

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

Museums and intangible heritage: transmission, know-how and museum conservation INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM

8 and 9 November 2019: Mons – Binche

Partners: Doudou Museum (Municipality of Mons) and International Carnival and Mask Under the high patronage of the Belgian French-speaking and German-speaking Commission for UNESCO

Venues: International Carnival and Mask Museum (MUM – Binche), Townhall of Mons, Artothèque, St-Calixte Chapel (site of the belfry) and Mons Memorial Museum (in the afternoon, workshops will take place in the different locations).

Fifteen years after the adoption of the UNESCO convention for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, this interdisciplinary international colloquium aims at stimulating exchange between artists, artisans, academic researchers, heritage conservators, practitioners and the specialized public in order to discuss the difficulties encountered in the transmission of know-how, a major issue in arts and crafts as well as in the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.

Today technological, economic and social changes generate a number of realities and questions within the framework of the experimentation of ways of transmission of know-how and skills. Communities and individuals are trying to meet this challenge at different levels by using different systems of transmission. Researchers from various disciplines (art history, anthropology, history etc.), heads of administration, artists, artisans and practitioners will share their ideas from a critical and comparative perspective.

The longevity of oral and intangible heritage is not only ensured by the actors of these traditions supposed to hand down the know-how connected with them, but also by the responsible persons in the museums who have a duty of remembrance towards the society which they represent and by the policies setting the framework for these manifestations.

One of the museum's missions is to preserve and display its collections which are tangible by nature. However, when objects also comprise intangible aspects, the question arises of how and if museums can provide a faithful image of these objects taking into account as well the intangible element. The museum is historically linked to its objects which gave rise to its foundation and which at the same time determine its mode of operation. However, we can clearly state today that a presentation focused on the objects is insufficient. When it comes to intangible heritage, and even if there is a historical dimension, the museum has to integrate a changing and evolving contemporaneity. Today the museum must put these objects in their local and more global, geographic and territorial, social, economic, political, cultural, religious context; it must take into account their physical, biological and technological environment, the institutions, law, behaviors, their relation to time, power, others etc.

Shifting away from its traditional content (fine arts, history, ethnology etc.), the museum must find other approaches. New technologies may, for example, be new interesting carriers. Today the question of the restitution of all material forms of reality confronts the museum with three elements: ethics (what must be done), technique (what can be done) and museography (what is shown) (Martinez, 2003). Intangible heritage is interdependent on the objects and the same is true for the museum. Therefore it has to find the right balance between the exhibition of the intangible and its contexts and its subordination to the objects.

These are the different issues that will be highlighted. On the same occasion the question of the museum's role can also be raised. Should it preserve? Witness? Contextualize? Preserve? Make objects "come alive"? Or accessible?

Objectives:

- Facilitate the networking between actors of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) and the sharing of experiences;
- Reflect on suitable methodological tools to be implemented or created in order to guarantee the preservation and the inventory of this type of heritage;
- Work on the establishment of criteria and methodologies of integration of tangible and intangible heritage in the museums and other institutions dealing with heritage;
- Propose actions aiming at facilitating the preservation of know-how and craftsmanship connected with this intangible heritage, recognized by UNESCO or not;
- Reflect on interdisciplinary and intersectoral approaches allowing a global apprehension of different forms of cultural heritage: movable and immovable, tangible and intangible, natural and cultural;
- Identify the threats, respond to the challenges of this kind of material and study the approaches allowing to use in the best way the possibilities offered by the technologies;
- Identify and study the tools and standards of documentation in order to implement coordinated practices in the field of museology and heritage;
- Let local communities, actors of the intangible heritage, participate in the inventory of sources of cultural heritage;
- Discuss the issue of the museum and museology within the framework of the valorization of intangible heritage.



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