

President’s Report

Period: UMAC Japan 2019 to 26 June 2020

To be presented at the 20th UMAC Annual General Meeting, 27 July 2020 (online)



UMAC Webinars: Post-Lockdown Series, June 2020.

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This has been an 'abnormal' year *also* for UMAC as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. First, not one year has passed since our last annual general meeting (only nine months). Second, 2020 will be UMAC's first year ever without its annual conference. Third, this year's annual general meeting – the 20th – has to be held online.

As a result, this report detailing UMAC's activities between September 2019 and June 2020 is shorter than normal. The report is guided by the goals established in UMAC's 2019-22 Strategic Plan: Goal 1 – Increase UMAC's and ICOM's Global Visibility; Goal 2 – Examine Unexplored Dimensions of ICOM's Code of Ethics in University Museums and Collections; and Goal 3 – Increase University Museums and Collections' Recognition in the Higher Education Sector, preceded by a section on Governance.

All numbers provided refer to 26 June 2020.

GOVERNANCE

New Board

A new UMAC Board was elected during the 19th Annual General Meeting in Kyoto, Japan:

- Chair: Marta C. Lourenço (Portugal)
- Vice-Chairs: Andrew Simpson (Australia), Steph Scholten (UK)
- Secretary: Wenjia Qiu (China)
- Treasurer: Nathalie Nyst (Belgium)
- Ordinary Members: Fatemeh Ahmadi (Iran), Margarita Guzmán (Colombia), Nicole M. Crawford (USA), Sébastien Soubiran, ex officio (France).

Board Meetings

The UMAC Board held six meetings during this period (5 September 2019, 24 October 2019, 10 January 2020, 8 April 2020, 11 June 2020, 22 June 2020). Minutes are available to members upon request.

Finances

There was no significant movement in the bank account. UMAC has received its annual ICOM subsidy and a grant for the project ER – Ethics of Restitution and Repatriation, chaired by Steph Scholten. Apart from bank fees, there were no expenses.

Strategic Plan

The UMAC Board approved its Strategic Plan for the period 2019-2022 in January 10, 2020 (access [here](#)).

Increase UMAC's and ICOM's Global Visibility

UMAC Members

At the time of writing, UMAC members are well below our expectations – 21 institutional members (compared with 95 in 2019) and 208 individual members (compared with 543 in 2019) in 35 countries and territories (compared with 67 in 2019). This means ICOM members who have selected UMAC as their committee of first choice and paid their membership fees. The low numbers are due to a number of circumstances. First, the fact that we are counting members in the second trimester – when many members have still not paid or the payments are still being processed by national committees – instead of the third or fourth trimester. Secondly, the closure of many museums across the world against a scenario of economic difficulties is also likely to have played a role.

UMAC is hopeful that these numbers will increase during 2020. The December 2020 UMAC Annual Report to ICOM will include the definite annual membership numbers. The geographical distribution of members can be accessed [here](#).

Annual Conferences

UMAC 2019

The 19th UMAC Annual Conference was integrated in the 25th ICOM General Conference, Kyoto, Japan. The theme was 'University Museums and Collections as Cultural Hubs: The Future of Tradition'. Given that it was the first UMAC conference in Japan, we used the opportunity to develop a rich and intense program in coordination with Japanese university museums' colleagues. The Annual Conference had three parts: i) a pre-conference set of workshops held at the Kyoto National Museum (September 1); ii) the UMAC annual conference proper (September, 2-5); and iii) a post-conference seminar at the Keio University Art Center in Tokyo (September, 9-10). This makes the 2019 Annual Conference the longest in the history of UMAC .



Group photo UMAC 2019, Kyoto University of Foreign Studies

In terms of participant numbers, the conference was a success. According to numbers provided by ICOM Kyoto 2019, the number of UMAC registrations ranked 2nd among the ICs: 100 participants ICOM and 37 + 9 students + 29 single-day tickets from 32 countries (Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Chile, Colombia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Iran, Japan, Lithuania, México, New Zealand, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Taiwan, UK, USA, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka).

The conference featured two keynote speakers: Cláudia Rodrigues-Carvalho, from Brazil ("The Aftermath: Rescue activities after the fire at Museu Nacional, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil", September 3) and Seishi Namiki, from Japan ("University Museums Association of Kyoto (UMAK) and Beyond: New possibilities for university Museums", September 5).

UMAC supported the award of one ICOM YOUNG MEMBER travel grant to attend UMAC 2019 in Kyoto: Silvana Arago (Mexico). ICOM also supported the travel and accommodation of the Chair in Kyoto.

From its own travel grant programme, UMAC supported 4 members (600 EUR travel grants) for UMAC 2019: Azam Safipoor (Iran), Nicole Crawford (USA), Svetlana Frolova (Russia), Hakim Abdul Rahim (Australia). UMAC has also subsidized the registration fee of Karin Weil, Chair of the UMAC Elections Committee. It should be stressed that UMAC uses its own travel grant program as an expansion tool, in other words, it targets not only under-developed countries but also strategic geopolitical regions where UMAC is under-represented.

UMAC 2019 had the support of University Museums Association of Kyoto (UMAK), the Kyoto University of Foreign Studies, the Kyoto University Museum and the Kyoto Institute of Technology, we are very grateful for the arrangements made for the offsite sessions and tours.

The Co-Chairs of the Local Organizing Committee were Hiroshi Minami of Kyoto University of Foreign Studies, and Akiko Fukuno of International Christian University in Tokyo. Programme Committee members were: Hugues Dreyssé, Andrew Simpson, Hiroshi Kitazato, Hiroshi Minami, Lyndel King, Shikoh Shiraiwa, Marta Lourenço, Akiko Fukuno, Steph Scholten, Barbara Rothermel, and Nathalie Nyst.

All materials and photos – including from the Workshops, UMAC AGM, off-site meeting and post-conference seminar – are available [here](#).

UMAC 2020

UMAC 2020 would have taken place at the Chau Chak Wing Museum, University of Sydney, 5-17 September 2020. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, however, David Ellis, the Chair of the UMAC 2020 LOC proposed to the UMAC Board (1 April 2020) its cancellation in 2020 and postponement to a future date, which was accepted (Board meeting 8 April 2020) and [announced](#) to members. The decision should be made at the 20th UMAC AGM.

UMAC 2021

UMAC 2021 will take place at the Technische Universität Dresden, in Germany, in a joint conference with Universeum.

Dates: 31 August to 5 September 2021.

UMAC 2022

UMAC 2022 will be integrated in the 26th ICOM Triennial General Conference, Prague.

UMAC Webinars

An immediate consequence of the pandemic was to force us to find mechanisms to be in touch with the UMAC community, particularly at a time of great uncertainty and with most 2020 activities cancelled.

UMAC created the UMAC Webinars, a mid- to long-term umbrella term that will designate all online activities, including training. In June 2020, we have initiated the first series – the *Post-Lockdown Series* – with five webinars every Friday, on Zoom (twice a day for facility of access from different time zones), with live broadcast on the new [UMAC youtube channel](#).

UMAC POST LOCK DOWN SERIES

Every Friday
From 5 June to 3 July 2020
umac.icom.museum

ICOM international council of museums UMAC

- Webinar 1: Reopening to the public, 5 June, chaired by Andrew Simpson and Marta Lourenço (70 participants)
- Webinar 2: Reopening access to collections, 12 June, chaired by Akiko Fukuno and Sébastien Soubiran (66 participants)
- Webinar 3: Lockdown lessons: Going digital, 19 June, chaired by Roland Wittje and Jill Deupi (66 participants)
- Webinar 3: Lockdown lessons: online teaching and students, 26 June, chaired by Alistair Kwan and Kirsten Vincenz (49 participants).

The final webinar 5 – Lockdown lessons: The near future – will occur July 3, chaired by Steph Scholten and David Ellis.

All videos, PDFs, zoom chats and other resources are accessible on UMAC Website, under [Resources](#).

Support and Advocacy

Museu de História Natural e Jardim Botânico, Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil

UMAC was profoundly shocked by another fire in a Brazilian university museum, this time the Natural History and Botanic Garden of the Federal University of Minas Gerais, in Belo Horizonte. The fire occurred 15 June 2020

and seems to have impacted a collection storage. While we wait to see what further assistance the international community can provide, some initiatives have already been taken by UMAC:

- Message of full solidarity and support to the Director Mariana Lacerda, and to the Coordinator of the UFMG Museum Network, Leticia Julião, in the hours after the fire.
- Message of full solidarity and support to the President of ICOM-Brazil, Renata Motta.
- Compilation of solidarity messages from colleagues from all over the world (UMAC-ML)

UMAC is closely following the developments in coordination with ICOM-Brazil.

UMAC Projects

P-MUS

The project P-MUS (*Professionalising museum work in higher education: A global approach*), funded by ICOM Special Projects has concluded in 2019 its research. In 2020, a publication is being prepared compiling the results of the research and case-studies from across the world, for which a [call for papers](#) was organised early 2020.

Ethics of Repatriation and Restitution

See *Examine Unexplored Ethics*.

Working Groups

SPECIAL GROUP: UMAC FUTURES

Chair: Hakim Abdul Rahim (Australia)

UMAC Futures was formalised and launched at the ICOM Kyoto 2019, where members met face to face for the first time to discuss this exciting new initiative. Since then we have progressed in certain areas and faced certain setbacks due to the circumstances of the pandemic.

Since Kyoto we have formalised the participation criteria for participation and created the position of co-chairs, Michelle Kuek (Singapore) who will be overseeing programs and workshops, and Zhao Ke (China) who will be undertaking issues and topics surrounding IT and the digital space. UMAC Futures will also aim to create more roles for members to take on responsibilities to achieve UMACs strategic direction mainly in expanding the digital networks in different parts of the world. UMAC Futures has set up Microsoft Teams as forum for discussion and a platform to share information and resources. Zhao Ke has also disseminated a version of the UMAC app for testing and feedback. UMAC Futures members have also continued their conversations on Zoom to discuss the issues and consequences of the Covid pandemic on their universities in their part of the world.

UMAC Futures was to deliver a workshop aimed at early career professionals and students entitled "Methods of the *prep-room*: A Workshop for Emerging Museum Professionals". The workshop is on hold due to the cancellation of the UMAC Sydney 2020 conference.

UMAC Futures will continue to work on its strategic direction for the rest of 2019 with a focus on connecting with more emerging professionals around the world, and collecting experiences, ideas and issues.

National Networks

1 Meeting of South African University Museums and Collections



Last June 23, with the support of Sian Tiley-Nel from the University of Pretoria Museums (who hosted), UMAC promoted the First Meeting of South African University Museums and Collections online. The aim is to continue the dialogue about university museums and collections and consolidate a network in South Africa, for the benefit of South African – and African – higher education heritage. The meeting was supported by ICOM South Africa.

Thirty-four participants attended the meeting from the following institutions: University of Pretoria (University of Pretoria Museums, Javett-UP Arts Centre, the Mapungubwe Archive, Library Special Collections, University of Pretoria Archives, Department of Historical & Heritage Studies); North West University (Art Gallery; Records, Archives & Museums); University of the Witwatersrand (Origins Centre); University of Stellenbosch (Museums; Library); University of South Africa; SA Museums Association Archives; University of Cape Town (Irma Stern Gallery, Department of Human Biology Collections, UCT Libraries, Nagin Parbhoo History of Anesthesia Museum); University of KwaZulu-Natal (Geology Education Museum); Rhodes University (Albany Museum); Msunduzi Museums, Pietermaritzburg; Tatham Art Gallery; Durban Art Gallery; the Brenthurst Library, Johannesburg; ICOM-South Africa; and the Amazwi Museum of South African Literature.

Social Media Presence

Facebook (created 2012)	Twitter (created 2016)	Instagram (created 2016)	WeChat (created 2017)	You Tube NEW (created 2020)
Total 79 posts Likes: 1,913 Post reach: 85,413 Editor: Andrew Simpson	Total 227 tweets Followers: 1,525 (new followers 474) Twitter impressions: 208,589 Editor: Andrew Simpson	Total 65 posts Followers: 1,585 (new followers 378) Likes: 4,654 Editor: Marta C. Lourenço	Total: 16 posts Followers: 261 (new followers 51) Editors: Wenjia Qiu and Wenjun Zhang	Total: 8 videos Followers: 90 Editor: Marta C. Lourenço

Data from August 2019 to June 2020.

UMAC World Database of University Museums and Collections

There are presently 3,866 entries in the [UMAC World Database of University Museums and Collections](#) (100 more than last year).

UMAC-ML Mailing-list

The mailing list UMAC-ML includes all institutional and individual members, both active and inactive. It also includes non-members interested in university museums, collections and heritage. Subscription is free and messages are moderated. The total of subscribers is presently 3,487 (613 more subscribers than last year). UMAC-ML is regularly used to circulate news, communicate with members and consulting.

Examine Unexplored Ethics

Projects

Ethics of Repatriation and Restitution

Late 2019, UMAC has submitted a new project to ICOM Special Projects – designated Ethics of Repatriation and Restitution. The application was successful, and research will be developed in 2020 and possibly 2021. The project involves UMAC, ETHCOM, ICME and ICOM Australia, and it aims at raising levels of awareness, expertise and sensitivity in universities and their museums and collections and to contribute to the body of knowledge around the issues of restitution and repatriation in the wider museum community, by drafting guidelines that can complement the Code of Ethics. The project chair is Steph Scholten, UMAC’s Vice Chair.

Increase Recognition in Higher Education

UMACJ – University Museums and Collections Journal

ISSN: 2071-7229

Two issues of volume 11 of the journal *UMACJ* have been published. The first – Volume 11, No. 1 – was the abstracts volume for the Kyoto meeting that was produced and made available to 2019 conference delegates, and the broader UMAC community, before the Kyoto meeting. Volume 11, no. 2 consisted of papers offered from the proceedings of the Miami joint conference held with AAMG in 2018. As with all volumes that have been based on conference papers, only a small fraction of the conference content is captured in the proceedings. For volume 11, no. 2 this consisted of four brief papers on the topic of - why academic museums

matter? These formed the basis of one of the keynote sessions of the conference. In addition, another five papers based on conference presentations make up the rest of the volume. Both volumes can be accessed [here](#).

The year 2020 was always intended to be the year that the *University Museums and Collections Journal* transitions from being a series of conference proceedings to being an open call professional association journal publishing two issues per year, one of which may represent a conference abstract volume, as was done for volume 11 issue 1. To this end the Editorial Board has revised the submission criteria to reflect the fact that the journal now receives submissions at any time with an aim of undertaking a review and providing advice back to authors as quickly as possible. At the same time the Editorial Board has also been refreshed. We thank Peter Stanbury, Panu Nykanen and Jill Hartz for their contributions to the journal and support for our authors over recent years.

Covid 19 and the cancellation of the Sydney 2020 conference obviously precluded the publication of a volume of abstracts this year. However, much of the preparatory work in preparation of the conference program was already undertaken prior to the cancellation. Therefore we were able to invite all those who would have had a conference contribution accepted, the option of submitting a short communication based on their presentation. With these and other solicited and unsolicited contributions, we aim to produce two issues in 2020. The first set of papers are currently under review. Between now and the end of 2020 we will be approaching a number of journal indexing organisations as a strategy for gaining better professional and academic recognition for the journal.

2020 has also seen the publication of volume 10 of the *University Museums and Collections Journal* in [Chinese](#) through UMAC's partnership with Shanghai University Museum. The Editorial Board of the journal are most grateful for this work which introduces UMAC authors to an extensive Chinese museum practitioner and academic community. In particular the work of Guo Ji from Shanghai University Museum is greatly appreciated in the journal translation. We recommend extending this partnership to enable the production of further issues of the journal in Chinese.

UMAC Award

Every year since 2016, UMAC recognises outstanding projects in terms of excellence, impact and transferability in university museums and collections around the world through the UMAC Award. Typically, nominations occurred between September and December every year.

The winner of the UMAC AWARD 2019 was announced at the 19th Annual General Meeting in Kyoto: the exhibition '**Mind the Gap**', from the Medical Museion of the University of Copenhagen, Denmark. Second place in the UMAC Award 2019 was shared ex-aequo by the project 'Figures of Sleep and the Night of Ideas' by the Art Museum of the University of Toronto (Canada) and the Short-term Museology Internship Program of Shanghai University and Nagasaki International University (joint China-Japan project). See more information about the winners [here](#).

In 2020, eleven nominations were made for the UMAC Award, from the following countries and territories: Australia, China, Estonia, Italy, USA, UK, Spain and Taiwan. Contrary to other years, where the winners are announced during the AGM, in 2020 the UMAC Award will be announced in a separate event, in September.

The UMAC AWARD Evaluation Committee includes: Andrew Simpson, Vice-Chair UMAC, Australia; Steph Scholten, Vice-Chair UMAC, UK; Laishun An, Vice-President of ICOM, China; Isabel Garcia Fernandez, University Complutense of Madrid, Spain; Terry Simioti Nyambe, ICOM Executive Council Member, Zambia and Akiko Fukuno, Japan (Chair, in a non-voting capacity).

Acknowledgements

During this past year UMAC is grateful to:

- the 2016-2019 UMAC Board
- the 2019 Elections' Committee: Karin Weil and David Ellis.
- the Kyoto UMAC 2019 LOC and Programme Committee: Akiko Fukuno (Co-Chair), Hiroshi Minani (Co-Chair), Hiroshi Kitazato, Shikoh Shiraiwa Yu Homma, Ayumi Terada, Andrew Simpson, Barbara Rothermel, Hugues Dreyssé, Marcus Granato, Nathalie Nyst, Steph Scholten.
- all UMAC 2019 authors, session moderators, workshop facilitators, participants, and sponsors.
- the Chau Chak Museum and the University of Sydney
- the Sydney UMAC 2020 LOC and Programme Committee, chaired by David Ellis
- the candidates to the UMAC Award 2020
- the UMAC Award Evaluation Committee, coordinated by Akiko Fukuno
- the UMAC Futures Special Committee, chaired by Hakim Abdul Rahim
- the authors, editors and referees of *UMACJ*
- our partners ICTOP, AAMG, Universeum, ETHCOM, ICME, ICOM South Africa and ICOM Australia
- the University of Strasbourg
- the University of Lisbon
- the University of Pretoria Museums and Sian Tiley-Nel
- the Shanghai University Museum
- the chairs of UMAC Webinars
- ICOM-SAREC
- the enlarged UMAC community of members and non-members who replied to UMAC-ML posts, made comments on social media and made general suggestions by email.

This report was made with the contributions of the UMAC Board and Hakim Abdul Rahim.

Marta C. Lourenço
Lisboa, 27 June 2020

ABOUT UMAC

UMAC is the international committee for university museums and collections of the **International Council of Museums**. Created in 2001, it is the largest international forum of higher education museums and collections, stimulating exchanges among professionals and supporting the development of university museums and collections as essential resources for research, education and culture.

Website: <http://umac.icom.museum/>