



**LIVE WEBINAR SERIES**

# WHAT IS A MUSEUM?

## An Exploration in Six Parts

Webinar Series sponsored by the US National Committee of the International Council of Museums (ICOM-US)

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## WHAT IS A MUSEUM? AN EXPLORATION IN SIX PARTS

Join your museum colleagues to discuss what makes a museum, a museum. The very core of our existence is being questioned today both within the museum field and the broader society. We are at a transformative moment in the history of museums. Contribute to this critical dialogue in a series of webinars investigating how museums meet their sustainable, ethical, political, social and cultural responsibilities in the 21st century. This six-part series brings international museum experts together to contribute to our understanding of the challenges in our world and thoughts toward a new definition for "museum" in the United States.

Webinar Series sponsored by the US National Committee of the International Council of Museums (ICOM-US)

### Pricing Information

- ICOM Members\*: free access (\$0 registration fee)
- Non-members: \$20 registration fee

\*The institution representatives (3) may access the webinar through their ICOM member number. Any additional staff members looking to register, please contact [icomus@icom.museum](mailto:icomus@icom.museum).


**Pro Tip:** Attending as a non-member: \$20 per webinar x 7 webinars = **\$140 total webinar package**  
As an Individual ICOM-US member: \$0 per webinar x 7 webinars = 0, with your **\$135 membership\*\***

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### Registration

Click on each webinar below to find registration information.



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### Upcoming Events

Tue Jan 19, 2021

[Decolonisation: Moving Towards a More Holistic Perspective and Relational Approach](#)

Category: Affiliate

Tue Jan 19, 2021

[WHAT IS A MUSEUM? Part Two](#)

Category: US

Wed Jan 27, 2021

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[WHAT IS A MUSEUM? Part Three](#)

Category: US

Tue Mar 16, 2021

[WHAT IS A MUSEUM? Part Four](#)

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### Our Tweets

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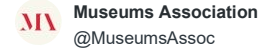
Zoom Webinar. **Recordings of webinars will be uploaded to members only section of ICOM-US website.**

Click on the webinar to find details about the event.



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LIVE WEBINAR

ICOM-US presents:

# WHAT IS A MUSEUM?

## An Exploration in Six Parts

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2020 @ 12:00 EST





**Elaine Heumann Gurian**, Senior Museum Consultant



**Tom Loughman**, Director and CEO, Wadsworth Athenaeum of Art, Co-Chair, ICOM-US



**Rick West**, President and CEO, Autry Museum of the American West, ICOM-US Board Member

### INTRODUCTION

November 17, 2020

12pm- 1pm EST

What is the purpose of museums today? How do museums meet their sustainable, ethical, political, social, cultural challenges and responsibilities in the 21st century? Do museums reflect the accountability and transparency under which they are expected to acquire and use their material, financial, social and intellectual resources?

#### Speakers:

**Elaine Heumann Gurian**, Senior Museum Consultant

**Tom Loughman**, Director and CEO, Wadsworth Athenaeum of Art, Co-Chair, ICOM-US

**Rick West**, President and CEO, Autry Museum of the American West, ICOM-US Board Member

#### Moderators:

**Alejandra Peña Gutiérrez**, Executive Director, Museo de Arte de Ponce, ICOM-US Executive Committee

**Kate Quinn**, Executive Director, James A. Michener Art Museum, ICOM-US Executive Committee


ICOM-US Members can view the [recording here](#).

### Bios

#### Elaine Heumann Gurian

Elaine Heumann Gurian, is a consultant/advisor to museums and visitor centers that are beginning, building or reinventing themselves. Gurian writes, speaks and teaches about museums and inclusion around the world. She was awarded the Distinguished Service to Museums Award in 2004.



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#### Our Tweets



**Tom Loughman**

*Thomas J. Loughman is the Director and Chief Executive Officer at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art in Hartford, Connecticut. He assumed the role of the 11th Director at the Wadsworth Atheneum in February 2016, just months after the institution completed a major renovation. Previously he served as the Associate Director at Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts, (2008-2016) as well as in a variety of curatorial, research and teaching roles in the field.*

*Dr. Loughman is a scholar of Italian art and has lectured and published particularly on the art, architecture, patronage, and urbanism in early renaissance Florence. Additionally, he has contributed to numerous exhibition catalogues on artists as diverse as Claude Monet, Jean-Leon Gérôme, Jusepe de Ribera, and Nicolas Poussin. As a curator, he has spearheaded a number of projects highlighting Baroque art in Naples, printmaking in twentieth century Philadelphia, a focus on sculptors as draftsmen, ancient bronzes from China, as well as the global tour of the Clark's core collection. Other initiatives have focused on creating a corpus of early Italian paintings and the American Southwest, a course on Giotto Di Bondone, and an exhibition and related catalogue examining Sterling Clark's career as a military officer and explorer in late Imperial China.*

*Dr. Loughman earned his AB from Georgetown University where he was a George F. Baker Scholar; the MA from Williams College; and PhD from Rutgers University, where he was a Fulbright Scholar and a Kress Fellow. He lives in the Hartford area with his wife and two daughters.*

**Rick West**

*W. Richard West, Jr. serves as the President and CEO of the Autry Museum of the American West in Los Angeles, and is Director Emeritus and Founding Director of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian. He is a citizen of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma and a member of the Southern Cheyenne Society of Peace Chiefs. West currently is a member of the Board of Directors of ICOM-US, the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, and Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums. He previously served on the Boards of the Ford Foundation, Stanford University, and the Kaiser Family Foundation. He also was Chair of the Board of Directors of the American Alliance of Museums (1998 – 2000) and Vice President of the International Council of Museums (2007 – 2010).*

**Alejandra Peña Gutierrez**

*Alejandra Peña is a certified Architect from the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and has Art History Master's Degree studies from the Faculty of Philosophy and Literature of said university. She taught Architecture at the bachelor level at Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Universidad Anáhuac, Universidad Iberoamericana, and also Art History at the Center for Design, Cinema and Television in Mexico City.*

*Her experience in the field of museums starts in Mexico City as Head of the Museography Department of the Museo Nacional de San Carlos, later she worked as Associate Curator for the Museo de Arte Moderno, then as Deputy Director at the Museo del Palacio de Bellas Artes where later she also held the position of Director.*

*In 2001 she was appointed Deputy Director General of the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes (INBA) in Mexico.*

*She worked on the conception and development of the Center for Design, Cinema and Television, where she was in charge at the beginning of the Academic Coordination and later of directing the Continuing Education Program.*

*She was Executive Assistant to the General Director of INBA, then Director of Cultural Promotion for the Directorate General of Educational and Cultural Collaboration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. From 2009 to 2012, she held the position of Deputy Director General of Artistic Heritage for INBA.*

*During the second half of 2012, she moved to Puerto Rico to become the Deputy Director of the Museo de Arte de Ponce; museum of which she was appointed Executive Director in September 2013.*

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*Alejandra Peña has been part of the ICOM-US Board since 2018, where she is now Co-Chair of the Programming Committee. In January 2020 she was appointed Member of the Disaster Risk Management Standing Committee (DRMC) which advises the Executive Board and the Advisory Council of ICOM.*

**Kate Quinn**

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ICOM-USA presents:  
**WHAT IS A MUSEUM?**  
An Exploration in Six Parts

**Part 1:**  
**SAFE PLACES OR SOCIAL SPACES?**

Tuesday, December 15, 2020 @ 12:00 EST

**Andrés Roldán,**  
Parque Explora  
Science Center,  
Colombia

**Linda Norris,**  
International  
Coalition of Sites  
of Conscience

**Ihor Poshyvailo,**  
Maidan Museum,  
Vice Chair of DRMC,  
Ukraine

**What is a Museum? An Exploration in Six Parts**  
**PART 1: SAFE PLACES OR SOCIAL SPACES?**

Tuesday December 15, 2020  
12pm EST

[Presentation Reference Guide for Attendees](#)

**ICOM-US Members can view the [recording here.](#)**

Museums are committed to be recognized as meaningful meeting places, open and diverse platforms for learning, exchange and progress. What should be the role of museums in a time of social scrutiny and transformation? What actions can be taken to provide a wide and inclusive experience to share knowledge and promote understanding in a safe environment for all?

**Speakers:**

**Andrés Roldán,** *Parque Explora Science Center, Colombia*

**Linda Norris,** *Senior Specialist, Methodology and Practice, International Coalition of Sites of Conscience*

**Ihor Poshyvailo,** *Maidan Museum, Vice Chair of DRMC, Ukraine*

**Moderators:**

**Rick West,** *President and CEO, Autry Museum of the American West, ICOM-US Board Member*


**Diana Pardue,** *Director, Museum Services Division - Statue of Liberty & Ellis Island, ICOM-US Board Member*

**Bios**

**Andrés Roldán**

*As Director of Parque Explora, Colombia's largest science museum, aquarium and planetarium, Andrés*



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*Roldán works with his team the creation of compelling and innovative learning environments and museums for science and cultural engagement. He also pursues to dilute the museum's walls and take it to different territories and communities, educational strategies, community processes, and itinerant experiences that connect people through learning experiences.*

*Andrés has a vast experience in the conceptualization, design and construction of exhibitions, as well as in the development of educational strategies. He also stands out for cultural planning, alliance builder, fund-raising, and management of interdisciplinary teams.*

*As an active participant in Medellín's transformation, Roldán's work is based on the paradigm of socially committed museums. He believes the union between education, culture, urban planning and architecture is vital for fostering sustainable community development and social justice.*

### **Linda Norris**

*Linda Norris is Senior Specialist, Methodology and Practice at the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience (ICSC) In this role she facilitates connections and builds the capacity of members and other organizations in the work of using the past to create a more just future. ICSC is s the only global network of historic sites, museums and memory initiatives that connects past struggles to today's movements for human rights.*

*At the Coalition, she has spearheaded innovative projects such as the re-interpretation of Maison des Esclaves, Africa's first World Heritage Site; a digital map of sites of human rights abuses in the Middle East and North African regions; and workshops on the re-imagining of the place of Native American women in the New York State landscape.*

*As the co-author of Creativity in Museum Practice, Linda is an international thought leader in facilitating conversation and action surrounding the ways creativity can transform museums, shape more compelling narratives and create deeper, more inclusive community connections. She has also written for publications such as Museum, Exhibitionist and History News.*

*Linda holds an M.A. in History Museum Studies from the Cooperstown Graduate Program and an AB from Cornell University. She was a U.S. Fulbright Scholar to Ukraine in 2009 and continues her involvement with the Ukrainian cultural sector. She has facilitated workshops for museum colleagues throughout the United States, as well as in Canada, Ukraine, Romania, Albania and the Baltics.*

*She represents Sites of Conscience in international museum and heritage contexts. In 2019, she presented sessions at ICOM Kyoto, and at conferences in locations such as Estonia, Ukraine, Sierra Leone and Turkey. She has been featured on the Museopunks podcast, "[A new definition of museum?](#)" as well as Dan Snow's History Hit podcast.*

### **Ihor Poshyvailo**

*Ihor Poshyvailo is a general director of the National Memorial to the Heavenly Hundred Heroes and Revolution of Dignity Museum (Maidan Museum) in Kyiv, Ukraine. He is a Vice-Chair of the ICOM DRMC Committee, member of ICOM ICMEMO. Ihor is ex-chairman of the Museum Council at the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture. He holds PhD in History, was a Fulbright Scholar at the Smithsonian Institution; an international fellow at the DeVos Institute of Arts Management at the Kennedy Center; a participant of the First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis training courses in the Netherlands, US and Italy. He is author of the award-winning book Phenomenology of Pottery, as well as numerous articles on the arts and culture, cultural heritage preservation, interpretation in museums, cultural emergency management, presentation of conflicted history in museums.*

*He is co-moderator and co-organizer of the museum management and disaster risk management workshops in Ukraine provided by the Fund for Arts and Culture in Central and Eastern Europe, the US Embassy in Ukraine, Smithsonian Institution, Prince Claus Fund and ICCROM.*

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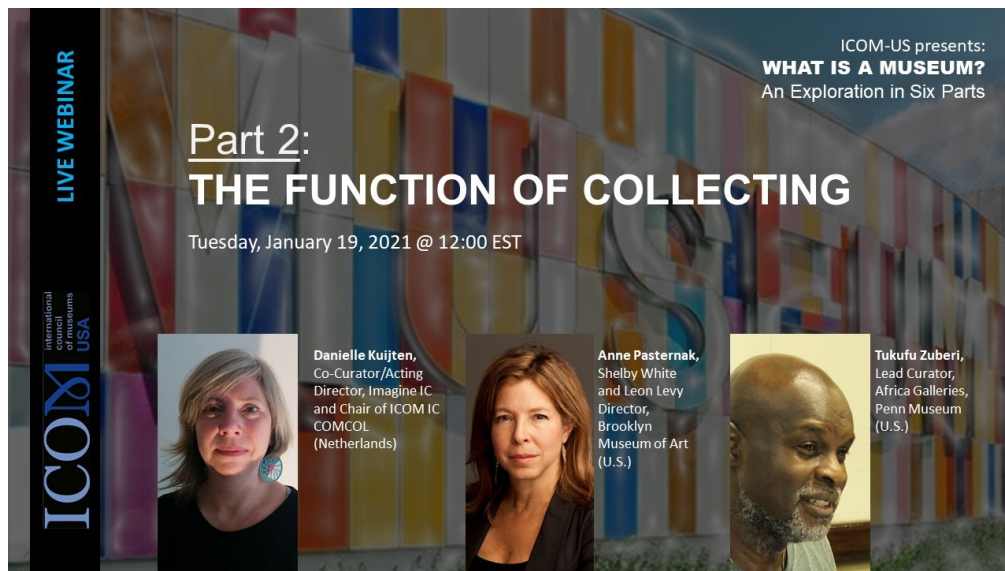
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ICOM-US presents:  
**WHAT IS A MUSEUM?**  
An Exploration in Six Parts

**Part 2:**  
**THE FUNCTION OF COLLECTING**

Tuesday, January 19, 2021 @ 12:00 EST

**Danielle Kuijten**,  
Co-Curator/Acting  
Director, Imagine IC  
and Chair of ICOM IC  
COMCOL  
(Netherlands)

**Anne Pasternak**,  
Shelby White  
and Leon Levy  
Director,  
Brooklyn  
Museum of Art  
(U.S.)

**Tukufu Zuberi**,  
Lead Curator,  
Africa Galleries,  
Penn Museum  
(U.S.)

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### What is a Museum? An Exploration in Six Parts

#### PART 2: THE FUNCTION OF COLLECTING

Tuesday January 19, 2021

12pm EST

The defining essential unity in museums are the functions of collecting, preserving, documenting, researching, exhibiting and in other ways, communicating and interpreting evidence of human culture and history for the benefit of everyone. Should our collections shift as our communities do? In a world aimed towards political correctness, how do we address collections as a result of power and colonization? The elephant in the room ... deaccession!

#### Speakers

**Danielle Kuijten**, *Co-Curator/Acting Director, Imagine IC and Chair of ICOM International Committee COMCOL (Netherlands)*

**Anne Pasternak**, *Shelby White and Leon Levy Director, Brooklyn Museum of Art (U.S.)*

**Tukufu Zuberi**, *Lead Curator, Africa Galleries, Penn Museum (U.S.)*

#### Moderators

**Kathy Dwyer Southern**, *Professor, Museum Studies Program, George Washington University, ICOM-US Board Member and Immd. Past Co-Chair*

**William Eiland**, *Director, Georgia Museum of Art, ICOM-US Board Member and Treasurer*

#### Bios



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#### Our Tweets

### Danielle Kuijten

*Danielle Kuijten holds a Master of Museology from the Reinwardt Academy / Amsterdam University of the Arts. She is acting director and co-curator at Imagine IC, a pioneer in the field of contemporary heritage practices. Recent projects she produced here were on topics of resistance, gender and slavery. At Imagine IC she also heads the co-collection lab. This lab researches a variety of collecting/collection questions like how to work with shared authority, democratizing heritage practices. As a freelancer she is active in the heritage field under the name Heritage Concepting. Her main focus in projects is on participatory collecting methods, contemporary collecting, action curating and reflective practice. Danielle has been an active member of COMCOL ICOM's international committee for collecting, and since 2019 in the role of chair.*

### Anne Pasternak

*Since 2015, Anne Pasternak has served as the Shelby White and Leon Levy Director of the Brooklyn Museum, one of the oldest and largest fine arts institutions in the nation. For more than thirty years, Anne has devoted her career to engaging broad audiences with the limitless power of art to move, motivate, and inspire. As a staunch advocate for the civic and democratic roles our cultural and educational institutions can play, she is committed to projects that demonstrate the crucial links between art and social justice.*

*During her time at the Brooklyn Museum, Anne has focused on strengthening the Museum as a center for the visual arts that is courageous, pioneering, and global. Through her leadership, Anne has expanded exhibitions, educational and public programs, and fostered special exhibitions, including *The Legacy of Lynching: Confronting Racial Terror in America*, *We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965–85*, *Georgia O'Keeffe: Living Modern*, *David Bowie is*, *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power*, and *Frida Kahlo: Appearances Can Be Deceiving*. These initiatives are building the foundations for the Brooklyn Museum's new Strategic Plan, to further the Museum's mission to create inspiring encounters with art and engage the audiences the issues of today.*

*Prior to joining the Brooklyn Museum, Anne served as the President and Artistic Director of Creative Time for two decades, where she initiated projects that gave artists opportunities to respond to political and environmental challenges, while also expanding their practice and work globally. She collaborated with hundreds of artists, including Nick Cave, Paul Chan, Jenny Holzer, and Kara Walker, commissioning and presenting works that ranged from sculptural installations in Grand Central Station's Vanderbilt Hall to skywriting over Manhattan, as well as *Tribute in Light*, the twin beacons of light that illuminated the sky above the former World Trade Center site, and continue to be presented on the anniversaries of 9/11.*

### Tukufu Zuberi

*Dr. Tukufu Zuberi is the Lasry Family Professor of Race Relations, and Professor of Sociology and Africana Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. He is the Lead Curator of the Africa Galleries at the Penn Museum. Dr. Zuberi's vision is dedicated to education.*

*Dr. Zuberi is the curator of several exhibitions. He curated **Tides of Freedom: African Presence on the Delaware** at the Independence Seaport Museum (Premiered in May 2013). Using four key moments in Philadelphia's history representing the themes of Enslavement, Emancipation, Jim Crow, and Civil Rights, **Tides of Freedom** urges visitors both to bear witness to a story central to Philadelphia and American history, and to think about the meaning of "freedom" both historically and in today's world.*

*His exhibition, **Black Bodies in Propaganda: The Art of the War Poster** premiered at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in June 2013. The **Black Bodies in Propaganda** exhibit was also presented at the Northwest African American Museum in Seattle, Washington (2016), and at the Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma (2017). Professor Zuberi is curating the redesign of the Penn Museum Africa Gallery (opening in 2019). Professor Zuberi curated the redesign of the Penn Museum Africa Gallery **AFRICA GALLERIES from Maker to Museum** (2019). He directed nine interstitials as part of the **AFRICA GALLERIES from Maker to Museum** at the Penn Museum.*

*From 2003 to 2014, Dr. Zuberi was a host of the hit Public Broadcasting System (PBS) series **History Detectives**. The History Detectives regularly presented the social history of American culture to the public. In 2014, Dr. Zuberi returned as host and co-producer of the summer PBS series **History***

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**Detectives: Special Investigations.** He is the writer and producer of **African Independence**, a feature-length documentary film that highlights the birth, realization, and problems confronted by the movement to win independence in Africa. *African Independence* was selected and featured at over a dozen film festivals, and was the recipient of various awards. Completed in 2020, his feature-length documentary on memory and pre-colonialism in Africa is entitled **Before Things Fell Apart**. His most recent short documentary on African material culture in museums is entitled **Decolonizing the Narrative: Africa Galleries from Maker to Museum (2020)**. The first in a series of 3 short documentaries, **Decolonizing the Narrative**, is a 30-minute exploration of the debates about Museums, Reparations; Restitution; and Race.

Dr. Zuberi is the author of *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot: The Mortality Cost of Colonizing Liberia in the Nineteenth-Century*, published by the University of Chicago Press in 1995; *Thicker than Blood: How Racial Statistics Lie*, published by the University of Minnesota Press in 2001; *Más espeso que la sangre: la mentira del análisis estadístico según teorías biológicas de la raza*, published by Universidad Nacional de Colombia, in Bogotá in 2013; and *Africa Independence: How Africa Shapes the World*, published by Rowman & Littlefield Publishers in 2015. He has written more than 70 scholarly articles, and edited or co-edited eight volumes. These edited volumes include *White Logic, White Methods: Racism and Methodology* (with Eduardo Bonilla-Silva) that was awarded the Oliver Cromwell Cox Book Award by the American Sociological Association. He completed a manuscript on *African Words and Memory* (forthcoming). He is competing an edited volume on the *Decolonizing the Narrative of the Penn Museum Africa Galleries*.

Born Antonio McDaniel to Willie and Annie McDaniel, and raised in the housing projects of "Tassafaronga" in Oakland, California, he later embraced the name Tukufu Zuberi - Swahili for "beyond praise" and "strength." He took the name because of a desire to make and have a connection with an important period in which social movements in the United States and other nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America were challenging what it means to be a human being.

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## What is a Museum? An Exploration in Six Parts

### PART 3: THE WHITENESS OF MUSEUMS

Tuesday February 16, 2021

12pm EST

Museums are undergoing an effort to acknowledge and recognize with concern the legacies and continuous presence of deep societal inequalities and asymmetries of power and wealth across the globe, nationally, regionally and locally. How could museums reverse their lineage and attain diversity in a continuous organic fashion? Can tokenism eventually lead to core transformation and inclusion?

#### Speakers

**George Abungu**, *Professor of Heritage Studies, University of Mauritius*

**Christopher Bedford**, *Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director, The Baltimore Museum of Art*

**Christina Woods**, *Executive Director, Duluth Art Institute*

#### Moderators

**Lyndel King**, *Director Emeritus, Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum, ICOM-US Board Member*

**Kate Quinn**, *Executive Director, James A. Michener Art Museum, ICOM-US Board Member and Program Committee Co-Chair*

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#### Bios

##### George Abungu

##### Christopher Bedford

*Christopher Bedford is the Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director of The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA) and the 10th director to lead the museum, which is renowned for its outstanding collections of 19th-century, modern, and contemporary art. Recognized as an innovative and dynamic leader for building greater community engagement and creating programs of national and international impact, Bedford served as director of the Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University for four years prior to joining the BMA and was appointed as Commissioner for the U.S. Pavilion for the 2017 Venice Biennale, the world's most prestigious contemporary art fair, which presented an exhibition of new work by American artist Mark Bradford. Previously, Bedford held the positions of chief curator and curator of exhibitions at the Wexner Center for the Arts at The Ohio State University (2008-2012), where he organized a nationally travelling exhibition of the work of Mark Bradford. He also served as assistant curator and curatorial assistant in the Department of Contemporary Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2006-2008) and consulting curator in the Department of Sculpture and Decorative Arts for the J. Paul Getty Museum (2006-2008). Born in Scotland and raised in the United States and the UK, Bedford has a Bachelor of Arts from Oberlin College, received a master's degree in art history through the joint program at Case Western Reserve University and the Cleveland Museum of Art, and has studied in the doctoral programs in art history at the University of Southern California and the Courtauld Institute of Art at the University of London. Bedford is also a noted author and contributor to publications including Art in America, ArtForum, and Frieze, among others. He is currently a trustee of Art + Practice, Greater Baltimore*



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*Cultural Alliance, and Maryland Citizens for the Arts.*

**Christina Woods**

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## What is a Museum? An Exploration in Six Parts

### PART 4: MUSEUMS AS INFLUENCERS

Tuesday March 16, 2021


12pm EST

Museums have a shared commitment, responsibility and authority in relationship to their communities. Museums are places of learning and exploration, key institutions for influence and dissemination of public scholarship. How can museums best portray the identity and memory of their communities? How can museums not only chronicle the past, but depict the present and become touchstones for the future of their communities?

**Speakers:** *to be confirmed*

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#### Upcoming Events

Tue Jan 19, 2021

[Decolonisation: Moving Towards a More Holistic Perspective and Relational Approach](#)

Category: Affiliate

Tue Jan 19, 2021

[WHAT IS A MUSEUM? Part Two](#)

Category: US

Wed Jan 27, 2021

[021 / 2022 J. S. Lee Memorial Fellowship Programme is Open for Application](#)

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Tue Feb 16, 2021

[WHAT IS A MUSEUM? Part Three](#)

Category: US

Tue Mar 16, 2021

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[COVID-19 Resources &](#)

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#### Our Tweets

## What is a Museum? An Exploration in Six Parts

### PART 5: CRISIS: ENVIRONMENTALISM, SUSTAINABILITY, AND MUSEUMS

Tuesday April 20, 2021


12pm EST

Museums must acknowledge the urgency of the crisis in nature and the imperative need to develop and implement sustainable solutions. How prepared are museums to face climate change, civil unrest and economic crisis? The toll to pay when preparedness is the last of our priorities.

**Speakers:** to be confirmed

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#### Our Tweets

## What is a Museum? An Exploration in Six Parts

### PART 6: WHAT NOW?

Thursday May 13, 2021

12pm EST


Museums are often perceived as solid institutions with a slow adjustment to change. What is the future of museums in a fast-changing world of economic uncertainty, social disruption, health challenges and climate change? What is the essence that should define us now? What lessons have we learned from the needs of the communities we claim to serve and how can we better adapt to shift our priorities in a faster and efficient way?

#### Speakers: *Confirmed*

- ICOM-US Co-Chair, Lonnie Bunch
- Definition Committee Members
- Program Committee Members or moderators

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#### Upcoming Events

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**WHAT IS A MUSEUM?  
AN EXPLORATION IN SIX PARTS**

*Webinar Series sponsored by the US National Committee of the International Council of Museums  
(ICOM-US)*

**Organizers/Moderators:** Staff: Molly and Morgan

Museum Definition Task Force Members: Kate Quinn, Alejandra Pena, Diana Pardue, Rick West, Kathy Dwyer Southern, Bill Eiland, Lyndel King and Eric Dorfman. Additional Program Committee Members: Elizabeth Varner, Virginia Curry and Joanne Flores. *Note (ICOM-US Reps): Diana Pardue and Elizabeth Varner are on MDPP2 and Eric Dorfman is on ICOM EB.*

**Date/Frequency:** Webinars held the 3rd Tuesday of each month (except the closing webinar)

**Target Audience:** ICOM-US Members (attend for free).

- Registration
  - ICOM-US Members- free access (\$0 registration fee)
  - Non-members: \$20 registration fee

**Platform/Technology:** Zoom Webinar (up to 500 attendees can join).

- Record webinars and upload to members only section of ICOM-US website.

**Speakers/Panelists:**

- Each speaker gets 5-10 minutes to present (three speakers), then majority of time will be left for Q&A. Questions sent in advance, receive each speakers POV to the same questions, then take live questions from the attendees.

**Marketing- Series Description:** <https://www.icomus.org/upcoming-events>

WHAT IS A MUSEUM? AN EXPLORATION IN SIX PARTS

*Join your museum colleagues to discuss what makes a museum, a museum. The very core of our existence is being questioned today both within the museum field and the broader society. We are at a transformative moment in the history of museums. Contribute to this critical dialogue in a series of webinars investigating how museums meet their sustainable, ethical, political, social and cultural responsibilities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This six-part series brings international museum experts together to contribute to our understanding of the challenges in our world and thoughts toward a new definition for “museum” in the United States.*

*Webinar Series sponsored by the US National Committee of the International Council of Museums  
(ICOM-US)*

**I. What is a Museum? An Exploration in Six Parts**

**INTRODUCTION**

TUESDAY, November 17, 2020

12pm, EST

[Featured on our website HERE.](#)

What is the purpose of museums today? How do museums meet their sustainable, ethical, political, social, cultural challenges and responsibilities in the 21st century? Do museums reflect the accountability and transparency under which they are expected to acquire and use their material, financial, social and intellectual resources?

**Speakers:** (one international person, one non-museum person-- Get the outsider perspective?)

1. ICOM-US Co-Chair- **Tom Loughman- confirmed**
2. Former MDPP2 member- **Rick West- confirmed**
3. **Elaine Gurian- confirmed**

**Moderator:** Kate and Alejandra

**Organizers:** Staff (Molly/Morgan)

**1) What is a Museum? An Exploration in Six Parts**

**PART 1: SAFE PLACES OR SOCIAL SPACES?**

TUESDAY, December 15, 2020

12pm, EST

Museums are committed to be recognized as meaningful meeting places, open and diverse platforms for learning, exchange and progress. What should be the role of museums in a time of social scrutiny and transformation? What actions can be taken to provide a wide and inclusive experience to share knowledge and promote understanding in a safe environment for all?

**Speakers:**

- **Andrés Roldan**, *Parqué Explora Science Center, Colombia- confirmed*
- **Linda Norris**, *Senior Specialist, Methodology and Practice, International Coalition of Sites of Conscience- confirmed*
- **Ihor Poshyvailo**, *Maidan Museum, Vice Chair of DRMC, Ukraine- confirmed*

**Moderator:** Rick and Diana

**Organizers:** Staff (Molly/Morgan) & Program co-chair

**2) What is a Museum? An Exploration in Six Parts**  
**PART 2: THE FUNCTION OF COLLECTING**

TUESDAY, January 19, 2021  
12pm, EST

The defining essential unity in museums are the functions of collecting, preserving, documenting, researching, exhibiting and in other ways, communicating and interpreting evidence of human culture and history for the benefit of everyone. Should our collections shift as our communities do? In a world aimed towards political correctness, how do we address collections as a result of power and colonization? The elephant in the room ... deaccession!

**Speakers:** *to be confirmed*

- **Danielle Kuijten**, Co-Curator/Acting Director, Imagine IC and Chair of ICOM IC COMCOL (Netherlands)- **confirmed**
- **Anne Pasternak**, Shelby White and Leon Levy Director, Brooklyn Museum of Art (U.S.)- **confirmed**
- **Tukufu Zuberi**, Lead Curator, Africa Galleries, Penn Museum (U.S.)- **confirmed**

**Moderator:** Bill and Kathy

**Organizers:** Staff (Molly/Morgan) & Program co-chair

**3) What is a Museum? An Exploration in Six Parts**  
**PART 3: THE WHITENESS OF MUSEUMS**

TUESDAY, February 16, 2021  
12pm, EST

Museums are undergoing an effort to acknowledge and recognize with concern the legacies and continuous presence of deep societal inequalities and asymmetries of power and wealth across the globe, nationally, regionally and locally. How could museums reverse their lineage and attain diversity in a continuous organic fashion? Can tokenism eventually lead to core transformation and inclusion?

**Speakers:** *to be confirmed*

- **George Abungu**, Professor of Heritage Studies, University of Mauritius- **confirmed**
- **Christopher Bedford**, Dorothy Wagner Wallis Director, The Baltimore Museum of Art- **confirmed**
- **Christina Woods**, Executive Director, Duluth Art Institute- **confirmed**

**Moderator:** Kate and Lyndel

**Organizers:** Staff (Molly/Morgan) & Program co-chair

**4) What is a Museum? An Exploration in Six Parts**

**PART 4: MUSEUMS AS INFLUENCERS**

TUESDAY, March 16, 2021

12pm, EST

Museums have a shared commitment, responsibility and authority in relationship to their communities. Museums are places of learning and exploration, key institutions for influence and dissemination of public scholarship. How can museums best portray the identity and memory of their communities? How can museums not only chronicle the past, but depict the present and become touchstones for the future of their communities?

**Speakers:** *to be confirmed*

**Moderator:** Rick and Diana

**Organizers:** Staff (Molly/Morgan) & Program co-chair

**5) What is a Museum? An Exploration in Six Parts**

**PART 5: CRISIS: ENVIRONMENTALISM, SUSTAINABILITY, AND MUSEUMS**

TUESDAY, April 20, 2021

12pm, EST

Museums must acknowledge the urgency of the crisis in nature and the imperative need to develop and implement sustainable solutions. How prepared are museums to face climate change, civil unrest and economic crisis? The toll to pay when preparedness is the last of our priorities.

**Speakers:** to be confirmed

**Moderator:** Kathy, Bill, and Lyndel

**Organizers:** Staff (Molly/Morgan) & Program co-chair



**6) What is a Museum? An Exploration in Six Parts**

**PART 6: WHAT NOW?**

THURSDAY- May 13, 2021

12pm, EST

**\*\*WEEK OF ICOM-US ANNUAL MEETING\*\***

Museums are often perceived as solid institutions with a slow adjustment to change. What is the future of museums in a fast-changing world of economic uncertainty, social disruption, health challenges and climate change? What is the essence that should define us now? What lessons have we learned from the needs of the communities we claim to serve and how can we better adapt to shift our priorities in a faster and efficient way?

**Speakers:** *Confirmed*

- ICOM-US Co-Chair, **Lonnie Bunch- Confirmed.**
- Definition Committee Members (Kate, Alejandra, Rick, Lyndel, Bill, Kathy, Diana)
- Program Committee Members or moderators (internal)

**Moderator:** Kate and Alejandra

**Organizers:** Staff (Molly/Morgan)