Asia-Europe Museum Network (ASEMUS)
7th ASEMUS General Conference

ENGAGED MUSEUMS: TECHNOLOGY, ACCESS AND NEW AUDIENCES
15-17 March 2017
National Museum - New Delhi, India

REPORT

Contents

The 7th General Conference of the Asia-Europe Museum Network (ASEMUS) was hosted by the National Museum in New Delhi, between 15 and 17 March 2017. Entitled *Engaged Museums: Technology, Access and New Audiences*, the conference involved one day of training sessions, one comprising several presentations, discussions and debates, and a final day of cultural visits. It gathered over 20 speakers and approximately 70 participants from across Asia and Europe, including museum directors, curators, educators, artists and scholars and representatives of UNESCO and ICOM (The International Council of Museums).

Among the topics discussed in the course of the conference were accessibility in museums, emerging experiences in community and audience engagement, the role of regional museums in fostering local development, and the uses of technology in museums. Short summaries of the sessions and a final set of conclusions and ideas for future work are presented hereafter.

Dr. B.R. MANI, Director General of National Museum-New Delhi, inaugurated the 7th General Conference which was held in India for the first time. National Museum New Delhi has been a member of ASEMUS since 2014.

Wednesday 15 March: Training Sessions and Welcome Dinner

The first day of the 7th ASEMUS General Conference involved two training workshops designed primarily for young museum professionals. About 30 participants took part and actively engaged in training sessions focused on curatorship and social media for museum professionals.

Training Workshop 1: Developing Curatorial Concepts

This session aimed to provide a contemporary reflection on curatorship in museums and heritage contexts. It was facilitated by **Professor (Dr.) Amareswar GALLA**, the Executive Director of the International Institute for the Inclusive Museum, as well as Curator of the Amaravathi Ancient Town and Bapu Museum, in Andhra Pradesh, and an international heritage advisor to the Government of Andhra Pradesh, India. In the round of presentations, Professor (Dr.) GALLA was described by **Anupama SEKHAR**, Director of the Culture Department of the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) as one of the "founding fathers" of ASEMUS.

The workshop included a reflection on the meaning of 'curating'. On the basis of his own experiences in a wide range of countries, Professor (Dr.) GALLA argued that curating involved contextualising the museum as relevant and responsive to local communities, as well as a reflective institution. Curating should also be understood as a long-term process in which everyone can learn, in which knowledge is generated and shared, and where communities build their own sense of place.

In the second part of the workshop, participants were invited to work in groups, in order to develop a curatorial strategy for developing an exhibition on the Amaravathi sculptures, which are currently held in a wide range of international museums. Results of the working groups were later presented, raising a discussion on several issues including community involvement, museum inclusiveness and the ethics of collecting and curating.

For the first time, training workshops for young museum professionals were offered as part of the ASEMUS General Conference programme.

Training Workshop 2: Social Media for Young Professionals – 10 Key Ideas

The second training workshop was delivered by **Jordi Baltà PORTOLÉS**, a consultant, researcher and trainer in culture and international affairs, who works as the website and social media editor of ASEMUS. The session was meant to discuss the relevance of social media to museum professionals, as well as to provide some basic tips in this area.

Jordi Baltà opened his presentation by asking participants about their current social media practices, for both personal and professional purposes. Following a short introduction to the most popular social media tools and their characteristics (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Instagram), a presentation ensued, in which several key concepts were introduced, and tips were given for participants – the importance of engagement with communities of users, the integration with other communication channels and strategies, the use of tags and hashtags, the identification of influencers, and the importance of using data to monitor social media impacts. A range of examples were provided, from ASEMUS' own digital channels as well as those of ASEF Culture360.org and others. Participants were also invited to identify target groups that were relevant to their own institutions, and to identify goals and imagine ways in which to reach them via the social media.

Welcome dinner

The first day of the General Conference closed with a welcome dinner hosted by the National Museum – New Delhi and held at the Indian International Centre. This provided an ideal setting for informal conversations and networking among ASEMUS members and other conference participants.

Thursday 16 March: ASEMUS General Conference

Opening Ceremony

Dr. B.R. MANI, the Director General of the National Museum of India, opened the proceedings. He welcomed all participants and referred to the historic relations between museums in Asia and Europe, as well as the National Museum's cooperation with other museums in both continents in a number of initiatives. The ways in which people engage with museums in Asia and Europe are quite different – our cultural experiences depend on local sensitivities and ways of doing, and museums should be aware of this. Addressing the themes of the General Conference, he highlighted in particular the importance of regional museums in enabling access to heritage, and closed by hoping that participants would enjoy the conference.

Speaking next, **Fionnuala CROKE**, Director of the Chester Beatty Library and Chair of ASEMUS, thanked the National Museum and its staff for hosting the conference, as well ASEF for its tireless work in organising it. She presented ASEMUS, which promotes networking and building bridges to promote Asian art – sharing ideas, expertise, collections, whether online or on the ground. She highlighted how, over the course of her career, the real importance of networking had become increasingly evident – 'our museums are stronger when we are better connected, more networked'. Furthermore, international networking had positive effects nationally: 'the more engaged we are internationally, the more respected we are at home'.

The Director of the Asian Civilisations Museum and Vice-Chair of ASEMUS, **Kennie TING,** also thanked the National Museum and ASEF. He addressed the topic of 'engaged museums' which was the core theme of the General Conference – he described it as a topic that involves all museums, for three reasons: they now need to assume a more social role, engaging with the communities; audiences have become more sophisticated and expect to be involved in how museums operate; and, most importantly, the digital shift requires museums to engage online. **Anupama SEKHAR**, Director of the Culture Department of ASEF, thanked the National Museum staff for its work behind the scenes. She introduced ASEF, an organisation publicly funded by the 51 countries that make up the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) – a good example of multilateral cooperation and dialogue. ASEF facilitates collaboration in these countries, and sees museums as a very significant sector. She stressed that ASEMUS hoped to engage more Indian museums as members, and encouraged participants to express their needs, so as to facilitate the provision of support by the network.

Finally, **Dr. Mohan PRATAP**, Curator for Learning and Education at the National Museum, expressed a word of thanks to all participants for their attendance, as well as speakers for wishing to share their knowledge and experiences. He also thanked the National Museum Institute, as well as the staff of the National Museum that had been involved in preparations of the conference.

Engaging with Regional Culture and Heritage: What Role for Regional Museums?

The first plenary session of the conference focused on regional museums, recognising their important role in maintaining the collective memories of communities. The debate was moderated by **Anupama SEKHAR**, Director of the Culture Department of ASEF, who highlighted that regional museums were the most numerous, and played an important role in fostering a sense of place.

Four case studies were presented thereafter:

- The [Mekong Ganga Cooperation Asian Traditional Textiles Museum](#) in Siem Reap, Cambodia, was presented by its Director, **Professor (Dr.) Charu Smita GUPTA**. She placed this museum in the context of the historic Khmer culture, and described its efforts in collecting pieces from communities across the countries in the Mekong-Ganga region, as well as in preventive conservation, social development and education.

Regional heritage and regional museums were an important part of the agenda at the General Conference.

- The [Indian Heritage Centre (IHC)](#) in Singapore was presented by Curator **Nalina GOPAL**, who described the relations between India and Singapore over history. The IHC's curatorial approach had been the result of extensive consultations and involvement of the local Indian community, which had also strongly engaged in providing pieces as well as in the Centre's activities to collect oral history, stories and narratives.

- The [Sarawak State Museum](#), Malaysia, was presented by **Mr. Tazudin MOHTAR**, who highlighted Sarawak's significant ethnic diversity and the museum's community engagement programme, involving extensive consultations – this had allowed it to collect items from local communities. He also referred to the museum's educational activities, and regional and international networking, with a view to the forthcoming opening of its new premises.

- The [Amaravathi Ancient Town and Bapu Museum](#), in Andhra Pradesh, India, was presented by Curator **Professor (Dr.) Amareswar GALLA.** He reflected on the museum's role in regional development, the training of young people from the community, the potential of fostering experience-based tourism, the importance of local, regional and international partnerships, and the need to work with women, who have traditionally been neglected from heritage narratives.

Following these presentations, **Dr. Irena ŽMUC**, Museum Councillor at the City Museum, Ljubljana, Slovenia, and Chair of [ICOM's International Committee for Regional Museums (ICR)](#), introduced ICR's mission and activities. ICR has recently addressed the role of museums in supporting communities in post-earthquake contexts, as well as museums' engagement with migrants and asylum-seekers.

Connecting with Collections

The session was curated by the India Foundation for the Arts (IFA), represented by curator **Suman GOPINATH,** and served to present two case studies of projects supported by IFA's [Archival and](#)

[Museum Fellowships Programme](). The programme aims to facilitate access and visibility to collections which are valuable but seldom known, and enable diverse narratives around existing collections.

Latika GUPTA, curator and associate editor of the [Marg]() magazine, Mumbai, presented the project she curated at the Munshi Aziz Bhat Museum of Central Asian and Kargil Trade Route Artifacts, in Kargil, an Indian town near the border with Pakistan. A four-month fellowship had allowed her to make objects more visible, present and explain them better to the local community and tourists, foster an appreciation of everyday life and history, and reflect on the museum's impact on local communities.

Taking the floor next was **Abeer GUPTA**, visual anthropologist and assistant professor at the School of Design of [Ambedkar University Delhi](), who presented his experience working, alongside a filmmaker, with the Decorative Textiles Department at the National Museum, New Delhi, focusing on brocade textiles from Varanasi. Alongside traditional pieces were other elements of popular culture and contemporary design pieces which showed an influence of brocade saris.

Film Screening: Race Course Road (from 'The Day I Lost My Shadow')

The Day I Lost My Shadow is a short-film trilogy commissioned by the Indian Heritage Centre, Singapore, to Singaporean filmmaker K. RAJAGOPAL. One of its three pieces, *Race Course Road*, was presented by **K. RAJAGOPAL** and IHC curator **Nalina GOPAL** and shown thereafter. *The Day I Lost My Shadow* focuses on three iconic locations in Singapore's Little India, and connects them with individuals and events. The elaboration of the films relied primarily on oral history, because there is limited documentation for some of the events that were presented.

Towards a Culture of Accessibility in Our Museums: Good Practices and Challenges

This session, focusing on accessibility in museums, was moderated by **Fionnuala CROKE**, the Director of the Chester Beatty Library and Chair of ASEMUS. In her introduction, she referred to the several meanings of access in museums, including physical access, outreach to those that are not interested in museum activities, etc.

Several case studies and tools were presented thereafter:

- **Kristine MILERE**, Curator of Foreign Decorative and Applied Arts Collection at the [Art Museum Riga Bourse](), part of the Latvian National Museum of Art, discussed how accessibility challenges had been addressed: enhanced physical accessibility in a historic building the structure of which had to be preserved, collaboration with organisations

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representing people with disabilities, provision of guided tours for different target groups, and the design of tailored education and family activities.

- **KIM Jongsok**, Curator at the National Museum of Korea, Seoul, described this museum's efforts to overcome intellectual and language barriers, through the use of artificial intelligence translation systems. The National Museum has translated several ICOM documents with automatic translation programmes and would now like to offer similar services to its visitors.

- **Jenny SIUNG**, Head of Education at the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, presented its educational activities, meant to inspire visitors and the broader community. To this end, the Library has established a blog targeting educators, developed intercultural learning activities, engaged 'community ambassadors' as bridge-builders with individual communities, and takes part in international projects including *The Creative Museum*, which fosters visitors' creative engagement.

- **Shivani GUPTA**, founder and chief consultant of AccessAbility, addressed access to culture for people with disabilities, stressing how taking measures to improve accessibility for this group was also positive for many other people. However, specific challenges include the limited visibility of people with disabilities, existing misconceptions, and the need to take into account diverse groups of people with disabilities. She suggested that ASEMUS should develop a Disability Action Plan, describing minimum accessibility standards for museums.

- **Nao HAYASHI**, Museums Programme Coordinator at the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, introduced UNESCO's 2015 Recommendation on the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, highlighting its focus on the social role of museums and their accessibility. Among the issues raised are the importance of education as a tool to enhance accessibility and museums' potential to enhance intercultural dialogue. She also described ASEMUS as an extraordinary example of museum collaboration, and hoped this network would engage in disseminating the Recommendation.

Museums in the City

This session aimed to discuss the role of museums in city life, in terms of urban regeneration, social inclusion, community engagement and place-making. The conversation was led by **Kennie TING**, Director of the Asian Civilisations Museum in Singapore, as well as Vice Chair of ASEMUS. Introducing the discussion, he discussed museums' responsibility in encouraging community engagement in their cities.

The session involved a presentation of the [Delhi Citizens Memory Project](#), an initiative of the Centre for Community Knowledge at the Ambedkar University Delhi, which is documenting and presenting neighbourhood stories across the city and actively engaging Delhi inhabitants. A range of activities have been conducted, covering oral histories, photography documentation and exhibitions and the plan to establish a travelling museum. The project was presented by **Dr. Surajit SARKAR**, Associate Professor and Coordinator of the Centre for Community Knowledge.

Contributions were also made by **Dr. Philippe PEYCAM**, Director of the [International Institute for Asian Studies](#) (IIAS, the Netherlands), a partner of the Ambedkar University Delhi, with which it shares an interest in knowledge, urban sites, culture, engaging and questioning; and by lawyer and researcher **Raghavendra TENKAYALA**, who described the case of the City Museum in Bangalore, reflecting on the need for museums to connect what happens within their walls to stories of specific individuals, through education and outreach activities, engaging to build meaning and value.

ASEMUS: A Conversation on Future Directions

This final plenary session aimed to present ASEMUS' activities in recent years and to discuss opportunities for future work. It involved an initial discussion among **Fionnuala CROKE; Kennie TING; Anupama SEKHAR**, who introduced a chronology of ASEMUS' activities since 2000; **Kristine MILERE**, who described her experience as a former beneficiary of the [Educational Exchange and Outreach Programme](#); and **KONG Hyun-Ji** (National Museum of Korea), who presented the **Virtual Collection of Asian Masterpieces (VCM)**, followed by an open debate.

In the course of the open debate, the following issues were raised:

- the importance of promoting **training and capacity-building of museum staff**, through workshops such as those held the previous day;
- **collaboration, networking, knowledge-sharing and museum-bridging between Asia and Europe** as a distinctive aspect of ASEMUS, which as a network facilitates spaces for collaboration among museums;
- the need to regularly **review ethical practices in museum cooperation**;

- ASEMUS' potential to foster **intercultural education activities** in museums, bringing together the diverse communities that live near them;
- the social impact of museums, and how museums can use **social media for dissemination and engagement**;
- the need not only to foster the visibility of and collaboration around Asian collections, but also **Asian museums' ability to access European collections and address European themes**, as this area is also marked by asymmetries; and
- the **significant role of ASEF** in facilitating the work of ASEMUS over the years.

Key Messages from the Conference

Final addresses by **Dr. B.R. MANI, Fionnuala CROKE** and **Kennie TING** served to close the 7th General Conference of ASEMUS. In their speeches, they highlighted the themes addressed in the course of the conference, including museums' engagement with their communities, the need for museum training to address this important area of work, and the need to continue fostering collaboration among museums in Asia and Europe. Staff of the National Museum – New Delhi and of ASEF were also thanked for their intensive work in making the General Conference possible.

Before closing, **Fionnuala CROKE** also announced that the **8th ASEMUS General Conference** would be held in Kuching, Sarawak, in November 2018, hosted by the Sarawak State Museum.

Friday 17 March: Cultural Visits

The final day of the General Conference involved visits to significant heritage sites in New Delhi, including [Humayun's Tomb](), a UNESCO World Heritage Site; and the [Sanskriti Foundation's Cultural Centre]().

Conclusions

Over the course of three days, the 7th ASEMUS General Conference provided a space for networking and discussion. In this context, several proposals were made for areas that ASEMUS could further explore in the near future. The main themes identified are as follows:

1. **Training and capacity-building**: the need to strengthen the capacities and skills of museum staff and young professionals is an area of shared interest among many ASEMUS members. As the General Conference in Delhi showed, speakers and trainers

invited by ASEMUS can make a substantial contribution to local museum staff, by providing specialised training opportunities – General Conferences provide a suitable setting for this. Other educational activities, including online training and peer-learning (in a model similar to the Educational Exchange and Outreach Programme) could be considered as well. Among the areas where further training could be provided are some of ASEMUS' traditional themes (education and outreach programmes, curatorial practices, etc.) and others which emerged as topics of common interest (technologies, accessibility, etc.).

2. **Community engagement and participatory curatorial practices**: the central topic of the conference, engagement, led to several discussions stressing the need for museums to 'go beyond their walls' and find ways to engage communities more actively – not only as audiences, but also as participants in designing and curating exhibitions and other activities, co-creating narratives, engaging in intercultural learning, etc. As noted above, this could be a topic for future training activities, but it could also be addressed by other means – e.g. collecting good practices from member museums, discussing it in future General Conferences, etc.

3. **Accessibility**: this remains a universal theme, the several dimensions of which (physical, linguistic, educational, social accessibility) raise interest across ASEMUS member museums, many of which have expertise in this area. ASEMUS could consider discussing a set of minimum access standards, drawing on existing documents (e.g. UNESCO and international and regional documents on disability rights), and giving visibility to existing good practices.

4. **Ethics and practice of international museum cooperation**: the core objectives and values which inspired the establishment of ASEMUS over 15 years ago remain important, in light of the views collected during the General Conference. Taking advantage of its unique, distinctive position, ASEMUS could consider fostering new discussions on the ethical implications of international collaboration in the museum field, as well as continuing to facilitate bilateral and multilateral collaboration among Asian and European museums in curation and other areas of museum work.

PROGRAMME

Tuesday, 14 March 2017: Briefing Meetings & Dinner

6:00 – 7:00 pm
Briefing with Speakers, Trainers & Moderators
Venue: The Samavar (24-hour coffee shop)
Lobby Level at The Ashok, 50-B, Diplomatic Enclave, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi

7:30 – 9:30 pm

Dinner hosted by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)
Venue: Frontier Restaurant - North Indian cuisine & Avadhi cuisine from the city of Lucknow
Lobby Level at The Ashok, 50-B, Diplomatic Enclave, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi

Wednesday, 15 March 2017: Training Sessions & Welcome Dinner

Closed-door training sessions (by registration only)

9:00 – 10.00 am
Registration
Venue: Registration Desk in front of Auditorium, Ground Floor, National Museum

Coffee Break
Venue: Rotunda, Ground Floor, National Museum

10:00 am – 12:30 pm
Training Workshop for Young Museum Professionals:
Developing Curatorial Concepts
By Professor (Dr.) Amareswar GALLA, Executive Director, International Institute for Inclusive Museum; Curator, Amaravati Ancient Town & Bapu Museum, Andhra Pradesh, India & International Heritage Advisor to the Government of Andhra Pradesh, India
Venue: Conference Room, 1st Floor, National Museum Institute

12:30 – 2:00 pm
Lunch
Venue: Rotunda, Ground Floor, National Museum

1:30 – 2:00 pm
Registration Desk for afternoon workshop in the lunch area (Rotunda)

2:00 – 4:00 pm
Training Workshop for Young Museum Professionals:
Social Media 101 for Museum Professionals
Venue: Conference Room, 1st Floor, National Museum Institute
By **Jordi Baltà PORTOLÉS**, Consultant, Researcher & Trainer in the areas of cultural policy and international affairs & Editor, asemus.culture360.ASEF.org

4:00 – 4:30 pm
Coffee Break
Venue: Rotunda, Ground Floor, National Museum

Parallel Session from 2:30 – 6:00 pm for ASEMUS Executive Committee (ExCo) members only
ASEMUS Executive Committee (ExCo) Meeting
Venue: Seminar Room, 1st Floor, National Museum Institute

7:00 pm
Welcome dinner for all General Conference delegates hosted by National Museum - New Delhi
Venue: Indian International Centre, 40, Max Mueller Marg, New Delhi, Delhi 110003

Thursday, 16 March 2017: ASEMUS General Conference
Venue: Auditorium, Ground Floor, National Museum

09:00 – 10:00 am
Registration
Venue: Registration Desk in front of Auditorium, Ground Floor, National Museum

Morning coffee
Venue: Rotunda, Ground Floor, National Museum

10: 00 – 10:30 am
Opening Ceremony
- *Welcome remarks*
  By Dr B.R. MANI, Director General, National Museum – New Delhi
- *Introducing ASEMUS*
  By Ms Fionnuala CROKE, Director, Chester Beatty Library (Dublin, Ireland)
  & Chair, ASEMUS Executive Committee
  Mr Kennie TING, Director, Asian Civilisations Museum (Singapore)

& Vice Chair, ASEMUS Executive Committee
Ms Anupama SEKHAR, Director, Culture Department, Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)

10: 30 - 11.45 am
Engaging with Regional Culture & Heritage: What Role for Regional Museums?

Regional museums are among the most numerous in the world, dedicated to maintaining collective memories of communities. This plenary will address the following questions:
- What role for regional museums in their community with respect to culture, local history, social development and language?
- What are key challenges faced by such museums in terms of access to funding, audience development, staff training, technology and networking?
- How could regional museums benefit from international co-operation?

Speakers:
- Professor (Dr.) Amareswar GALLA, Executive Director, International Institute for Inclusive Museum; Curator, Amaravati Ancient Town & Bapu Museum, Andhra Pradesh, India & International Heritage Advisor to the Government of Andhra Pradesh, India
- Ms Nalina GOPAL, Curator, Indian Heritage Centre, Singapore
- Professor (Dr.) Charu Smita GUPTA, Director, Mekong Ganga Cooperation Asian Traditional Textiles Museum, Siem Reap, Cambodia
- Dr. Irena ZMUC, Museum Councilor, Mestni muzej Ljubljana (City Museum of Ljubljana), Slovenia & Chair, ICOM's International Committee for Regional Museums

Respondent: Mr Tazudin MOHTAR, Sarawak State Museum, Kuching, Malaysia

Moderated by: Ms Anupama SEKHAR, Director, Culture Department, Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)

11:45 am – 12:30 pm
Connecting with Collections

India Foundation for the Arts (IFA), Bangalore – a national, not-for-profit, grantmaking organisation that supports practice, research and education in the arts in India - presents case studies of two exhibitions that received support from their Archival and Museum Fellowships initiative. This panel will discuss the curatorial process and the strategies the curators, Ms Latika GUPTA and Mr Abeer GUPTA used to contextualise and 'make accessible' the collections at the Munshi Aziz Bhat Museum of Central Asian & Kargil Trade Artifacts, Kargil, India and the National Museum - New Delhi, India respectively.

Speakers:
- Ms Latika GUPTA, curator & Associate Editor, Marg magazine, Mumbai, India
- Mr Abeer GUPTA, visual anthropologist & Assistant Professor, School of Design, Ambedkar University Delhi

Moderated by: Ms Suman GOPINATH, curator and currently manages the Archival and Museum Fellowships at India Foundation for the Arts (IFA), Bangalore

12:30 – 1:30 pm
Lunch at Rotunda, Ground Floor, National Museum

1:30 – 1:45 pm
Film Screening: The Day I Lost My Shadow - Syed Alwi Road

The Day I Lost My Shadow is a trilogy set in three iconic locations within Singapore's Little India district: *Race Course Road*, *Campbell Lane* and *Syed Alwi Road*. The notion of re-examining history by truth and myth through visual storytelling serves as the inter-connecting thread between the three short films, and the films offer glimpses of Little India through the 19th and 20th centuries. *The Day I Lost My Shadow* was commissioned by the Indian Heritage Centre, Singapore and made by acclaimed Singaporean filmmaker, K.Rajagopal, who is known for his sensitive and evocative films, often dealing with the trajectory of Singapore's Indian community.

1:45 – 2:15 pm
Local Heritage & Histories on Film:
Conversation with filmmaker, Mr K. Rajagopal on The Day I Lost My Shadow
Discussion led by Ms Nalina GOPAL, Indian Heritage Centre, Singapore

2:15 – 3:30 pm
Towards a Culture of Accessibility in our Museums:
Good Practices & Challenges

"Improving access in museums, while incorporating inclusion and diversity, involves using creative ideas to tackle physical, intellectual and social barriers that prevent people from taking advantage of services," writes Loretta MORDI of Museums Galleries Scotland (UK) in *Why Museums Need to Embrace a Culture of Accessibility*. This panel will discuss innovative ways in which museums in Asia & Europe are widening engagement vis-à-vis technology, education & outreach and access for people with disabilities and special needs. It will also discuss the accessibility issue in the framework of UNESCO's Recommendation on the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections (2015).

Speakers:

- Ms Kristine MILERE, Curator of Foreign Decorative and Applied Arts Collection, Art Museum RIGA BOURSE, Latvia
- Ms Jenny SIUNG, Head of Education, Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, Ireland
- Mr KIM Jongsok, Curator, National Museum of Korea (NMK), Seoul
- Ms Shivani GUPTA, Founder & Chief Consultant, AccessAbility, India
- Ms Nao HAYASHI, Museums Programme Coordinator, World Heritage Centre, UNESCO

Moderated by: Ms Fionnuala CROKE, Director, Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, Ireland & Chair, ASEMUS Executive Committee

3:30 – 4:00 pm
Coffee break
Venue: Rotunda, Ground Floor, National Museum

& Parallel Session: Film Screening: The Day I Lost My Shadow - Campbell Lane
Venue: Auditorium, Ground Floor, National Museum

4:00 – 5:15 pm
Museums in the City

Interactive session on the role of museums in the lives of cities in terms of urban regeneration, social inclusion, community engagement & place making

Discussion led by: Mr Kennie TING, Director, Asian Civilisations Museum (Singapore)
With:

- Dr. Philippe PEYCAM, Director, International Institute for Asian Studies, Netherlands
- Dr. Surajit SARKAR, Associate Professor & Coordinator, Centre for Community Knowledge, Ambedkar University Delhi
- Mr Raghavendra TENKAYALA, lawyer and researcher; co-author of an arts & culture profile of India for the *WorldCP-International Database of Cultural Policies* (available at http://www.worldcp.org/india.php)

5:15 – 6:00 pm
Asia-Europe Museum Network (ASEMUS): A Conversation on Future Directions

- The story so far: ASEMUS and the Virtual Collection of Masterpieces (http://masterpieces.asemus.museum/index.nhn)
- Future directions: A conversation with ASEMUS Executive Committee Members

6:00 – 6:15 pm
Key Messages from the Conference

With Dr. B.R. MANI, Director General, National Museum – New Delhi, Ms Fionnuala CROKE, Director, Chester Beatty Library (Dublin, Ireland) & Mr Kennie TING, Director, Asian Civilisations Museum (Singapore)

8:00 – 10:00 pm
Dinner hosted by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)
Venue: Zerruco - Contemporary Mediterranean cuisine
Ground level (outside; hotel grounds), The Ashok, 50-B, Diplomatic Enclave, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi

Friday, 17 March 2017: Cultural Visits for ExCo Members, Speakers & Trainers

9.30 am – 2:00 pm
Cultural Visit

Cultural visit to Humayun's Tomb (UNESCO World Heritage Site) followed by lunch at Sanskriti Foundation

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Profiles of Trainers

Professor Amareswar GALLA is the Executive Director of the International Institute for the Inclusive Museum. He is also Curator of the Amaravati Ancient Town & Bapu Museum in Andhra Pradesh, India & serves as International Heritage Advisor to the Government of Andhra Pradesh, India. He is Honorary Professor, Global Change Institute, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia & Visiting Professor, Don Bosco University, Shillong, India.

Professor (Dr.) GALLA has, for three decades, been a champion of cultural democracy, UN Millennium Development Goals, and safeguarding all forms of heritage. An alumnus of the Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi), and Professor of World Heritage and Sustainable Development at Split University, he is the founding Executive Director of the International Institute for the Inclusive Museum in Denmark and India. His extensive publication record, focusing on inclusion and active citizenship, ranges from *World Heritage: Benefits Beyond Borders* (Cambridge University Press & UNESCO Publishing, 2012) to *Heritage Curricula and Cultural Diversity* (Australian Government Publishing House, 1993). He was the 2nd and 3rd Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Intangible Heritage and founding Editor of the International Journal on the Inclusive Museum. He has served as Professor of Museum Studies at the University of Queensland (Brisbane), as well as Professor and Director of Sustainable Heritage Development Programs at the Australian National University (Canberra). From 1994-1999 he was the International Technical Adviser for the transformation of Arts Councils, National Museums, and the National Parks Board (now SAN Parks) in post-apartheid South Africa. He worked on the implementation of *Museums and Cultural Diversity Promotion* at the National Museum of Ethnology (Leiden, The Netherlands). He has been honoured internationally on several occasions including the Outstanding Conservationist of the Year Award (Vietnamese government, 2002) and the European Best in Heritage Award (2008).

Mr. Jordi Balta PORTOLES works as a freelance consultant and trainer in the areas of cultural policy and international affairs, with a particular interest in cultural diversity, the place of culture in sustainable development, and international cultural relations. He currently works for the Culture Committee of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and the Asia-Europe Museum Network (ASEMUS), among others. He is the Editor of the website of the ASEMUS network, asemus.culture360.asef.org.

Previously he was a researcher and project coordinator at the Interarts Foundation, where he coordinated the European Expert Network on Culture (EENC) between 2011-2014. He is a member of the UNESCO Expert Facility for the implementation of the Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, the U40 network 'Cultural Diversity 2030', the board of the Catalan Association of Cultural Managers (APGCC) and the board of the Interarts Foundation. Jordi teaches at the Online MA in Cultural Management of the Open University of Catalonia (UOC) and the University of Girona (UdG), as well as the Degree in International Relations of Universitat

Ramon Llull (URL). He holds a BA in Political Science (Autonomous University of Barcelona) and a MA in European Cultural Policy (University of Warwick).

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Profiles of Speakers

Dr. B.R. Mani is Director General, National Museum - New Delhi. Dr. MANI (b. 1955) has been a renowned field archaeologist, numismatist and art critic, who has served as Additional Director General in the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) till April 2015.

Presently he is the Director General, National Museum - New Delhi and also Vice-Chancellor of National Museum Institute, New Delhi. He has a throughout first class first career up to his Master degree, which he obtained from Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in 1976 - receiving the Altekar gold medal and BHU gold medal - and completed his Ph.D. on *Life in the Kushan Age* in 1980 from BHU. He has been teaching in BHU and the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies from 1978-1984 when he joined the ASI as Deputy Superintending Archaeologist.

Since then he has been involved in conservation of monuments in Maharashtra, Goa, Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir across India. He has discovered a large number of archaeological sites in these places besides also in Uttar Pradesh and Haryana during his explorations. He has directed more than 19 excavation projects in the country, some of which are LalKot (Delhi), Salimgarh (Delhi), Muhammad Nagar and Harnol (Haryana), Siswania, Sankisa, Ayodhya, Lathiya (UP) and Kanispur and Ambaran (Jammu and Kashmir). Recently he re-excavated the sites of Kapilavastu, Rajghat and Sarnath (UP) during 2013-2015. He is member of various national and international organisations in the field and has widely traveled to European, American and Asian countries for international seminars and conferences. He has four books and about 200 research papers to his credit. He is also the General Secretary of the Indian Archaeological Society, New Delhi and edits two of its international journals.

Ms. Fionnuala CROKE is an art historian and, since March 2011, Director of the Chester Beatty Library (CBL), Dublin, Ireland. She is currently the Chair of the Executive Committee of the Asia-Europe Museum Network (ASEMUS).

Since joining the CBL, she has worked on developing a new strategy for the Library, and has sought to re-position its role within the museum sector. Increasingly the CBL is engaging with new audiences both domestically and overseas through its exhibitions and multicultural programmes. Fionnuala has published on a wide range of art-related subjects; and, has organised and curated numerous exhibitions, most recently *Chester Beatty's A to Z: from Amulet to Zodiac.* She received a BA with honours in History of Art & Archaeology from University College Dublin (UCD), a research MA from UCD and an International Executive MBA from the Smurfit Business School. She also

attended the Getty Museum Leadership Institute in Los Angeles. Prior to her appointment to the CBL, she was Keeper & Head of Collections at the National Gallery of Ireland. She is an Adjunct Professor in UCD in the School of Art History & Cultural Policy.

Professor Amareswar GALLA – see above under *Profiles of Trainers*.

Ms. Nalina GOPAL is Curator at the Indian Heritage Centre, Singapore. She holds a Bachelors' in History and Masters in International Studies from the University of Madras. She was curator and registrar at Dakshina Chitra, a private museum in Chennai. She joined the National Heritage Board of Singapore in late 2008. Her research interests include South Asian diaspora in Southeast Asia as well as Indian history and art. She has recently curated the *Once Upon A Time in Little India* exhibition at the Indian Heritage Centre.

Ms. Suman GOPINATH is a curator and currently manages the Archival and Museum Fellowships at India Foundation for the Arts (IFA), Bangalore.

Mr. Abeer GUPTA is a visual anthropologist and currently works as Assistant Professor, School of Design, Ambedkar University, New Delhi.

Professor Charu Smita GUPTA is Director of the Mekong Ganga Cooperation Asian Traditional Textiles Museum (MGCATT) in Siem Reap, Cambodia. Professor (Dr.) GUPTA has a Master's in Social Anthropology and a PhD in Museology. Over a span of 40 years, Professor Gupta has dedicated herself to research, documentation, exhibition, teaching & publishing in the field of handicrafts and handlooms in the museum collection at Crafts Museum, New Delhi and the National Institute of Fashion Technology, New Delhi. As the founder director of the MGCATT Museum since August 2013, she was responsible to set up the museum and now runs it. The museum presents collections from six countries from the Mekong Ganga region.

As Professor (Museology), she was into academic teaching, guiding PhD candidates and other linked works for about 2 years at National Museum Institute, New Delhi. She has participated in numerous international conferences, seminars, organised workshops and has published two monographs, one catalogue, several chapters in edited books and about 70 papers in various journals, magazines etc. Her internationally known monograph, *Zardozi Glittering Gold Embroidery* (Abhinav Publications) is now a rare book.

Ms. Latika GUPTA is a curator and currently works as Associate Editor with *Marg* magazine. *Marg* (meaning 'pathway') is a quarterly Indian art magazine, based in Mumbai. It began in 1946, with writer Mulk Raj ANAND as its founding editor.

Ms. Shivani GUPTA, author of *No Looking Back – A True Story*, is the founder of AccessAbility, and one of India's best-known access consultants. With post graduate degrees in inclusive

environments (design and management) from the UK, and diplomas in architecture technology and hotel management, Shivani has spent most of her professional life in working towards improving accessibility of public spaces such as educational institutions, hotels and retail and other commercial spaces in India. She has undertaken research on issues related to accessibility in India and contributed to policies for disabled persons in the country.

Apart from her work at the country level, Ms GUPTA has worked on international projects as a consultant with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Disability Alliance (IDA), Disabled Peoples' International (DPI) and the Christian Blind Mission (CBM). She has also co-authored three publications pertaining to improving accessibility in physical environments for disabled people.

For her achievements in the disability sector, and her personal courage, Ms GUPTA has received national and international acclaim. She has been honoured with the Helen Keller Award (2008), the CavinKare Ability Mastery Award (2008), the National Role Model Award (2004), the Neerja Bhanot Award (2004), the Red and White Social Bravery Award (1999), and the Sulabh International Woman of the Year Award (1996).

Ms GUPTA believes that there is nothing more disabling for persons with disabilities than society's failure to accept and include them as part of the mainstream.

Ms. Nao HAYASHI is Museums Programme Coordinator, World Heritage Centre, UNESCO. A historian by training, Ms HAYASHI has worked in the safeguarding of the built and movable heritage since 2002. Through operational projects in Africa, the Arab world, Asia and the Pacific, and Europe, she has designed and implemented programmes for building the capacities of museum professionals in developing countries and partnerships among institutions. Since 2014, she has been Museums Programme Coordinator at UNESCO, Paris leading the elaboration of the new UNESCO *International Recommendation on the Promotion of Museums and Collections*.

Mr. K RAJAGOPAL is an acclaimed Singapore Indian film maker known for his sensitive and evocative films, often dealing with the trajectory of Singapore's Indian community. He has worked on stage and in film for over fifteen years. As a filmmaker, RAJAGOPAL has won the Singapore International Film Festival's Special Jury Prize for 3 consecutive years with *I Can't Sleep Tonight* (1995), *The Glare* (1996) and *Absence* (1997). His other films are *Brother*, commissioned by the Singapore Art Festival; *The New World*, commissioned by the National Museum of Singapore; and *Timeless*. His film, *A Yellow Bird* (2016) has also been selected for the Cannes Film Festival. At the ASEMUS General Conference in Delhi, his film, *The Day I Lost My Shadow* - a trilogy set in three iconic locations within Singapore's Little India district and commissioned by the Indian Heritage Centre, Singapore – will be shown.

Mr. KIM Jongsok is the curator at the Cultural Relations and Publicity Department at the National Museum of Korea, which is under the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Republic of Korea. Previously he worked as curator at the Cultural Exchange and Education Division in the museum from 2004-2008. Mr. KIM received his bachelor's degree in Mathematics in SungKyunKwan University, and continued in M.A. program in Museum and Gallery Management at City University London.

During his career, Mr. KIM has been greatly involved in various international projects, such as the International Journal of Intangible Heritage, the Virtual Collection of Asian Masterpieces (VCM) Project and the Asia-Europe Museum Network (ASEMUS). He was appointed as a board member for the International Committee for Museum Security (ICOM-ICMS) in International Council of Museums (ICOM) from 2001-2004. From 2004-2007, he continued to serve as an ordinary member in the Executive Council of ICOM.

Ms. Kristine MILERE is Curator of Foreign Decorative and Applied Arts Collection at the Art Museum RIGA BOURSE in Riga, Latvia. Previously Ms MILERE worked in the Education and Communication Department of the museum and has worked with several projects to make the museum more accessible to different target audiences. She holds a MA degree in Arts and is interested in cultural anthropology and cross-cultural communication. In 2015, she took part in a museum education exchange project supported by ASEMUS.

Dr. Philippe PEYCAM is the Director of the [International Institute for Asian Studies](), Leiden, the Netherlands. He is a trained historian whose recent book traces the origins of a Vietnamese public culture of contestation during the colonial occupation. *The Birth of Vietnamese Political Journalism: Saigon 1916-30* was published by Columbia University Press (May 2012). For 10 years, Dr. PEYCAM worked as founding director of the Center for Khmer Studies, an academic and capacity building organisation in Cambodia, a hybrid transnational institutional model which is both Cambodian and American (a member of the Council of American Overseas Research Centers network). This double trajectory stems from an early interest in phenomena such as colonialism and modes of resistance to it; the creative role of the city as a privileged environment for new forms of social and cultural interactions, and, ultimately, consciousness; the importance of cultural forms and representations from material and immaterial heritages to institutional knowledge production, and the challenge of building cross-cultural, transnational institutional bridges out of these contexts. He sees these intellectual interests as having implications for concrete development policies in today's postcolonial societies. From 2010-2011, he was a United States Institute of Peace's Jenning Randolph Fellow. Since 2009, he is a Visiting Research Fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore.

Mr. Jordi Baltà PORTOLÉS works as a freelance consultant and trainer in the areas of cultural policy and international affairs, with a particular interest in cultural diversity, the place of culture in sustainable development, and international cultural relations. He currently works for the

Culture Committee of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and the Asia-Europe Museum Network (ASEMUS), among others. He is the Editor of the website of the ASEMUS network, asemus.culture360.asef.org.

Previously he was a researcher and project coordinator at the Interarts Foundation, where he coordinated the European Expert Network on Culture (EENC) between 2011-2014. He is a member of the UNESCO Expert Facility for the implementation of the Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, the U40 network 'Cultural Diversity 2030', the board of the Catalan Association of Cultural Managers (APGCC) and the board of the Interarts Foundation. Jordi teaches at the Online MA in Cultural Management of the Open University of Catalonia (UOC) and the University of Girona (UdG), as well as the Degree in International Relations of Universitat Ramon Llull (URL). He holds a BA in Political Science (Autonomous University of Barcelona) and a MA in European Cultural Policy (University of Warwick).

Dr. Surajit SARKAR is Associate Professor at Ambedkar University/AU (Delhi, India) and co ordinator of the Centre for Community Knowledge (CCK), an interdisciplinary research centre at AU, studying different living communities in India, their cultural knowledge heritage and their interrelations. At CCK, Dr SARKAR is responsible for conceptualising projects and creating processes for implementing research, documentation and dissemination. His previous work includes electronic media and community based cultural activities. Recently, he co-curated the photo exhibition, *Camera Dilli Ka – A Delhi Photo Archive 1880-1980*, organised by CCK at the India International Centre and offering a visual history of the city spanning over 100 years. At CCK, he is also involved with the *Citizen's Memory Project*, a digital archive of the lives of the people of Delhi and the oral history of the capital. The *Citizen's Memory Project* hopes to tie up with the Delhi Museum, which will be housed in the Dara Shikoh Library, a historical monument that lies within the campus of Ambedkar University.

Ms. Anupama SEKHAR is the Director of the Culture Department at the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) and is actively engaged in facilitating multilateral cultural co-operation among 51 countries across Asia and Europe. She is also part of UNESCO's Expert Facility to support capacity development initiatives for the implementation of the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. She holds degrees in English Literature and International Studies. She is a trained dancer in the Indian classical style of *Bharatnatyam*. Prior to joining ASEF, Anupama worked with the International Labour Organisation and with independent arts spaces in India

Ms. Jenny SIUNG is Head of Education at the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, Ireland. She developed the first multi- and intercultural learning program in an Irish museum. Ms. SIUNG is a recipient of the first ASEMUS Education Exchange Programme in 2006, and is now a coordinator of the programme.

Mr. Raghavendra TENKAYALA is a Bangalore based lawyer and researcher. He has worked in the areas of law, cultural policy and the arts. He has consulted on various arts and culture projects for local and international organisations. He is author of the cultural policy profile of India for the *WorldCP-International Database of Cultural Policies* (the profile is available at: http://www.worldcp.org/india.php).

Mr. Kennie TING is the Director of the Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM), Singapore, which currently hosts the Secretariat of the Asia-Europe Museum Network (ASEMUS). He is also the Vice Chair of the ASEMUS Executive Committee.

Mr. Ting's career began at the former Ministry of Information, Communication and the Arts (MICA), Singapore where he had a hand in drafting the *Renaissance City Plan III* - a comprehensive blueprint for the arts and heritage sector. This plan helped to drive various national-level initiatives in the late 2000s, including the development of the National Gallery, Singapore and the Singapore Night Festival. In 2015, he was appointed Group Director of Museums at the National Heritage Board (NHB), Singapore with direct oversight of NHB's museums and major festivals.

Mr. Ting is also the author of two books published in 2015, *The Romance of the Grand Tour - 100 Years of Travel in South-east Asia*, and a volume on *Heritage* in the *Singapore Chronicles* series commissioned by the Institute of Policy Studies, Singapore.

Dr. Irena ZMUC is a Museum Councilor, Department of Modern Age at Mestni Muzej Ljubljana (City Museum of Ljubljana) in Slovenia. She holds a PhD in history from the University of Ljubljana. She is the Chair of ICOM's International Committee for Regional Museums.

Organisers

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- Dr B. R. MANI, Director General
- Mr P. K. NAGTA, Director (Collections and Administration)
- Mr K. K. SHARMA, Deputy Curator Exhibitions and In-charge PR
- Mr Mohan PRATAP, In-charge Lecturing and Education
- Ms Rige SHIBA, Assistant Curator, Education
- Ms Joyoti ROY, Outreach Consultant
- Ms Vasundhra SANGWAN, Outreach Officer
- Ms Ridham SETH, Volunteer
- Ms Karishma AGGARWAL, Volunteer

Team at the Asia-Europe Museum Network (ASEMUS)

- Ms Fionnuala CROKE, Director, Chester Beatty Library (Dublin, Ireland)
  & Chair, ASEMUS Executive Committee
- Mr Kennie TING, Director, Asian Civilisations Museum (Singapore)

& Vice Chair, ASEMUS Executive Committee

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- Ms Crystal KOH, Director, Finance & Administration Department
- Ms Valentina RICCARDI, Project Manager, Culture Department & in charge of the ASEMUS website, [asemus.culture360.ASEF.org](#)
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- Ms Andrea ABELLON, Volunteer, Culture Department

ASEF is an intergovernmental not-for-profit organisation located in Singapore. Founded in 1997, it is the only institution of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), an intergovernmental process fostering dialogue among 53 partners (30 European and 21 Asian countries, the European Union, and the ASEAN Secretariat). Together with about 750 partner organisations, ASEF has run more than 700 projects, mainly conferences, seminars and workshops. For more information, please visit [www.ASEF.org](#).

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Set up in 2001, the Asia-Europe Museum Network (ASEMUS) is a cross-cultural network of museums with Asian collections. It now gathers over 140 museums in 41 countries in Asia and Europe. The Secretariat of the Network is currently located at Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore. ASEMUS is supported by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF). To learn more, visit the ASEMUS website: [http://asemus.culture360.ASEF.org](#).

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