



In this issue

METRICS, MEASUREMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

PAGE 2
EDITOR'S NOTE

CURCOM
DEMOGRAPHICS

PAGE 3
IDEAS CITY: THE
IMPORTANCE OF THE
UNQUANTIFIABLE
by Corinne Erni

PAGE 9
ART PLACE ASKS
FOR METRICS
by Jamie Hand

PAGE 11
MEET THE 2015
CURCOM FELLOWS

PAGE 16
GOOGLE INVITES
YOU TO CURATE
THE INTERNET
by Piotr Adamczyk

Howdy from your Chairperson!

Leadership change: two words that strike fear into most hearts, but don't fear; I intend to build upon Ellen's successes over the past six years. She created a strong foundation and saw CurCom through the transition from standing professional committee to professional network. I want to lead us to become the most successful professional network in terms of serving its membership. How can we accomplish our goal? By addressing the most pressing curatorial concerns in the field. Toward that end, we are engaging AAM's leadership in discussions about the future of curators in the profession.

The 2016 annual meeting program will include a curatorial session track. This is a significant step forward for curators, and thanks go to Ellen for that accomplishment. She will be serving on the national program committee as a CurCom representative. Ellen and I have been asked by the chair of the national program committee to encourage session proposal submissions that will ensure a stronger CurCom presence and attract more curators to the annual meeting.

CurCom members will receive communications from us about submitting session proposals in the coming weeks. Please take note and put your best ideas out there. The future of curators depends on you, and we know that you are dynamic, enthusiastic and energetic about what you do! If you have questions, contact Ellen Endslo, Ron Potvin, Elisa Phelps or Keni Sturgeon. Their email addresses can be found on the last page of this month's *Update*.

Lastly, here are two more opportunities for CurCom members to sharpen skills and expand personal networks through deeper involvement.

Interested in the latest trends in label writing? Join the next CurCom-generated webinar on this topic. The exact date is pending, likely late August or early September. The next webinar in our series will focus on label writing as a window to deeper audience engagement.

Haven't read the [curatorial core competencies document](#) published last Spring? You might want to before the conversation comes to your region. Watch for information about local roundtables that will continue the conversation about curatorial core competencies.

James Burns
CurCom Chairperson
Director

Editor's Note

Thank you to the contributing authors in this issue of *Update*. This issue underscores the impact of AAM's annual meeting fellowship, where the co-created value of new attendees can hardly be measured by the cost of their meeting attendance. Further, our contributors begin to unpack some of the issues around measurement and technology in museums as social institutions.

While museums are among the first to advocate for the value of ephemeral, unquantifiable and decidedly **intangible cultural resources**, they simultaneously must fit those instincts into various metrics-based frameworks that provide crucial support to their very existence (page 9). Quantifying program efficacy or translating an object into a digital record, for example, requires what sometimes feels more like transliteration or transcription. How might IDEAS CITY (page 3) be appropriately translated into an online curatorial project via Google's CMS tool (page 16)?

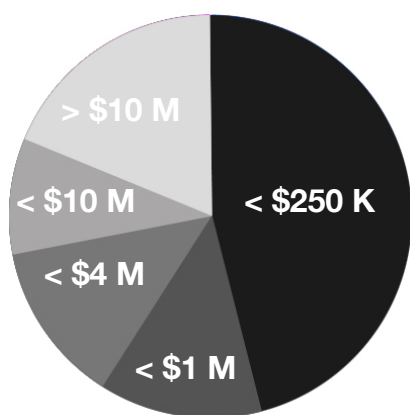
How does Google's move into the realm of digital cultural heritage stack up against other platforms such as **Europeana**? Much has been said on the topic of **digital museum practice**, but the discussion is far from over. Share your thoughts via **CurCom's Facebook** page. Also, start thinking about the fall issue of *Update*. We're seeking articles that tackle issues of naming, nomenclature, and American identity. Email ideas and questions to: tessashultz@gmail.com.

Lastly, since we've got the measuring stick out, I'll leave you with a look at CurCom demographics, three ways.

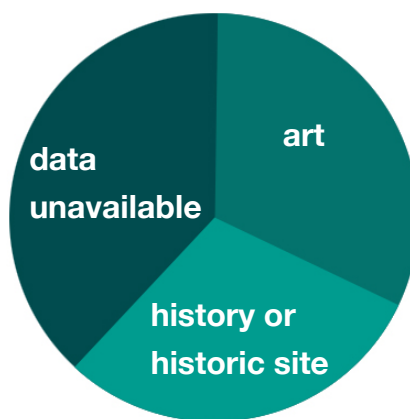
Tessa Shultz

Who is CurCom?

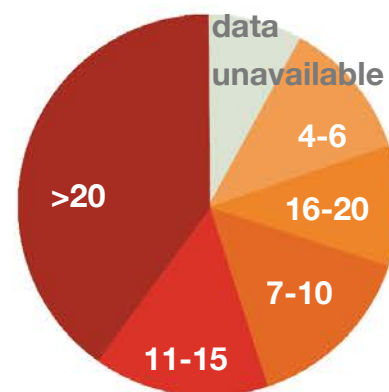
budget



institution type



years in the museum field



Source: AAM 2014.



IDEAS CITY: the importance of the unquantifiable

by Corinne Erni
Senior Producer, IDEAS CITY
New Museum

IDEAS CITY Festival New York 2015: Nomadic Place, a spectacle of temporary architecture from disused hot air balloons, by Jordi Enrich Jorba at [A Performative Conference in Nine Acts](#), at the Aula of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral. Photo by Zach Sultan.

The fifth [IDEAS CITY Festival for the Future](#) just concluded at the end of May. Twenty-five thousand visitors gathered in downtown New York City to experience three days of panels, keynotes, debates, workshops, performances, artistic and architectural interventions, and actions that brought into focus the importance of art and culture in our fast growing cities. Dozens of thought leaders, several hundred artists, and 150 local arts, education, and civic organizations engaged the public with key concerns in contemporary civic life related to this year's theme: The Invisible City—urban development, citizenship and representation, sustainability and surveillance. An auditorium, a gym, a basilica, parks and the streets around the Bowery served as programming locales. Thousands more people participated online. The numbers are impressive, but what remains imprinted in my mind are the vibrant images and the energy of so many people congregating, collectively exploring ideas for a better city.

IDEAS CITY, founded by the [New Museum](#) in 2011, explores the future of cities with culture as a driving force, to discuss key civic issues, propose solutions, and formulate action for the city of tomorrow. From its inception, IDEAS CITY was conceived as a collaborative and creative enterprise that builds on the New Museum's mission of "New Art, New Ideas" by expanding the Museum beyond its walls into the civic realm. The collaborative nature of the project begins at the organizational level; our team meets regularly with the IDEAS CITY Executive Committee, which consists of the directors of The Architectural League, Bowery Poetry Club, The Drawing Center, Storefront for Art and Architecture, and the Acting Dean of the Architecture School at The Cooper Union.

continued on page 4

After producing three biennial IDEAS CITY Festivals in New York City (2011, 2013, 2015) and two Global Conferences in Istanbul (2012) and São Paulo (2013), I have come to believe that IDEAS CITY distinguishes itself as a game-changer because of a few key

“IDEAS CITY distinguishes itself as a game-changer because of a few key ingredients—they are palpable at every level, but also hard to quantify.”

ingredients—they are palpable at every level, but also hard to quantify. They are about overcoming barriers that keep people out of museums and separated from the art inside; creating physical and conceptual spaces where the unexpected can happen; curating carefully yet allowing the informal; intersecting and amplifying creative capital from which tangible actions and projects emerge; identifying and responding to urgent issues; and finally, making participants feel welcomed, excited and relevant.

FOCUS ON ART, THEN MIX IT UP

Urban conferences have sprung up like mushrooms over the past years, but few of them are truly multidisciplinary, embrace polarized voices, and experiment with format and approach. Almost none focus on art. Art is the connective membrane in IDEAS CITY; it allows for uncomfortable questions and experimentation. As artist Paul Chan said in one of our think tanks, “art is when things can take a left turn.” The curator and writer Ana Paula Cohen, a speaker at IDEAS CITY: São Paulo, put it this way: the potential of contemporary art is, “to create symbolic cracks and transform calcified structures of common thought,” and that therefore art cannot be exploited for immediate purposes but it generates long-term effects, including cultural and economic capital.



Ana Paula Cohen and Charles Renfro at IDEAS CITY: São Paulo 2013 at Sesc Pompeia Panel, Whose Downtown is it?: Colonizing, Conceptualizing, Capitalizing. Photo by Claudia Mifano.

IDEAS CITY brings artists together with visionaries from a variety of disciplines: curators, scholars, designers, international mayors, forecasters, architects, economists, and technology experts who share ideas, propose solutions and advocate for the value of “creative capital” in our cities. Some of the most fruitful conversations sprang from unlikely pairings of people who would otherwise never sit together at the same table. For example, at this year's IDEAS CITY conference, architect Bjarke Ingels and science fiction writer Kim Stanley Robinson (*Mars* trilogy) realized that **architecture is the art and science of turning fiction into fact, while sci-fi turns facts into fiction.**

continued on page 5

Mayors from very different cities—Annise Parker from Houston, TX, Svante Myrick from Ithaca, NY and Carmen Yulín Cruz from San Juan, PR, came together to discuss their roles as shapers of their cities of very different sizes and character, and to learn from each other.

“We held IDEAS CITY: Istanbul in October 2012, a few months prior to the Taksim Square unrests. The frustration of an incapacitated youth [...] was painfully felt at the workshops...”

The benefits of highlighting diversity became most evident in our international destinations, Istanbul and São Paulo. We were often told by participants that they would have never met were it not for IDEAS CITY. In São Paulo Charles Renfro argued for top-down design while Ana Paula

Cohen advocated for bottom-up initiatives. The two sat face to face on a panel and are now still in touch. The director of Pivô, an independent art space, started to work with artists she met at the workshops.

URGENCY

High-energy think tanks incubate the next IDEAS CITY themes. We invite community activists, preservationists, artists, architects, entrepreneurs, government officials and developers to speak their mind behind closed doors about what they perceive as the most burning issues in our city—for example, how changes on the Bowery affect them and what they wish to see happen in the future. The theme of this year's Festival, The Invisible City (leaning on Italo Calvino's 1972 literary masterpiece, *Invisible Cities*), came out of one of these gatherings, as did the 2013 theme: Untapped Capital.

It is particularly rewarding to experience IDEAS CITY as a cultural and social seismograph. We held IDEAS CITY: Istanbul in October 2012, a few months prior to the Taksim Square unrests. The frustration of an incapacitated youth with respect to their repressive government was painfully felt at the workshops we held in collaboration with SALT Galata. One participant said, “we Turks have a culture of complaining but we're passive.” Another invited participant, however, excused himself with an email saying, “I have to be with my friends to announce our objection all together to the public.” It was one of the first small demonstrations on the square. A couple of months later, full-scale protests broke out, and several of our workshop participants were a part of them.



Amanda Burden, Commissioner of New York City Department of City Planning, gives keynote at IDEAS CITY: Istanbul, Hasköy Spinning Factory. Photo courtesy IDEAS CITY.

continued on page 6

A year later, we held IDEAS CITY: São Paulo at [Sesc Pompeia](#), just as unrest unfolded all over Brazil. We invited Yaşar A. Adanali, an urban researcher and activist who maintains a blog about the devastatingly massive gentrification in his home city of Istanbul, and who participated in the IDEAS CITY conference there. Adanali connected face-to-face with activists in São Paulo, expanding his network cross-continently. This year we invited Daniel Lima, an artist and activist who was a workshop leader in São Paulo, to present a performance in New York. Prior to the festival he spent a week in Harlem connecting with artists, writers and neighborhood residents living under the threat of displacement. The result was a powerful music performance and visuals from interviews with residents.

TAKE IT OUTSIDE THE AUDITORIUM AND MUSEUM WALLS

Lima was part of this year's new program, A Performative Conference in Nine Acts, which took issues discussed at the conference onto the stage. Performers Penny Arcade, Danny Hoch, DJ Rupture, Sharifa Rhodes-Pitts and Ursula Scherrer explored the invisible forces in our city through spoken word, dance, music, immersive video and sound installations. The night-long extravaganza took place at the gym and basilica of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral, which has become an important partner since the inception of IDEAS CITY.



MirrorTent and Speechbuster Storefront capture the energy of IDEAS CITY 2013 street programming. MirrorTent won the 2013 street architecture competition. Photo by Benoit Pailley.

Another important component of the biennial IDEAS CITY Festival in New York is a one-day street program that is now a fixture on the Bowery and anchors the Festival in this neighborhood. The community creates and hosts a temporary 'city of ideas' with a focus on keeping waste minimal. It is an open invitation to present new ideas for activating underused urban spaces. Since 2011, we have knocked on hundreds of doors in the Lower East Side—an area that has drastically changed since the New Museum's arrival in 2007.

continued on page 7

The result is a network of over 1,000 local arts, civic and educational organizations. Many of these partners now participate in the IDEAS CITY Festival by presenting interactive workshops, educational activities, tours and launching new projects right on the street. Prototypes of innovative street architecture are added each year to the program through competitions and partnerships.

A 2015 collaboration with ETH Zurich, one of the leading universities in technology and science worldwide, resulted in the construction of a pavilion from upcycled paper waste. Situated at First Street Park, it connected with other architecture and design institutions, as well as with its East Village neighbors. The pavilion served multiple purposes, from demonstrating how trash can be turned into a valuable building material to providing a platform for community groups to present their projects.



Left: ETH Zurich **Future Garden and Pavilion** at First Park. IDEAS CITY Festival New York 2015. Right: Young poets from Urban Word NYC presented Words on Walls, a collaborative performance of music and spoken word and poetry projections by the POEMobile. IDEAS CITY Festival New York 2013. Sponsored by City Lore and Bowery Arts + Science. Photos by Daniel Levin.

INCUBATE

IDEAS CITY has seeded many networks and collaborations and has been the launching pad for new projects. We may never know about all of them, but we know they exist. Here are just some examples. The founders of 596 Acres met at IDEAS CITY 2011.

continued on page 8

Now they are a leading creator of community garden space in empty lots all over New York City. At the now biennial, high-energy **Pitching the City** event, organized by Municipal Art Society and Architizer, the public votes for the next best urban design ideas. **+Pool**, the world's first water-filtering floating pool, took off from an idea to a project initiative for the East River after being presented at the 2013 Festival.

At that same 2013 Festival, Made in the Lower East Side (miLES) provided empty storefronts as starter homes for emerging projects during IDEAS CITY. Today, miLES has grown into a sustainable enterprise. In a unique cross-disciplinary collaboration, PEN World Voices Festival and the Architectural League of New York launched the Little Free Library/ NYC. Rethinking libraries as architectural community-building opportunities, 10 designers were selected to create site-specific libraries at community centers throughout the neighborhood. Fourth Arts Block (FABnyc), a local advocacy group for artists, collaborated with engineering, architecture, and art students from the Cooper Union Institute of Sustainable Design. The culmination of their work was three-fold: an off-the-grid lighting installation on East 4th Street, a Cooper Union exhibition, and a Resource Guide on the themes of community, energy, waste and water.

THE FUTURE

The IDEAS CITY brand and network is growing significantly with each edition. We have been invited to Detroit and Athens as our next destinations, and other cities are in the pipeline. One of our next objectives is to create IDEAS CITY blueprints for innovative urban interventions and concrete actions that will live on an online platform. All of this is a sign of growth and relevance. But while we all strive to measure success, it's important to recognize the value of the amazingly powerful yet unquantifiable synergies, innovations and changes that IDEAS CITY fosters.

Corinne Erni is Senior Producer of IDEAS CITY at the New Museum. She also cofounded and co-directs **ARTPORT_making waves**, an international art project exploring issues connected to climate change.

More ideas, more cities:

newmuseum.org
ideas-city.org

Videos: past IDEAS CITY talks | <http://www.ideas-city.org/#past-festivals>

Little Free Library/NYC | <http://www.newmuseum.org/ideascity/view/little-free-libraries-new-york>

SALT Galata, Istanbul | <http://saltonline.org/en/home>

Video: IDEAS CITY Mayoral Panel: Finding The Invisible City, with Annise Parker (Houston, TX), Svante Myrick (Ithaca, NY), and Carmen Yulín Cruz, San Juan, PR, moderated by Kurt Andersen, Host of Studio 360.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0K-Y2gXXsU>

ARTPLACE ASKS:

“What is the change you are trying to make, and how will you know whether you have made that change?”

by Jamie Hand
Director of Research Strategies
ArtPlace America

Measuring Change

For many in the nonprofit sector generally, and in the arts sector specifically, words like “evaluation,” “metrics,” and “outcomes” elicit reactions that range from annoyance to panic at the thought of taking on what may be considered superfluous tasks, unrelated to the real work of a project. [ArtPlace America](#) (ArtPlace) has worked to change this by revising the language we use around project evaluation.

ArtPlace is a collaboration among 15 foundations, 8 government agencies, and 6 financial institutions. Established in 2011, we aim to advance creative placemaking, which we define as the practice of strengthening the social, physical, and economic fabric of a community through arts and culture.

Beginning with our annual grantee summit in 2014, ArtPlace started describing creative placemaking projects as those that are, quite simply, “doing art to change a place.” This allows us to frame our evaluation question as “what is the change you are trying to make, and how will you know whether you have made that change?” This reframing is one way of encouraging our grantee organizations and practitioners across the board to think creatively, without intimidation, about measurement.

We are currently harvesting the full range of measurement work that our grantees have been doing with an eye toward analyzing, organizing, and disseminating the measurement techniques that have worked best and most efficiently. By sharing this work with the creative placemaking field at large, our intention is to minimize the need for project managers to reinvent the wheel when they can instead borrow from one another.

Translating Outcomes

Similarly, ArtPlace is not looking to reinvent the wheel as we pursue our mission: to position the role of arts and culture as a core sector of community planning and development. We believe that the arts and culture sector needs to be represented alongside sectors like housing, transportation, public safety, and open space during any comprehensive conversation about the future of a community. Each of these sectors requires planning and investment from its community, and each of them should also have a responsibility to make a contribution to its community in return.

continued on page 10

Rather than attempting to develop a one-size-fits-all set of indicators to assess creative placemaking projects, then, we are committed to translating their outcomes into the appropriate languages and practices used by these other community planning and development sectors. Understanding the taxonomies that each of these sectors uses to organize the world, as well as the outcomes and goals to which they aspire, allows us to understand the way business is transacted and how the structures encapsulating art and cultural strategies must operate.

Call for Field Scan Researchers

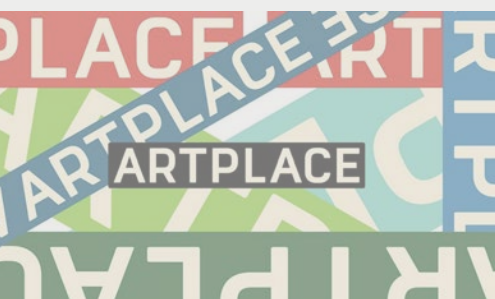
As a first step toward this translational research, ArtPlace is commissioning **field scans** that will synthesize baseline knowledge about other community development sectors, and serve as framing pieces for a series of working groups that will be held beginning in 2016. On June 25th we issued an open call for researchers to conduct field scans focused on Housing, Public Health, and Public Safety.

	Government	Commercial	Nonprofit	Civic, Social & Faith	Philanthropy
Agriculture & Food					
Economic Development					
Environment & Open Space					
Health & Human Services					
Housing					
Immigration & Social Justice					
Public Safety					
Transportation					
Workforce Development					
Youth & Education					

Community Development Matrix: in scanning the community planning and development field, ArtPlace found five types of stakeholders working across ten sectors that capture a majority of work taking place in communities.

Please feel free to share this research opportunity far and wide, particularly with colleagues who have worked at the intersection of Arts and Health, Arts and Public Safety, and Arts and Housing. ArtPlace is eager to continue building our institutional knowledge in these three sectors and welcome inquiries and introductions in the coming months.

Jamie Hand is the Director of Research Strategies for ArtPlace America, drawing from a background in landscape architecture, project management, and grantmaking. Previously, she served as a Design Specialist at the National Endowment for the Arts, where she launched and managed Our Town - the agency's signature creative placemaking grant program.



Download the full **Call for Research Consultants** for more information on this opportunity, ArtPlace's vision for subsequent working groups, and detailed application instructions. Submissions due: Thursday, August 6, 2015.

Meet the 2015 CurCom Fellows

Four fresh perspectives from the annual meeting



fellows traveled from Berkeley, CA, Lansing, MI, Raleigh, NC and Abuja, Nigeria



Marina Vlnar

Museum Studies and Business Administration
John F. Kennedy University, Berkeley, CA

Being granted a fellowship from CurCom to attend the 2015 AAM Annual Meeting was such an exciting and wonderful experience. I was also attending as a Getty Foundation Leadership Fellow, which provided me additional sessions not open to the rest of the conference attendees. I had never been to a museum related conference prior to visiting Atlanta and I was unsure of what to expect. In addition, I only knew two other people that were attending the conference, and they were instructors from my university. My university connected me with a former student who would become my roommate but I had only spoken to her via email until we met in person for the first time at the conference hotel.

Needless to say I was very anxious traveling across country, all alone, to a strange city, without any understanding of what I was about to encounter.

continued on page 12

I have to say “southern hospitality” is a real thing and it exists in Atlanta, Georgia. From the airport, to the train station, to the hotel and restaurant staff, I was made to feel welcome. I was not just given directions, but walked directly to my destination. I was not just delivered room service, but provided advice and friendly conversation. And did I forget to mention the architecture, food and history? The beauty that exists in Atlanta is so much more than I expected. The tree lined streets, expansive colonial homes with park-like yards, and views from the Sundial restaurant at the top of the Westin were picture perfect. I got to try homemade

“[the] sessions I attended [...] were important not only because of the annual meeting theme but also for my personal career aspirations and beliefs.”

“southern” cooking at Pittypat’s with my conference mentor, James Peterson, Assistant Curator of Artifacts at the Colorado Historical Society. The fried chicken, collard greens and sweet tea were the best I’ve ever had, but hearing about James’ life and museum experiences was even better.

On my second day I took the DIVCOM field trip “Remembering Our Past and Realizing Our Future” where I toured the Martin Luther King, Jr. Historic Site. If anyone ever tells you that museums or historic sites cannot move you to tears, then they obviously have not visited this site. To see the museum, tour his childhood home, visit the church he grew up in, and speak to members of his congregation was inspiring and emotional. I got to see firsthand how restoration, interpretation and education are integral parts of a museum’s purpose. I finished off my day at the CurCom Margaret Mitchell House reception, and then the Opening Night Party at the High Museum of Art. I use to think that collection people such as myself were a stuffy group but I met some fun people who really know how to shut a place down.

members of his congregation was inspiring and emotional. I got to see firsthand how restoration, interpretation and education are integral parts of a museum’s purpose. I finished off my day at the CurCom Margaret Mitchell House reception, and then the Opening Night Party at the High Museum of Art. I use to think that collection people such as myself were a stuffy group but I met some fun people who really know how to shut a place down.

My remaining time was spent in sessions, starting with a one hour leadership training each day, which was sponsored by the Getty Foundation. Greg Stevens, Assistant Director of Professional Development at AAM, was an excellent moderator and the rest of the presenters provided real life experiences and a wealth of truly valuable knowledge. In addition, I met with peers from all over the world and heard their perspectives on diverse museum issues such as working in a war zone. At the Fellows Breakfast I met kindred spirits and shared my anxieties. At the Indigenous Peoples Breakfast I networked with like-minded professionals with whom I shared similar experiences. At the CurCom Breakfast I got to meet Nicole Suarez who had been offering me encouragement via email before my arrival. I also met Kyla, another CurCom fellow, who I hope to collaborate with on a session for next year. Sessions I attended such as “Remembering the Past, Looking to the Future,” “Collaborating with Integrity,” and “Do Ethics Matter to You and Your Museum?” were important not only because of the annual meeting theme but also for my personal career aspirations and beliefs. This was a truly a rewarding experience that I will remember and cherish. I hope to be able to attend next year, but on behalf of a museum instead of as a student.

continued on page 13

Kyla Cools

**Museum Studies Specialization MSU Museum, Cultural Education
Michigan State University Honors College**

Networking, crowds and travel mishaps - these are the things I prepared for when getting ready to attend the 2015 AAM Annual in Atlanta. Like any recent graduate hoping to make connections for both my institution and future career, I thought I knew what to expect. Don't get me wrong, I met countless people and am excited to see where these new relationships lead, but none of my preparations truly made me ready for what I experienced.



In all the excitement of being awarded a CurCom fellowship to help me attend the annual meeting (in addition to the stress and excitement of preparing for finals and graduation) I forgot the main reason I even applied for the fellowship in the first place: to learn. I wanted to learn about how to manage my career and what steps to take when it comes to graduate school. I wanted to learn about the varied facets of museum work and the future challenges these institutions will likely face. Most of all, I wanted to learn whether or not I was making a mistake dedicating my career path to educational institutions such as museums.

The true mistake, however, turned out to be doubting my passion. I learned about the lives, careers and paths of individuals in the museum field. I learned about Atlanta, its colorful history and remarkable inhabitants, past and present. I had the opportunity to participate in a leadership and career management series put on by the Getty Foundation, where I learned how to recognize opportunities to act as a leader in any position. I learned the importance of self-awareness in a new city. And most importantly, I learned that inspiration strikes when you least expect it.

**“I learned that
inspiration
strikes when you
least expect it.”**

I spent so much time preparing for who I would meet and how I would get there that I didn't anticipate how these experiences would impact me.

Hearing the stories of people I met, being brought to tears at the Center for Civil and Human Rights, and being surrounded by people filled with passion and optimism about the variety of roles museums can play in our global society made me more excited for my future career than practicing responses to imagined questions ever could. While I still think it's important to be prepared, my experience at the annual meeting helped me realize that sometimes it's more important to remember *why* you wanted to do something in the first place.

continued on page 14

Diana Bell-Kite

Associate Curator

North Carolina Museum of History, Raleigh, NC



“Anxiety and opportunity are the companions of change. [...] Museums can commit to promoting diversity instead of merely bemoaning its absence.”

Can museums create positive connectivity between immigrants and established populations? Can museums use history (or art or science) to build community? Can museums heal the sick? Such questions framed my experience as a CurCom fellow at the 2015 AAM Annual in Atlanta this past April. This year’s theme provided a starting point. However, presenters addressing topics as diverse as programming for autistic visitors, repatriation of Native American remains and public artifact demonstrations reached beyond mere appraisals to address how museums should actively strive to become empathetic spaces in service of their communities.

Gone are the days of cool detachment. One presenter paraphrased Howard Zinn: “You’re on a moving train. By doing nothing you’re complicit.” Museums are uniquely situated - as guardians of the public trust - to foster empathy within their communities. Whether hosting *encuentros* where immigrants from Mexico and lifelong southerners meet to engage in dialogue about their hopes and fears, developing “human libraries” so that visitors can check out living, breathing “books,” or providing victims of the African AIDS epidemic a space for collective grieving, museums are intentionally constructing forums to advance the goals of peace and mutual understanding.

As an associate curator at the North Carolina Museum of History, I juggle an odd assortment of job functions that range from curating the flat textile collection to coordinating the institution’s Latina/o outreach initiative to serving on the museum’s accessibility committee. The words of one annual meeting presenter struck a chord that echoed through session rooms in Atlanta and continues to reverberate for me as I return to my varied responsibilities: “inclusion is something you have to *actively* create.” I must *act* to guarantee that the true diversity of North Carolina’s quilters - past and present - is represented in our artifact collection. I must *act* to ensure that Latina/o visitors see faces that resemble their own reflected in their state history museum. I must *act* so that individuals with disabilities will no longer say, “I never thought there was anything for me at a museum.”

continued on page 15

Anxiety and opportunity are the companions of change. The annual meeting allowed me a glimpse at how transforming a museum into purposefully empathetic space creates opportunities. By fostering empathy, museums can build, rather than just reflect, community. Museums can commit to promoting diversity instead of merely bemoaning its absence. By doing nothing you're complicit. Inclusion is something we must all *actively* create.

Aliyu Lass Abdu

Curator and Heritage Manager

National Commission for Museums and Monuments, Abuja, Nigeria

Aliyu Lass Abdu holds a master of arts in history and a post graduate diploma in museology. He currently serves as Curator and Heritage Manager at the National Commission for Museums and Monuments in Nigeria. In 2013 Aliyu participated in AAM's Museum Connect program, "From the Ground Up: Nutritional Values and Cultural Connections," where high school students learned about nutrition, cooking and cultural food traditions in the U.S. and Nigeria.

Become an AAM member, join the Curator's Committee

Curator's Committee (CurCom) is a Professional Network (PN) committee within the American Alliance of Museums (AAM). *CurCom Update* is a periodic newsletter distributed to CurCom members and available online at: <http://www.curcom.org>.

To join CurCom, you must be an individual Professional member of AAM. Simply login to the AAM website and add the PN on your profile.

Questions? Contact:

Membership at 866-226-2150 or membership@aam-us.org



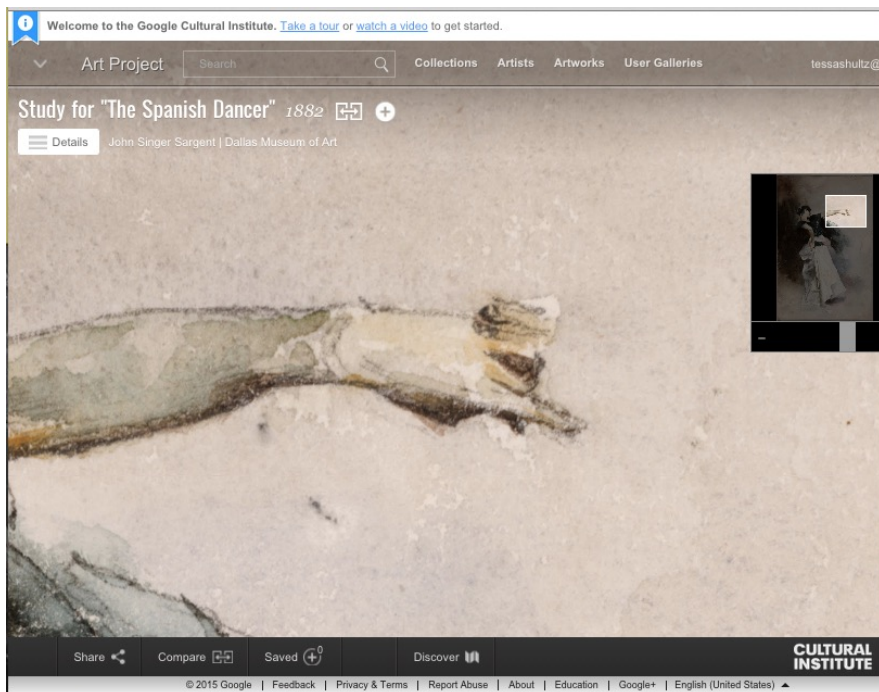


An Invitation to Curate the Internet

from Piotr Adamczyk
Program Manager
Google Cultural Institute

Founded in 2011, the Google Cultural Institute is a not-for-profit initiative that partners with cultural organizations to bring the world's cultural heritage online. We build free tools and technologies for the cultural sector to showcase and share its riches, making them more widely accessible to a global audience.

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful. The Internet no longer plays just a minor role in diffusing museum knowledge. It has become a major force, allowing museums to expand and strengthen their reach. As such, the Cultural Institute is an effort to make important cultural material available and accessible to everyone and to digitally preserve it to educate and inspire future generations.



Detail of a woman's hand from John Singer Sargent's *Study for The Spanish Dancer*, in a screenshot of Google Art Project's ultra-high resolution imaging tool. Dallas Museum of Art online collections.
<https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/asset-viewer/study-for-the-spanish-dancer/sgG2bSxo3jfVbQ?hl=en&projectId=art-project>

Image contributions and curation have all come from our partners and collaborators. Google provides the technology platform that allows the object photography, video, and audio to be uploaded, managed, and exhibited online and our partners decide which objects and stories represent them online.

All of the material is selected and owned by our partners, they are in charge of clearing copyright, and Google hosts content on their behalf. Each partner and, where applicable, curator is credited in the online exhibitions. Of course the host institution is always referenced wherever an object is presented along with a link back to the institution's website whenever one is provided.

continued on page 17

Since the very beginning of the Cultural Institute, we have worked in concert with the cultural heritage sector, defining a technology framework which meets their expectations. We continue to listen, exchanging and sharing experiences to provide them with the best possible services.

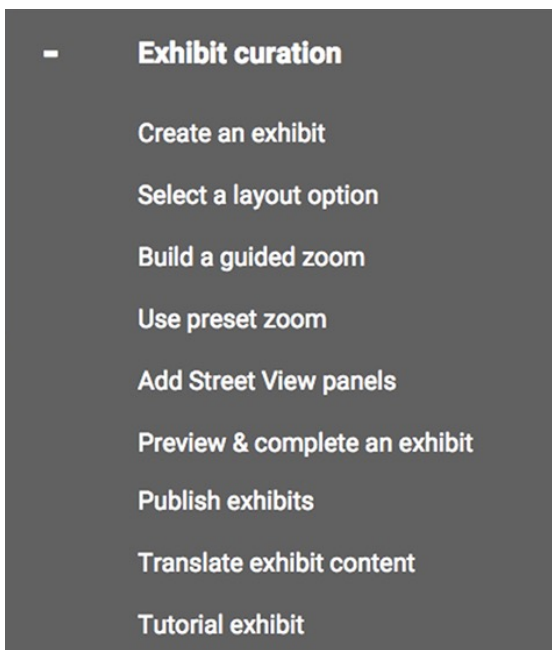
“Google has partnered with more than 800 institutions, giving a platform to over 180 thousand artworks and a total of 6 million photos, videos, manuscripts and other documents of art, culture, and history.”

At the core of our platform is our Collection Management System (CMS). Institutions can access and manage digital assets (images, videos, audio files) and metadata at all times through a dedicated dashboard. Object information and media can be uploaded individually or in bulk with the assistance of a simple spreadsheet format. There is no limit on the amount any institution can share. This means virtually unlimited content hosting space, access to advanced publishing and image processing technology, and sophisticated searching and filtering tools — a small technical staff can take advantage of tools normally reserved for larger institutions. Further, large institutions can leverage the scale and breadth of our tools to reach an even bigger audience.

On top of the CMS, we have an exhibition tool that is simple to use. It allows curators to create beautiful stories using their collection objects, and objects from other institutions if they’ve been shared in the CMS. Exhibitions can include a high-res zoom viewer, videos, specific viewing notes, 360 degree Street View imagery, and maps. These exhibitions can be presented on the Cultural Institute site, shared via social media or, similar to a YouTube video, embedded on the institution’s website. Partners can also chose to allow their content to be embedded on third-party websites. Embedding in particular allows institutions to be part of the conversation on social media, while keeping control of how their content is exhibited online.

In addition to online tools we can also provide imaging services. Our state-of-the-art camera system is tailored to meet the needs of cultural institutions, capturing paintings at ultra-high resolution.

Google Street View technology lets us photograph our partner locations and piece together seamless 360° virtual tours, combined with floor plans and location information. It is also possible to annotate these virtual tours, enabling visitors to move easily from a gallery’s interior to a full listing of any of the visible artwork.



Screenshot of curatorial tools offered at:
<https://support.google.com/culturalinstitute/partners/?hl=en#topic=6006824>

continued on page 18

Google, continued

Beyond the desktop, the platform allows museums to create a simple yet powerful museum-branded mobile app. Without resorting to expensive technical help, the app, for both Android and iOS, is managed through the CMS with no programming required.

Once the app has been released, exhibits can quickly be published. In this way, we've seen museum partners create audio guides for special exhibitions, virtual exhibit tours using Street View imagery, or custom tours for different groups of visitors.

The Google Cultural Institute has partnered with more than 800 institutions—museums, libraries, archives—giving a platform to over 180 thousand artworks and a total of 6 million photos, videos, manuscripts and other documents of art, culture, and history.

We are always eager to partner with new cultural institutions. If you'd like to learn more please [contact us!](#)

Piotr Adamczyk is the Program Manager at Google Cultural Institute. A librarian and computer scientist, his work focuses on the use of open/linked data in cultural heritage institutions. He began his career as an analyst at The Metropolitan Museum of Art before moving to the Google Art Project.

Further reading:

Explore Google CMS capabilities

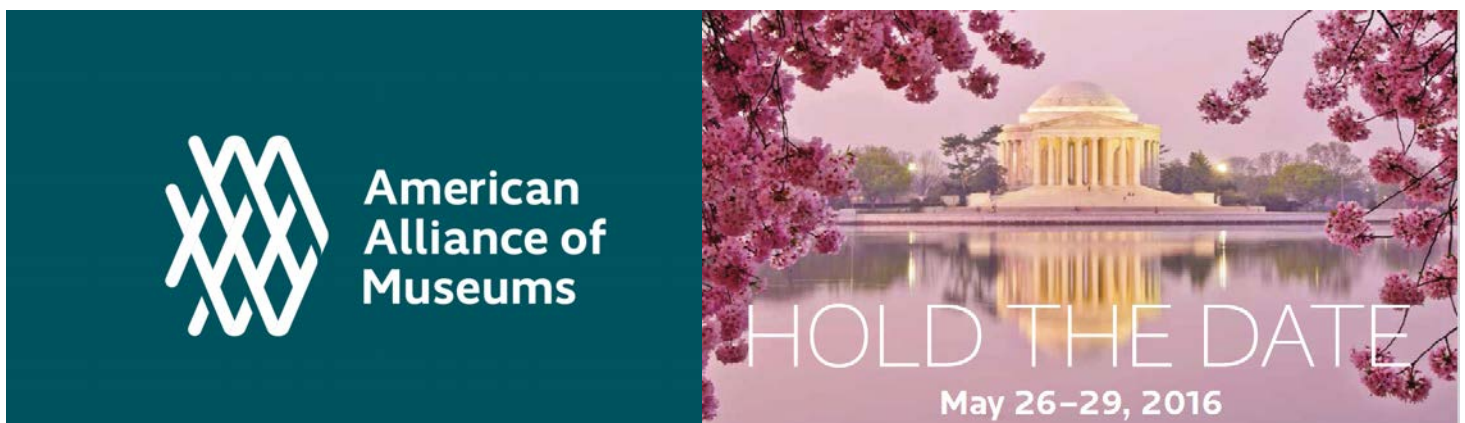
<https://support.google.com/culturalinstitute/partners/?hl=en#topic=6056759>

Learn more about partner institutions

<https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/about/partners/>

Interested in partnering with Google?

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1zxv1tvYalJECanlclC1LbEg3FYIZLXFQhZM4dH-Uzik/viewform>



Curators' professional network of AAM

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wjamesburns@email.arizona.edu

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Cindy Olsen, Curatorial Consultant
cmolsen@gmail.com

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eeslo@chesterhistorical.org

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dkennedy@OKhistory.org
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elisa.phelps@state.co.us

Regional representatives

Association of Midwest Museums (AMM)

Angela Goebel-Bain, Illinois State Museum
agb@museum.state.il.us
Cindy Olsen (see vice chair)

Mid-Atlantic Association of Museums (MAAM)

Debra Hughes, Hagley Museum and Library
dhughes@hagley.org
Elizabeth Varner, National Art Museum of Sport
elizabeth.c.varner@gmail.com

Mountain-Plains Museums Association (MPMA)

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David Kennedy (see board members-at-large)

New England Museums Association (NEMA)

Bonnie Stacy, Martha's Vineyard Museum
bstacy@mvmuseum.org
Sheila K. Hoffman, Université du Québec à Montréal
sheila.hoffman@gmail.com

Southeastern Museums Conference (SEMC)

Denise Drury, Western Carolina University Fine Art Museum
ddrury@email.wcu.edu
Nicole M. Suarez, Airborne and Special Operations Museum
nicole.m.suarez2.civ@mail.mil

Western Museums Association (WMA)

Redmond J. Barnett, Washington State Historical Society
redmond.barnett@wshs.wa.gov
Amy Scott, Autry National Center
ascott@theautry.org

Appointments and committee chairpersons

AIC Liaison (open)

AAM Liaison (open)

Archivist (open)

Ethics Committee 2012

Sheila Hoffman (chair, see NEMA rep)
James Burns (see chair)
Nathan C. Jones, The General Patton Museum of Leadership
Nathan.c.jones.civ@mail.mil

Brian Peterson

brianhpeterson88@icloud.com

Elizabeth Varner (see MAAM rep)

2016 Exhibition Competition Judge (open)

2015-16 Label Writing Competition

John Russick (chair), Chicago History Museum
russick@chicagohistory.org

Membership Committee

Stephanie Antequino (see SEMC rep)

2014 Nominating Committee

James A. Hoobler, Tennessee State Museum
jim.hoobler@state.tn.us

Program Committee 2016

Ellen Endslo (see immediate past chair)
Keni Sturgeon, Science & Education at Pacific Science Center
ksturgeon@pacsci.org

Elisa Phelps (see board members-at-large)

Ron M. Potvin, John Nicholas Brown Center

ronald_potvin@brown.edu

Social Media Committee

Allison Cywin, University of Massachusetts
allison.j.cywin@umassd.edu

Social Media Committee Members

Stacey Swigart (see secretary)

Exhibition Coordinator 2013-15

Stacey Swigart (see secretary)

National Program Committee (open)

Newsletter Editor

Tessa Shultz
tessashultz@gmail.com

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