lastly, we can connect to the world and see how the DDA system can be used by other disaster-related museums to share their data. This will enable us to share the local wisdom of each country, promote our temporary exhibitions and our daily events, and provide researchers with the information of other museums for further research in the disaster field.

Everyone involved in the DDA project met in March 2019. The first time I presented the DDA to the public was in December 2018 when I was a speaker at the 2nd World Tsunami Museum Conference in Japan. Since then I have discussed data for the DDA with researchers from Kyoto University, Unsyiah University, Tohoku University, Fujitsu (Japanese electronics company) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

In February 2019 I spoke at Tohoku University in Japan, and the DDA project was one of the issues that we discussed. The dream of making the DDA is not an easy thing to realise as we need to work to collect data, determine the right concepts and techniques, and think about maintenance and the budget. I am trying to ensure the Tsunami Museum is able to contribute, by spreading the message using digital technology and saving people from similar disasters.

Hafnidar (Indonesia, ITP 2017)
Manager, Tsunami Museum

Making sense of archaeology: digital engagement



Visual education has taken a leap in global perspectives and has become a priority for non-formal institutions of education and learning such as art galleries and museums. Education through museums is an audio-visual phenomenon that has three-dimensional objects as reference materials. In the era of the technological age that has digitally gathered all information sources at the touch of a button or on a visual screen, culturally significant artefacts do need a podium as well. Archaeology is a crucial link that connects us to the past civilisations of the world and archaeological remains have information that has to be deduced or interpreted. Artefacts do not have a fixed or single meaning; they have layers of information that can be studied and presented. Dynamic displays along with significant aspects of the object are researched and presented to audiences throughout the world. The insatiable desire of audiences to get information about an object on display or in a collection, whether socially, economically, politically or physically significant, can be dealt with in museums nowadays. A mere label cannot attract visitors to the same museum object again, but if the information is being presented in an intellectually and visually creative manner, the spirit of enquiry and quest for knowledge can be enhanced.

The visual impact of the growing trend to use touchscreens, audiovisual aids and other equipment has shown impressive results. As a researcher, I have observed in India that museums associated with archaeological collections, whether at national, state or local authority level, connect with a larger audience through web links or social media pages, but actually when one is on site, this narrows down to a touchscreen or television. In a few instances, like in the Custom Heritage Gallery in Custom House, Goa or the Fort Museum, St. George, Chennai, they have made good use of digital engagement by providing information beyond the touchscreens. In the UK, I observed this scenario

in digital displays at the Museum of London, which displays the archaeology of London, once known as Londinium, through audiovisual interpretative aids. From multitouch tables to computer interactive games, this museum engages its visitors through many creative means. These museums demonstrate instances of archaeological content being presented in a format that may make any visitor interact with the object information. It's a two-way benefit, as when information is imbibed in digital form and easily accessed, the connection with the object gets stronger each time one interacts using different senses.

During a discussion in Norwich at the Castle Museum during my ITP UK partner placement last summer, an issue was raised around technology really benefitting all sets of audiences. The dynamic and free-flow nature of information might not be relevant for people who wish to have a look at the object with a meaningful gaze, relish the experience and go back home with just the information available on the label text. They are the ones who keep the visit simple yet enjoyable, and do not want to complicate it with multiple device usages or cross linkages of information, which would confuse rather than educate. Thus, it is a challenge to decide upon a balance as to how much to digitise, what to digitise or for whom.

However, the first thing museums around the world need to do is create a digital archive that can be presented and used to spread their collections and programmes in a wider context. Technology has no doubt added volume to archaeological displays and has forged ahead in spreading knowledge that will cater to the generations to come.

Suruchika Chawla (India, ITP 2018)
Researcher, Siddhartha Das Studio

Museums in the modern, digital world

One of the goals for museums at present is to promote participation and commitment with both local communities and communities around the world, and having digital platforms helps promote connections within cultural institutions and people around the globe.

For 'digital platforms' we can understand many things: access to a website that is managed, adapted and designed by museum staff; virtual catalogues with partial or complete collections, depending on museums' policies; or social networks to communicate with different audiences. At a broader level, a digital platform ensures a connection with people outside the museum's physical boundaries, resulting in extensive networks.

Currently, the connection with the visitor is different than it was 20–30 years ago. One needs to leave the walls of the museum and reach communities, other museums, other regions, schools and universities – one cannot expect people, anymore, to engage with the traditional space of what a museum used to be. If these connections are achieved, one can have a variety of results with potential alliances and groups that want to participate in museum spaces; meaning dissemination within the museum will be fulfilled more and more. Digital platforms are only a small part of all this.

Museums around the world are adapting to new tendencies and because there is increased access, even the smallest museum can learn from other institutions and start adapting to societal changes. Even if one doesn't have access to the internet or technology, people are receiving information

and widening their ways of thinking, because of other connections and contacts, and this can be seen in new museum planning and projects.

By categorising collections, it will give the public an awareness of the object variety in communities across their country. The network will start to grow, and information will follow. Projects and assistance will be accessible, and competencies will develop around museum spaces.

We must take into account the vulnerability of collections and there are two important aspects to consider. The first is that digitising collections does not mean that the material is conserved in digital format and that no physical preventive conservation measures should be taken; on the contrary, this digital part feeds the process of documentation of the pieces and access to them. The second aspect, and as an example, we have the recent case of the devastating fire at Brazil National Museum, where the importance of documentation and protection with digitisation is palpably evident.

I believe that connectivity throughout digital and spatial relations – through regions – will allow us to answer the questions that arise in our different realities; these can be resolved if alliances are established between cultural institutions, planning together for the future.

Andrea Terrón
(Guatemala, ITP 2017 and Senior Fellow 2018)
Professor, Faculty of Social Sciences, Del Valle University



Bulletin board

Institute of National Museums of Rwanda

The Institute is changing the display at the Museum of Rwesero and what used to be the National Art Gallery will instead be talking about home-grown initiatives in Rwanda. This will aim to show how the country managed to reconstruct itself based on national heritage and historical consciousness. Home-grown initiatives were the enablers for stability and accountability, and drivers of socio-economic transformation in Rwanda.

I co-curated a temporary exhibition that opened on 1 February 2019 about the evolution of technology in Rwanda's precolonial period, and I am also working on a temporary exhibition about the evolution of fashion in Rwanda since 1900.

Working with the community, the Institute has a training centre in traditional art-crafts (such as beading, weaving, iron smelting and pottery) that teaches children who have prematurely left the schooling-system – with their work then being sold in the museum's shop. As well as supporting the local community this will also help the Institute to preserve traditional knowledge. The Institute also has a coaching programme for children during their holidays teaching different traditional skills and games.

Finally, this year we will celebrate International Museum Day on 18 May at the Rwanda Art Museum, and on 5 June we will celebrate World Environment Day at the Museum of Environment.

Chantal Umuhoza (Rwanda, ITP 2018)
Curator, Institute of National Museums of Rwanda



Students presenting what they learnt during holidays in museums programme.

Wendland Chloé Kiziili during his time on the ITP 2013.

Kitale Museum, National Museums of Kenya

Ecotourism is aimed at promoting responsible and sustainable tourism through linking tourism, conservation and communities.

Kitale Museum was put forward for the Eco Warrior Awards 2018, whose theme was 'Tourism Protecting Culture and Heritage'. The Eco Warrior Award presented an opportunity to showcase the role of tourism in creating awareness, offering the necessary tools and enhancing public opinion and support in the conservation and preservation of natural and cultural heritage in Kenya.

Kitale Museum, Lamu Museum and Karen Blixen Museum made it to the longlist under category 10 (Best Heritage Attractions).

The 2018 Eco Warrior Awards ceremony took place at Crowne Plaza Hotel in Nairobi on 26 September. Out of the above nominated museums for the best heritage attraction, Kitale Museum won the award (trophy) and Karen Blixen was the runner up (certificate).

Wendland Chole Kiziili (Kenya, ITP 2013)
Curator, Kitale Museum, National Museums of Kenya



Bulletin board

The Albukhary Foundation Gallery of the Islamic world, British Museum

Three years ago, the Albukhary Foundation came to an agreement with the British Museum to sponsor a new gallery of Islamic art at the British Museum (BM). When I joined the ITP in 2016, representing the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia (fully managed by the Albukhary Foundation), I was able to view the location of the new gallery and also came to know BM staff from various departments that we would work with on the project. Being at the BM myself, and having the opportunity to get to know so many staff, certainly made my work related to the setting-up of the new gallery much easier.

The Albukhary Foundation Gallery of the Islamic world opened to the public on 18 October 2018. The collaboration between the British Museum and the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia was not only an exchange of ideas, knowledge and expertise between both institutions but a historical cultural exchange between two countries – Malaysia and the United Kingdom.

We at the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia hope that visitors to the Albukhary Foundation Gallery of the Islamic world will gain a deeper understanding of Islam and enjoy this masterfully crafted collection of Islamic history and art in the heart of London.

As for the ITP alumni, please do visit the Albukhary Foundation Gallery of the Islamic world when you next visit London.

Rashidah Salim (Malaysia, ITP 2016)
Senior Executive Assistant to the Director, Syed Mohamad Albukhary, Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia



Solomy, Namrata and Rashidah, ITP Fellows 2018.

ITP in the press!

We were delighted to share information on the International Training Programme in an article published in the *Financial Times* last year.

2018 fellows met Andrew Jack, Global Education Editor for the *Financial Times*, during sessions at the British Museum on learning on 18 July, and again at the Supporters' Reception on 9 August. A number of the 2018 cohort were quoted directly in the article: Yohana Frias (National Museum of the Philippines), Solomy Nansubuga (Kabale Museum, Uganda), Chantal Umuhoza (National Museums of Rwanda) and Sarah Elsheekh (Sudan National Museum).

Many thanks to Andrew for writing this piece, which will surely contribute towards increased visibility for the ITP, its fellows and their institutions.

Claire Messenger
Manager, International Training Programme, British Museum



When Mickey met Da Ke Ding, a 3,000-year-old bronze food vessel

A Mickey Mouse dressed in patterns from an important ancient Chinese bronze was unveiled in the Shanghai Museum to celebrate the 90th anniversary of Disney. This limited edition Mickey Mouse standing in the museum lobby attracts many visitors. Products designed fusing Mickey Mouse and bronze patterns are available only in the museum's on-site and online shops. This is an interesting cross-boundary collaboration between ancient culture and modern entertainment.



In other news from Shanghai Museum, *In a Myriad of Forms: Ancient Chinese Lacquer Wares* opened to public from 16 November 2018 to 25 February 2019, displaying 281 lacquerware objects spanning a time period from the late Warring States period (475–221 BC) to the early 20th century. Objects from the Zhejiang Provincial Museum, Changzhou Museum, Fuzhou Museum and Datong Museum also joined this exhibition. In China, the oldest surviving objects painted with lacquer were produced over 7,000 years ago. The Warring States period (475–221 BC) saw the first peak of lacquerware production and since the Song dynasty (960–1127), lacquerware production continued to flourish with exquisite craftsmanship and a kaleidoscope of patterns. This is the second exhibition of lacquerware hosted by the Shanghai Museum; the first was held 40 years ago.



On 7 December 2018, *The Ferryman of Ink World: Dong Qichang's Calligraphy and Painting Art* opened and was on display until 10 March 2019. The exhibition contained more than 150 paintings and calligraphy works from 15 museums ranging in date from more than 1,000 years ago to the Qing dynasty (1644–1911). Dong Qichang (1555–1636), a Shanghai native, was a very influential figure in China's art history in the late Ming dynasty.

And on 30 January 2019, the Shanghai Museum unveiled a pig-shaped bronze vessel (wine container) – over 2,000-years-old – to celebrate Chinese New Year and the coming year of the pig. The vessel was brought back to life by the museum's bronze conservators from fragments rescued from a smeltery in the 1960s. Pig-shaped bronze vessels are very rare. This vessel is innovatively formed by two adorable pigs combined at their back and decorated by exquisite cloud patterns. The pig, the last animal in the Chinese zodiac (called sheng xiao in Chinese), was domesticated by Chinese ancestors more than 10,000 years ago.

Mickey was invited to unveil his 'bronze' brother in the Shanghai Museum. Photo by Zhang Xudong.

Bronze pig you displayed in lobby.

2018 at National Museum Kaduna

In the year 2018, we embarked on a journey to improve National Museum Kaduna (NMK) and the National Commission for Museums and Monuments, Nigeria. NMK made several systematic changes in its management, working hard to improve revenue generation, transparency and utilisation despite funding constraints and the single treasury system. This would not have been possible without robust support. I must commend all our staff for daily advice, constructive criticism and the undoubted desire to move the Kaduna Museum forward.

Our mission, vision and desire is simple – serving humanity through culture and promoting unity in diversity. The museum is working with a consistent mindset to make this goal achievable within its constitutional and financial restrictions. NMK must make every effort in all its work to ensure the support of its staff and their families to continue to promote NMK in good faith, and ensure that we are truly representative in our words, actions and perception.

NMK, is optimistic that 2019 will be an even better year for all in terms of welfare and working environment. We shall support every concept, idea and progressive gesture with vigour and the fairest of intentions. As always, the curator's office is forever open to all staff for every good reason.

Additionally we have organised successful International Museum and Monument Day celebrations; commissioned and built a workable children's play park; remodelled and refurbished all our outdoor sculptures and paintings that were destroyed during the 2002 Kaduna crisis to beautify the museum premises; renovated the Habe Monument building; refurbished our generating plant; replaced our burnt Reklame cable; and purchased dozens of tables and chairs, a canopy set and a new public address system and amplifier.

We have organised successful training workshops for teachers, NMK staff and staff of other organisations, such as Ahmadu Bello University and Arewa House and have mounted an exhibition for Prison College, Kaduna.

And we have reorganised our antiquities stores including burglary proofing the doors and windows of the store rooms.

All these we were able to achieve through collaborations and our collective efforts.

Ishaq Mohammed Bello (Nigeria, ITP 2012)
Assistant Chief Technical Officer (Education), National Commission for Museums and Monuments, Kaduna



Children playing during a visit to the National Museum Kaduna playground.

National Museum Kaduna newly opened playground.

Global network news

Astghik Marabyan (Armenia, ITP 2017) has started a new job at the Ministry of Culture as the Head of Cultural Heritage and Folk Arts. She is now responsible for the whole museum sector, as well as monuments, libraries and intangible heritage. She tells us, 'this has been a very important step in my career, both professionally and personally, and I am indeed very much excited about this opportunity to bring my input into the development of culture in my country'.

Dikko Idris (Nigeria, ITP 2011) has been appointed as Curator at the National Museum Gidan Makama in Kano.

Mahesh Kalra (India, ITP 2013) has been appointed as the Curator for the Reserve Bank of India Museum.

Nevine Nizar Zakaria (Egypt, ITP 2012) has an exciting new post. After joining the Minister of Antiquities' office in July 2019 as a supervisor of the Museum Exhibition Department she has since been promoted to be his assistant in the field of museum exhibitions.

Shezza Rashwan, who many of you will remember as a much valued and missed member of the ITP team, is now back in London working at the British Library as International Engagement Manager.

Elaine Addington, Open Museum Curator, Glasgow Museums Resource Centre, was invited back to Yerevan in November 2018, having previously been there with the ITP in 2016 for the *Learning, engagement and museums* workshop. The invitation came via ICOM and The Association Of Museum Workers and Friends, and was to celebrate ICOM Armenia's 10th anniversary and AMWF's 15th anniversary. The event combined a conference and educational workshop which took place over four days and Elaine focused on themes that the Open Museum are currently working on, such as homelessness, hidden histories, health and working with older people. While in Yerevan Elaine reconnected with **Hayk and Marine Mkrtchyan** and **Davit Poghosyan** (Armenia, ITP 2014 & 2015).

Claire Messenger, International Training Programme Manager, took part in the Clore Leadership Short Course organised by the Clore Leadership Programme from 26 November to 7 December 2018. The course aimed to develop and strengthen leadership across the cultural and creative sectors.

Wesam Mohamed (Egypt, ITP 2015) has taken up an offer of a PhD fellow position at Aarhus University, Denmark. As well as studying she'll be employed as a member of their academic staff with teaching duties for MA students. In September 2018, she also travelled to Crete to participate in the annual conference of the ICOM International Committee for Documentation (CIDOC). It was Wesam's second time to be supported by CIDOC following on from her participation in Tbilisi in 2017. The conference theme discussed new insights into the provenance of knowledge and aimed to support museums by helping deepen communal knowledge and understanding of documentation as a means of knowledge preservation, dissemination and exchange.

Chantal Umuhoza (Rwanda, ITP 2018) has recently participated in two projects from the Centre for Biodiversity and Natural Resource Management: *Digitising specimens (collections) of the National herbarium of Rwanda* and *Developing guidelines for access and benefit sharing related to traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources for Rwanda*.

Antony Lee, who fellows will know as Collections Development Officer at the County Heritage Service in Lincolnshire, left the service at the end of September 2018. He has moved to Edinburgh and is planning to study for his PhD in Roman archaeology at Durham University.

Dana Korzuschek, who worked with the ITP on the Dresden Fellowships, has left the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden in Germany.

Rana Ramadan (Egypt, ITP 2018) has been accepted on to the Training Programme for Egyptian Museum and Heritage Professionals which is organised by the Reinwardt Academy, Amsterdam, and the University of the Arts in Sohag City, Upper Egypt.

Namrata Sarmah (India, ITP 2018) has joined the Assam State Museum, Guwahati as a Project Curator. She will be working in a museum with multifaceted collections and dealing with new museological practices like community engagement. And it's a very small world because her new Director, Y.S.Wunglenton, is an ITP 2014 fellow!

Manisha Nene (India, ITP 2011) was recently promoted to the post of Director (Galleries and General Administration) at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS), Mumbai.

Vaidehi Savnal (India, ITP 2016) was recently promoted to the post of Assistant Curator (International Relations) at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS), Mumbai. She also presented a Tedx Talk based on *India and the World: A History in Nine Stories*, an exhibition that was held at the CSMVS last year in collaboration with the British Museum and the National Museum, New Delhi.

Rika Nortjé (South Africa, ITP Fellow 2007) welcomed a new addition to her family – a baby boy, Luca, born September 2018.

Yohana Frias (Philippines, ITP 2018) went to Japan in March 2019 for the opening of a National Museum of the Philippines travelling exhibition on pineapple and silk textiles.

Suruchika Chawla (India, ITP 2018) has joined Siddhartha Das Studio, New Delhi as a Researcher. Her work will focus on researching and compiling data for the labels and media content (for a variety of audiences) to be displayed at the Interpretation Centre and museum complex project in the vicinity of the temple complex (Puri), Bhubhneswar, Orissa, India. Her tasks will also include research on the collection of the JD Centre of Art in Orissa.

The ITP team are based in the Department of Egypt and Sudan at the British Museum and in 2018 we were delighted to be joined by **Ikhlas Abdllatief** (Sudan, ITP 2006) and **Ayman El-Tayeb El-Tayeb Sid Ahmed** (Sudan, ITP 2009) who both worked with colleagues on the *Circulating Artefacts* project. The project aims to create an online semantic database of Egyptian and Nubian antiquities in circulation on the international art market and in private collections which will be an important academic resource and a powerful tool in the global fight against the looting and trafficking of antiquities. The project is supported by a grant from the Cultural Protection Fund, which was launched in 2016 by the British Council in partnership with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

Zeina Klink-Hoppe (Phyllis Bishop Curator for the Modern Middle East, BM) met-up with **Nurcan Yalman** (Turkey, ITP2017) in Istanbul in November 2018.

In December 2018, **Sayan Bhattacharya** (India, ITP 2009) met with **Sun Miao** (China, ITP 2007) at the Indian Museum, Kolkata while Sun was visiting India with his colleagues.

In November 2018, **Daniela De Simone** (Project Curator, Beyond Boundaries: Religion, Region, Language and the State, ERC Synergy Project, Department of Asia) travelled to India to work with **Gandhimathi Janakiraman Mohana** (India, ITP 2017) on their research project on the pre-colonial history of forests in India. She visited the Chennai Museum where Gandhimathi is Curator and looked at their Nilgiri collection. They then went to the Nilgiri hills for 10 days to carry out fieldwork in the forests.

Greek ITP Meet-up! **Constantinos Vasiliadis** (ITP 2014) and **Amalia Kakissis** (ITP 2018) met up in Athens to share stories and experiences of the ITP, how they have worked to integrate those experiences in each of their institutions and to make plans to bring all the Greek ITPers together to meet and exchange ideas. Constantinos also returned to the British Museum in August 2018 to complete work on a project with conservator **Duygu Camurcuoglu** (Conservator: ceramics and glass).

An international symposium on ancient Chinese lacquer ware was held from 15–16 June 2018 at the Shanghai Museum. **Jessica Harrison-Hall** (Curator: Chinese Ceramics, Percival David, Vietnam) was invited to give a speech on the collection of Chinese lacquerware in the British Museum and met with **Xu Liyi** (China, ITP 2018).

Xu Liyi also met with **Luk Yuping** (Basil Gray Curator of Chinese Paintings, Prints and Central Asian Collection), from the British Museum, when she was invited to deliver a speech on two Dong Qichang paintings in the British Museum and the dissemination of his ideas and pictorial motifs at the *International Symposium of Dong Qichang's Painting and Calligraphy Art* attended by over 50 international scholars from 21–23 January 2019.

Hayk Mkrtchyan (Armenia, ITP 2014 and Senior Fellow 2017), **Astghik Marabyan** (Armenia, ITP 2017) and **Irem Yildiz** (Turkey, ITP 2017) met in August 2018 while Irem was in Yerevan to attend a summer school on philosophy and linguistics.

The ITP team met up with **Şeyda Çetin** (Turkey, ITP 2014) at the opening of her exhibition *The Curious Case of Çatalhöyük* at SOAS's Brunei Gallery in October 2018. We met up again in November when Seyda returned to run a Virtual Reality interactive.

Davit Poghosyan (Armenia, ITP 2015) met **Elgazai Yousif Ishag** (Sudan, ITP 2013) at the JICA Museums and *Community Knowledge Co-Creation Programme* in Osaka in October 2018.

Waed Awesat and **Shubha Banerji** (Palestine and India, ITP 2014) met in Paris in September 2018. Shubha tells us, 'I always had a dream of visiting Paris and particularly exploring the Louvre. Once, while chatting with Waed about my Paris dream, she enthusiastically invited me to come along and stay with her. I was overwhelmed and happily accepted the offer. This was one of the best vacations I ever had and I am so thankful to Waed for her warm hospitality.'

Manuela Lehmann (Project Curator: Amara West Artefacts and Documentation) met with **Zohreh Baseri** (Iran, ITP 2007) at Golestan Palace in Tehran, whilst on holiday. Manuela also met with **Houiam Khalid Madani** (Sudan, ITP 2018) in September 2018 at the *International Nubian Conference* in Paris and in January 2019 whilst working on the Amara West site.

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