

Debate of the Institute of European Studies, Jagiellonian University, Krakow

– part of the Imagine Europe debates

Imagine European Culture:

Contemporary Europe and museums: Quest for relevance?

26 October 2018 (Friday)

11.00-13.00 Al. Mickiewicza 3, Room 331

Dorota Folga-Januszewska, Nikola Krstović and Sheila Watson in discussion with Katarzyna Jagodzińska

We live in the time of unprecedented production of museums. The museum boom that has globally started in the 1980s is still going on. There are new museums established and new museum buildings constructed all over the world, including great national museums and small museum projects launched by individuals, whereas the existing museums are changing and modernising in order to stay relevant for today's societies. Museums keep and communicate a fraction of heritage, be it history of a castle or art of a region, or they aim to address a history of a nation or of Europe as a whole.

At the same time social, political and economic context is rapidly changing. Patterns of participation in culture are different than they used to be only twenty or even ten years ago. Migrations. Multiculturalism. Nationalisms. These and many other issues are part of day-to-day agendas in particular countries, societies and communities, and museums have to respond.

In the debate we would like to address some of the burning issues of contemporary culture and discuss:

In what way museums (should) reflect the world of today? (Is it, indeed, their obligation?) Are contemporary changes in Europe reflected in museums?

Is it possible that museums stay relevant in the fast changing world?

Participation. Engagement. Social inclusion. Community. Activism. Change. Localism. Cross disciplinary and cross cultural. These are some of the keywords of museums today. Should all museums embrace them?

What is expected from contemporary museums?

What are the boundaries that museums cannot cross?

Panelists

Prof. Dr Dorota Folga-Januszewska, President of ICOM Poland. She is a member of SAREC ICOM and a member of AICA. Professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, Head of Theory Department, Faculty of Graphic Art; Deputy Director of the Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów in Warsaw. Art historian, art critic, museologist; 2010–2012 director of the Institute of Museology, Wszyński University in Warsaw. Founder of the museological studies. Worked at the National Museum in Warsaw 1979–2008 (curator at the Contemporary Print and Drawing Department, between 1995–2007 director for collections, research programme and education, between 2007–2008 general director). Since 2005 member of the Independent Group of Experts, EU Council and member of working groups in the EU program Mobility of Collection. Author of 340 books and catalogues, curator of 54 exhibitions.

Dr Nikola Krstović, Assistant Professor, University of Belgrade, Art History Department, Centre for Museology and Heritage Studies. ICOM Serbia EB member. Between 2006–2017 Head of curators of the Open air museum Old Village in Sirogojno (EMYA Nominee 2014), author of numerous exhibitions and museum projects. In 2017 gained the highest curatorial status – museum advisor and won the ICOM Serbia Award for the museum professional (curator) of the year. Editor in chief (2012–2017) of the International Yearbook: *Open air museums* (80 authors / 40 countries). Co-editor of the publication *Discussing heritage and museum* (2016–2017) University of Sorbonne, Paris 1. Publications: *To live or revive everyday life* (2014), *9 Lives of Curator – How to become more relevant* (2017–2018).

Dr Sheila Watson, Associate Professor, University of Leicester, School of Museum Studies. She is interested in the ways in which the museum can be democratized and made relevant to current political and social concerns, particularly in the ways in which the past is used for this purpose. She is currently working on a monograph about the ways in which nations essentialise their origins and what this tells us about contemporary politics and society. Editor of the books: *Museums and their Communities*, Routledge, 2007; *Museum Revolutions*, Routledge, 2007 (with S. Knell and S., MacLeod); *A Museums Studies Approach to Heritage*, Routledge, 2018 (with A. Barnes and K. Bunning).

Dr Katarzyna Jagodzińska, Assistant Professor, Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Institute of European Studies, and Chief Specialist at the Research Institute of European Heritage, International Cultural Centre in Krakow. She is an expert in museum studies and cultural heritage. Author of the book *Czas muzeów. Muzea i centra sztuki współczesnej w Europie Środkowej (1989–2014)* [The Museum Age in Central Europe. Museums and Centres of Contemporary Art (1989–2014)] (Kraków, 2014) which was the first study of this important phenomenon, and *Art Museums in Australia* (Kraków 2017) which is the result of a research project at the Australian Institute of Art History, University of Melbourne.