



# The Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees: The Role of Cultural Organisations

Maria Vlachou (coord.)

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**Countpoints Arts,**  
***Adopting Britain* exhibition.**  
**Photo: Nana Varveropoulou**

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# Notes

Interviews by Ana Carvalho: Association Renovar a Mouraria (PT), Migration Museum Project (UK), National Museums Liverpool (UK), Refugiacto/Conselho Português para os Refugiados (PT), Rotterdam Museum (NL).

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# Bionotes

**Ana Carvalho** is a museologist. She has a PhD and a Master in Museum Studies and is currently a post-doctoral researcher at the Centro Interdisciplinar de História, Culturas e Sociedades (CIDEHUS) of the Universidade de Évora. She published *Os Museus e o Património Cultural Imaterial: Estratégias para o Desenvolvimento de Boas Práticas* (Colibri, 2011), *Museus e Diversidade Cultural: Da Representação aos Públicos* (Caleidoscópio, 2016) and she has organised the digital publication *Participação: Partilhando a Responsabilidade* (Acesso Cultura, 2016). Author of the blog [No Mundo dos Museus](#) and editor of ICOM Portugal bulletin. She is one of the founders of MIDAS Journal – *Museus e Estudos Interdisciplinares*.

**Maria Vlachou** is the coordinator of this publication. She is a Cultural Management and Communications consultant. Executive Director of [Acesso Cultura](#). Author of the bilingual blog (and book) [Musing on Culture](#). Co-manager of the blog [Museums and Migration](#). She was Communications Director of São Luiz Municipal Theatre (2006-2012) and Head of Communication of Pavilion of Knowledge – Ciência Viva (2001-2006), in Lisbon. Board member of ICOM Portugal and editor of its bulletin (2005-2014). She was a consultant for the Museum Arpad Szenes – Vieira da Silva and for the Cultural Commission of the Portuguese Navy. She collaborated with the programmes *Descobrir* and *Próximo Futuro* of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. *Alumna* of the DeVos Institute of Arts Management at the Kennedy Center in Washington (2011-2013); she has a M.A. in Museum Studies (University College London, 1994) and a B.A. in History and Archaeology (University of Ioannina, Greece, 1992).



# Index

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Part I</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Interviews</b>	
<b>Part II</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Museums, Migration and Cultural Diversity: Recommendations for Museum Work</b>	
<b>Part III</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>Useful Contacts</b>	
<b>Part IV</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>Bibliography and other references</b>	

# Where to start?



Royal Ontario Museum, *Ahlan* project. Photo: ICC/Alyssa K. Faoro

# Introduction

## The context

Migration is not a new phenomenon; however, the current refugee crisis has drawn attention to a situation of greater proportions than those we have known so far, which is complex and urgent. The European Union has looked for ways to deal with it. However, rarely or never did its reflection and planning involve the cultural sector.

In this context, many culture professionals have been expressing their concern and disquietness regarding this situation. They have also been questioning their role as professionals and that of the cultural organisations they work for in our society's efforts to include people who are forced to migrate or to seek asylum outside and far from their countries. Those who work in the cultural field believe in the power of Culture to transform lives, sharing knowledge; promoting inclusion, dialogue, tolerance and respect; and contributing to social cohesion. For this reason, those who work in this sector cannot imagine how this process of inclusion may happen without Culture.

Where to start? What do we need to know? What to do and how? These are frequently asked questions among professionals interested in contributing to the inclusion of migrants and refugees in our societies. It is necessary to have access to the knowledge and tools that will allow us to reflect on the situation we are currently facing and to develop programmes and actions that can address the concerns and needs of the society, including those of the newcomers.

With this publication, Acesso Cultura aims to help meeting some of these needs.

## The publication

Where to start? From those who have already got the experience and are willing to share it with us. Part I presents ten interviews, conducted by Ana Carvalho and Maria Vlachou, with professionals and organisations with different levels of experience and involvement, who talk to us about their vision, concrete projects and their results, and what they learned from them. There are three Portuguese and six international case studies from the areas of museums, libraries and the performing arts. They include the testimonies both of those who have long worked on these issues, as well as those who felt that they had to urgently react to a situation they had never

experienced before, but to which they could not remain indifferent. This section closes with an interview with the Institute for Canadian Citizenship, an organisation that seeks to fulfill its mission to promote inclusion, to create contact opportunities and to encourage active citizenship through projects and programmes that include strong partnerships with cultural organisations. Readers will be able to find the email addresses of our interviewees in the beginning of each interview, should they wish to contact them directly.

There is a vision shared by all those whom we interviewed, one related to the power of Culture. The power to create spaces of encounter, spaces which are open and non-threatening, that promote knowledge, that allow one to get to know the “Other” and his/her humanity, that help create ties and construct a different image from the one often presented by politicians and the media, “make visible and give voice to what often remains invisible or silent”, in the words of our interviewee Almir Koldzic (Counterpoints Arts).

When we asked them to share with us some of their learnings, there were also common points: be honest about the reasons why you want to get involved; be honest with the people you go to work with; know how to listen; know the context and those who work in the same environment; be prepared to adjust or change objectives set initially; create closeness and build relationships.

Part II of this publication is a manual produced by the Deutscher Museumsbund (German Museums Association), entitled *Museums, Migration and Cultural Diversity: Recommendations for Museum Work*, and translated into English by NEMO – Network of European Museum Organisations. Despite being related only to museum work, we thought it would be useful to include it in our publication as it raises questions, shares thoughts and points to possible actions that are relevant for any type of cultural organisation.

Parts III and IV include useful information and resources: the contacts of government organisations, organisations in the cultural and social sectors and Academia; bibliography and other references. The aim is to help professionals who wish to develop projects in this area to better build their ideas, to get inspired and to create links and partnerships with other people and organisations working in this field.

## Persisting issues

Recent political developments in Europe and the US (notably the Brexit referendum and the US and French presidential elections) have come to remind us how quickly nationalism (as opposed to patriotism) can become a dominant ideology, bringing about a radically negative transformation of the society – of certain citizens. The campaign is almost invariably done by exploiting fear and ignorance and blaming the “Other”.





When talking about the role of Culture in this context, we talk about inclusion, tolerance, dialogue; we also talk about respect for human rights; about common values, about the many things that unite us. But what about what separates us? Is it possible to live in a common space considering that there are cultural values and practices that we do not share and which, at the same time, represent different concepts in relation to what constitutes a “human right”? Our discourse rarely includes factors that do not unite us, yet they exist.

The Canadians on Citizenship Survey (2012) showed, among other things, that most people think that being a good citizen is accepting other people who are different, but also sharing Canadian values. “Is this not a contradiction? What are Canadian values?”, we asked the Institute for Canadian Citizenship.

A more recent study by the Public Religion Research Institute and *The Atlantic*, entitled *Beyond Economics: Fears of Cultural Displacement Pushed the White Working Class to Trump* (2017), suggests that, contrary to popular belief, it was the fear of cultural change, rather than the economic pressure, that made white voters out of college vote in Donald Trump. The study also notes that 68% of white working-class voters said that the American lifestyle needs to be protected from foreign influence and almost 50% agreed with the statement, “things have changed so much that I often feel like a stranger in my own country.”

What does this tell us about the role of cultural organisations? That we must listen better, look better and not classify, simply and hastily, a person who feels afraid as an ignorant person. In this process, we must also recognise the humanity of those who are worried and uncomfortable with seeing the world around them change. We must also recognise differences, not only as factors that enrich our lives, but also as factors that separate us and create tension.

Knowledge, dialogue, tolerance, life in common, in general, are a daily exercise, an exercise in culture. We hope that the contents of this publication can serve as a basis for further reflection and a more sustained practice by cultural organisations and their professionals.

Maria Vlachou  
May 2017

# Part I

## Interviews

**Counterpoints Arts**

**United Kingdom**

**Association Renovar a Mouraria**

**Portugal**

**Roskilde Libraries**

**Roskilde Bibliotekerne, Denmark**

**TODOS – Caminhada de Culturas**

**Portugal**

**NOESIS – Science Centre and Technology**

**Museum of Thessaloniki**

**ΝΟΗΣΙΣ, Greece**

**Portuguese Refugee Council**

**Portugal**

**National Museums Liverpool**

**United Kingdom**

**Museum Rotterdam**

**The Netherlands**

**Migration Museum Project**

**United Kingdom**

**Institute for Canadian Citizenship**

**Canada**

Counterpoints Arts (United Kingdom)

# Engaging with refugee and migrant experiences

## Almir Koldzic

Co-director



Counterpoints Arts, *Adopting Britain* exhibition. Photo: Nana Varveropoulou

**Almir Koldzic** is a Co-Founder and Co-Director of Counterpoints Arts. He has worked for over 12 years on developing creative strategies for engaging with refugee and migrant experiences, including leading on the development of a national strategy and identity for Refugee Week UK; developing the Platforma – networking project; and curating and producing a big range of events, exhibitions and commissions relating to displacement. He has studied English literature (BA), Anthropology (MA) and Creative Writing. Almir is currently a Clore 2017 Programme Fellow and ESRC Impact Acceleration Research Fellow at York University. Email: [almir@counterpointsarts.org.uk](mailto:almir@counterpointsarts.org.uk)

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## Central to the mission of Counterpoints Arts is the conviction that the arts inspire social change and enhance inclusion and the cultural integration of refugees and migrants. How do the arts do that?

Our starting position is that art delights, moves and surprises, but that it also plays a unique role in questioning and imagining different ways of how we can live together. Artists and creative practitioners we work with do this by exploring in many different ways people’s everyday experiences, challenges, histories, dreams and aspirations, helping make visible and audible what’s often invisible or silent within policy and equally inaccessible via community consultation. It also helps to go beyond the policy abstractions that have tended to dominate the debate on migration in the UK.

In saying this, we realise that artists can’t and shouldn’t act alone to resolve deep-seated social problems or policy challenges – be it integration, inequality or racism. But what in our opinion art can do is provide a framework for people to come together, widen their horizons and participate in shared activities. It is within this, hopefully, non-threatening and non-didactic framework – loosely defined by creativity, equality and respect of difference – that we would like to see how the idea of cultural integration can be negotiated and developed.

## How should we understand “cultural integration”?

It should not be confused with assimilation or homogenization. It is not about telling people they need to give up their language and culture in order to fit in here. London is a great example of a city that has remained open and, as a result, has benefited hugely from skills and contributions of a wide range of communities who have been arriving here in the last 70 years, and much further back – whose contributions are woven in the very fabric of this society, and sometimes forgotten. One of our recent initiatives that gently addresses this subject is [The Traces Project](#) – an online platform that tells an untold history of contributions to arts and culture from men and women who have sought safety in the UK from conflict and persecution.

Another good starting point for considering potential models of cultural integration is to recognise that some newly arrived groups need to be supported in their efforts to adjust and rebuild their lives in the new society and culture – be it through language provision, educational opportunities, skills development, access to arts and culture or through simple neighbourly acts of welcome and kindness.

## **What does your mission translate into exactly? Can you tell us a bit about your initiatives?**

Our mission is to support, produce and promote the arts by and about migrants and refugees, seeking to ensure that their contributions are recognised and welcomed within British arts, history and culture. We do this by developing creative projects and approaches to represent the stories and experiences of refugees and migrants and we do this along three strands – Enabling, Producing and Learning – which intersect in a range of different ways.

Principally, the Enabling strand is about building infrastructure and networks across the country that can create pathways for emerging talent and support new projects in this field. The Production strand is about showcasing and “main-streaming” some of that work; and Learning is about creating spaces for shared learning and improving practice. All of this is done with a big range of partners from across the country.

Examples of our initiatives that fall into these three strands – such as *Refugee Week*, *Learning Lab*, *Who Are We?*, *Everyday on Canalside* – may be found on our website.

## **Maurice Wren, CEO of UK Refugee Council, one of your partners, said that CA seeks to counter the simple lies of the devoid of context and compassion dominant political and media discourse. How does an organization like CA can compete with such large-scale media? How significant is the impact of your work when dealing with a Goliath?**

Given the current context and the many serious challenges that we are going to be facing in the coming period, it is clear that all of us will need to do a lot and the effort will need to be collective.

The biggest public facing initiative that we have, and which Maurice is partly referring to in his statement, is *Refugee Week*, which we are delivering on the national level in collaboration with 14 national and international organisations. Over the years, *Refugee Week* has become the biggest arts and culture festival bringing communities together in the UK. It involves hundreds of organisations, groups and



communities and has become a good vehicle for generating different and more compassionate (local and national) media stories about refugee experiences. Last year, over 100,000 people attended the events and over 7 million came across a *Refugee Week* media or social media story. So, I would argue that as a collective effort, *Refugee Week* has a significant impact in the UK.

**Considering how fast and easily hate speech and racist attitudes re-emerged once politicians on both sides of the Atlantic made people feel it was OK, how would you evaluate the power of the arts in bringing about true social change and promote knowledge and tolerance? Isn't this what cultural organisations have always claimed to be doing? Should we conclude that they have failed?**

I am from former Yugoslavia and these recent developments have evoked all sorts of memories from the 90s, when nationalism became so quickly a dominant ideology. From that Yugoslav perspective, it seems to me that, for various reasons, societies become fragile at certain points in their history and that this can lead to their radically negative transformation – invariably involving nationalistic demagogues and the blaming of certain groups of “Others”. This transformation can happen incredibly quickly and irreversibly.

So, what happened on both sides of Atlantic is shocking, dangerous and should be a huge wake up call for our arts communities certainly, but also for all other groups and communities that share the values of diversity and equality. However, it does not take much analysing to see that behind these developments there is a growing inequality linked to the financial crisis and austerity policies; deregulated labor and financial markets; middle classes feeling increasingly precarious; relentless immigrant-blaming campaigns by sections of the media and so on. These are all the problems that will not be resolved over night, and certainly not through arts initiatives alone.

But there are certainly things we can do. We recently organised an *Arts and Social Change Retreat*, involving 50 people from the arts, culture, advocacy, philanthropy and education sectors, who came together for three days to think and imagine possible ways of responding to the increasing cultural rifts and community divisions in the UK. What we ended up with was a clear consensus about the urgency of working in a more connected and strategic way across organisations, silos and regions. We talked about the need for more innovative local projects; for the arts and culture to be better connected with advocacy and policy; more unified narratives; bolder approaches to arts commissioning and supporting artists and cultural activists

working in a variety of locations etc. You can see more and much better captured highlights from this session in the form of [visual notes](#).



Counterpoints Arts, *Adopting Britain* exhibition. Photo: Nana Varveropoulou

## In the specific case of the UK and the incidents that followed the Brexit vote, what are your thoughts regarding multiculturalism in British society?

The explosion of hate crimes, racism and xenophobia in the post-referendum Britain was deeply unsettling. But, I am not entirely sure that this points to the idea that Britain has failed as a multicultural and diverse society. To me, it felt more as a nasty culmination of a nastily fought referendum, where a small (but very noticeable) group of racists and haters felt (and still feel) emboldened by the result and political backing of their views by demagogues, who are offering migrants as a reason for any societal ill. I think Britain, as already a hugely diverse country, will resist and push against this insanity.

Diversity should not be seen as a burden or deficit but a progressive force that, if we commit to it, makes our societies stronger. It is a process that needs to include willingness to question and expand our ideas about what constitutes the 'dominant' culture. As Andrea Levy, an English novelist of Jamaican heritage puts it: "If Englishness doesn't define me, then redefine Englishness".

My thoughts on multiculturalism are based on my experiences of living and working in the UK. My son goes to a school in East London where kids of many different backgrounds are already learning how to be sensitive to difference, many of them growing up with 2 or 3 languages and with links to and an understanding of other parts of the world. To me they represent a hugely promising, polyphonic future that is still in making and that needs to be strongly defended against the re-emerging nationalistic and monocultural myths.

I think that the arts (starting with artists coming from different backgrounds and negotiating multiple perspectives) have an important role to play in arguing this case for diversity. We recently co-curated with the Southbank Centre an exhibition called *Adopting Britain – 70 years of migration*, which explored the stories of the many different communities that have made Britain their home, from those who chose to come here for work or for love, to those who have sought asylum, fleeing persecution or war in their own countries. The exhibition offered a portrait of migration that included from the British recruitment campaigns in the Caribbean in the 1950s to more recent European migration.

**Counterpoints Arts supports, produces and promotes the arts by and about migrants and refugees. What would you have to say to other culture professionals that wish to get involved and create their own projects? What should they be careful about when starting to deal with displaced and traumatised people?**

The other side of the story about current political developments and upheavals is that an unprecedented number of (young) people and organizations are coming forward wanting to do something in relation to refugees and migrants. Which is extremely positive and promising, and raises questions about how this energy, enthusiasm and new resources can be best used and sustained.

It is difficult to offer here very useful directions for those who are new to this field. A good starting point could be to be honest about why they want to get involved and to share it with the people who are supposed to be involved/affected by that project.

Being aware of the context/locality in which the project is to take place and to have some knowledge of what else is happening and who else is already operating in this field in order to avoid creating parallel structures and duplication.

Finding good collaborators, especially those who have some experience, relevant networks or access to local or wider audiences, can make a crucial difference.

And, finally, not generalizing and identifying refugees only as traumatized victims or indeed assuming that displacement is purely negative and damaging experience.

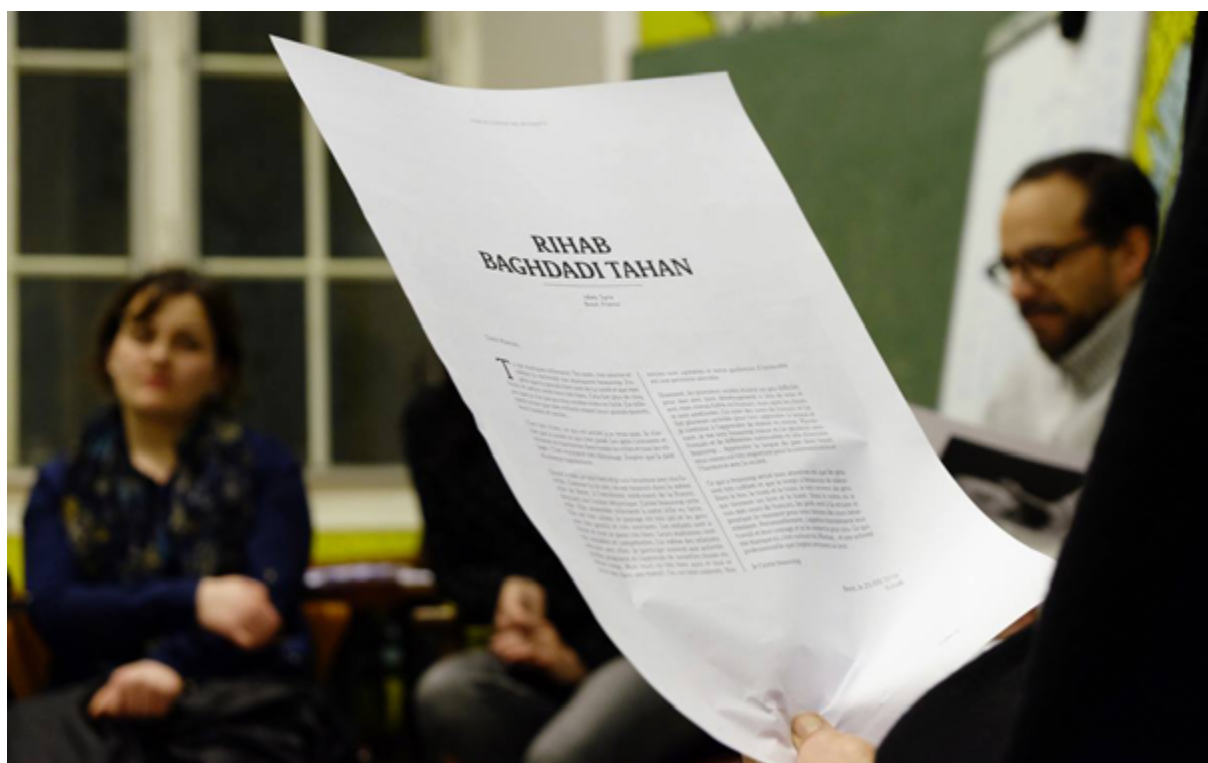
As Edward Said argued, displacement can also be creatively potent and transformative experience; enabling “exiles” to develop a double (contrapuntal or counterpointed) perspective that can open up hugely creative expressions and new angles of vision.

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Association Renovar a Mouraria (Portugal)

# ***The Encyclopedia of Migrants: the intimate and individual dimension of migration stories*** **Filipa Bolotinha**

Project Coordinator



*Enciclopedia dos Migrantes*. Photo Bertrand Cousseau - L'âge de la Tortue



**Filipa Bolotinha** lives in Mouraria (Lisbon). She graduated in Economics at the Universidade Nova de Lisboa. She is currently one of the coordinators of the Association Renovar a Mouraria and she is responsible for Local Development and Social Entrepreneurship. In 2010, after working for ten years in Marketing and Commercial Management in the cultural field, she found in the Association Renovar a Mouraria more than a professional challenge, a life project. Email: [filipa.bolotinha@renovaramouraria.pt](mailto:filipa.bolotinha@renovaramouraria.pt)

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## How did the *Encyclopedia of Migrants* project come about and what were its objectives?

The Encyclopedia of Migrants is an international project (2014–2017) supported by the Erasmus+ programme. It is based on a network of partner cities on the Atlantic coast (Brest, Rennes, Nantes, Gijón, Porto, Lisbon, Cadiz and Gibraltar), involving eight partners with different profiles (associations, universities, museums, etc.) in France, Spain, Portugal and Gibraltar. The project is coordinated by the French organization L'âge de la Tortue, which works in the visual arts field. The initiative has an artistic and experimental dimension and was originally designed by Paloma Fernández Sobrinho, with the aim to create an encyclopedia in paper version and in digital version with approximately 400 testimonies made by migrants.

The Encyclopedia format (a monumental, multi-volume, leather-bound artist book) was chosen in this case in order to disseminate non-scientific knowledge, resulting from life experiences, with all the subjectivity that this involves. The main idea was to gather diverse testimonies of migrants that could be the source of a new knowledge, based on the intimate and the individual. In 2017, publishing sensitive content in the form of an encyclopedia, by means of a popular and contributory initiative, is an artistic and political act.

In general, producing the *Encyclopedia of Migrants* involved 700 people, 103 represented countries, 74 mother languages and it was published in four languages: French, Spanish, Portuguese and English.

## The association Renovar a Mouraria participates in this project as a partner in the city of Lisbon due to the work already done with migrants. What projects have you carried out in this area?

Renovar a Mouraria is a non-profit association created in 2008 with the aim to revitalise the historic neighborhood of Mouraria (Lisbon), at a social, cultural, economic and touristic level. The Association is responsible for several cultural programmes,

ranging from world music concerts, to world cuisine dinners made by friends and neighbors - *jantares atravessados* - and cycles of cinema on issues related to migration and cultural differences - *Mouradoc*. In addition, it develops multidisciplinary projects for the promotion of interculturality, in order to fight stereotypes and to contribute to the integration of migrant communities. Among these projects, we highlight the newspaper *Rosa Maria*, a community publication distributed for free, that aims to present the neighborhood, and *Migrantour - Intercultural Urban Routes*, which invites visitors to get to know multicultural Mouraria, through the eyes of a local guide, him(her)self a migrant, who shares in the first person his/her perspective on the neighborhood.



*Enciclopedia dos Migrantes*. Photo Bertrand Cousseau - L'âge de la Tortue

**In the case of the *Encyclopedia of Migrants*, the testimonies of migrants have the peculiarity of having a specific format. Each protagonist wrote an intimate and personal letter addressed to someone they left behind in their country of origin. In a way, one enters the personal, introspective and expositive sphere of those people's life. How was the process of collecting these testimonies developed?**

The Association was responsible for collecting 50 testimonies of migrants living in Lisbon. Since the beginning, and in all partner cities, the intention was to have a very diverse sample in terms of nationalities, origins, qualifications, age, professions and motivations for migration. In Lisbon, we had a well-balanced collection, with 25 nationalities represented, ranging in age from 25 to 69 (the predominant range being that between 30 and 45) and very diverse in terms of gender, professions, levels of schooling and social strata.

The collection process took three months and was conducted by a mediator working on the ground and by two professional photographers, a method applied by all project partners. This collection required several contacts based on an informal approach so that the participants felt comfortable and confident, both in sharing their personal history, something that is reflected on every letter, and in taking the photographs that accompany the letters. The venue where the meeting and photo session was held was always chosen by the participant.

## How did the participants react?

The response rate was quite high and positive. All participants felt proud when they realised that we wanted to hear their story and that this could contribute to changing the way most people view migration.

Only through a relationship of trust, proximity and involvement with the participants was it possible to obtain letters such as those that form part of the encyclopedia, letters in which one makes confessions, reconciliations and sometimes reveals one's sorrows. There are also letters of longing and hope, of retrospection, sharing, friendship and love. The intimate and diversified dimension of the contents of these letters can be seen in the following excerpts:

"Have you seen the others? Sometimes I wonder, is it really me? Do you remember when we were children, with all those dreams? They seem impossible to come true, especially for me. You, at least, are living your dream, marrying, having a family, having children and a woman you love. This is very good, why ask for more." (excerpt from the letter of Lumbala Kimbuku, from Congo)

"I, 'binational', eternal 5th column, have got more than a dream, I have got a project for 2017... I propose the creation of a binational republic. A republic where citizens with dual nationality are basically citizens like the others. Moreover, in 'my' republic, the tri-nationals, the four-nationals, and even the penta-nationals would be invited to be as equal as all the others. They are few, I know, but that would be no reason not to do it.

In this republic of 'mine', I will go even further and dare to invite all the 'mono-nationals', those who have only one nationality, poor ones! After all, it is not their fault, it's just their genealogy." (excerpt from the letter of Mourad

Ghanem, who signs like this: Algerian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, in his soul, his career and his struggles, Mourad Ghanem continues to work on the ground)

**Paloma Fernández Sobrino, creator and artistic director of the project, said that the goal was not to make a miserable portrait of immigration, that this was an artistic project with an embedded social project. How did these two dimensions intersect?**

Paloma Fernández Sobrino is also a migrant and she made a contribution for the Encyclopedia. Although Sobrino does not match the stereotype of the economic migrant, she takes on her status of immigrant by going through the difficulties of being away from her country of origin and her family and by living in a country with a different culture. That is the premise of the Encyclopedia: to be a real portrait of the migratory movements that make up Europe, not a portrait of economic migration with all the preconceived ideas associated to it. It is a social project because it has several impacts, such as: changing mentalities, promoting multiculturalism and reinforcing the participants' identity and self-esteem. In this project, the artistic approach was allied to the social theme, just as the intimate and individual dimensions were linked to the collective knowledge of a sociological and historical dimension.

**What do you think you have learnt from this project?**

Running the risk of using a commonplace, the Encyclopedia of Migrants was a life lesson and, above all, a lesson of resilience. It is a project that demonstrates that a project's efficient implementation may allow us to discover a number of impacts that were not directly related to the initial objective, but which can enhance the expected results. For example, in the process of collecting the testimonies we felt that the participation of the migrants allowed them to take a moment and think, to take stock and analyse their lives and even to reconcile with their past. It is rewarding and empowering to feel that we may be the engine for resolving an old family conflict or the excuse for someone to write to a person he/she has left behind in a world that no longer seems to be the one he/she knew and which he/she is afraid to revisit because of the controversial feelings it brings about.

Above all, we learned that the factors that move us as human beings are the same - love, family, acceptance, security and health -, regardless of place of birth, the social and cultural context that surrounds us, our economic or social status, or any other differentiating factor. This project was a confirmation of the meaning of our

work, the one we firmly believe in, that is the motivation and the premise that we can contribute to the construction of a better world, where we all have the same opportunities and where we recognise the “Other” as a human being equal to us.

We have a clear perception that the *Encyclopedia of Migrants* is a document that helps to understand migration in Europe and can indeed contribute to the recognition of the important role of migrant movements and migrant communities in building the Europe in which we live.

It has not been possible yet to evaluate the acceptance of the Encyclopedia by the public, however, we think that the collection of testimonies and photographs allowed the organizations involved to strengthen their relationship with local migrant communities with whom they had already worked in other areas (eg. teaching of the national language, legal and social support, cultural events, etc.). In a way, it allowed for a deeper understanding of this reality, but also to create new bridges and new approaches in intervening.

Going back to your question, the process has gone very well, also thanks to the methodology chosen, which was designed in a participatory and multidisciplinary way. The relationship among the partners and the connection among the cities have also been positive aspects, we well as the capacity to stimulate an awareness among the participants that they can be the main vehicle for their own cause, finding in themselves and in their own story the relevance which can have an impact on the “Other” and shake them from their comfortable position of citizens born on the “right” side of Europe. Participants did not just share their story, they were present in several moments of the project, especially during the sessions organised around migration issues (project presentations, letter readings, etc.).

Another important aspect is the interconnection between the artistic dimension and social intervention, in cooperation with research. Not only were sixteen texts included in the Encyclopedia, resulting from research in the area of migration and language sciences, but the researchers themselves were present and active both as members of a thinktank and as partners during the various phases of the project (implementation, coordination and evaluation).

## **Based on this experience, what advice would you give to other professionals wishing to become more involved with the subject of migration and to create cultural initiatives in this area?**

Only one advice, based solely on our experience: in order for the projects to generate real impact in the communities involved, proximity and relationship building are mandatory dimensions. All too often in social and cultural intervention projects, some preconceived ideas lead us to assume that we know the needs of the target



audience and the best solutions. When we work on the ground, in different places and with different people, we realise that this is not quite so evident. It is necessary to listen to the “Other”, to develop working methodologies that allow to evaluate the real needs and to work directly with the participants, in order to plan the best intervention strategies.

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Roskilde Libraries (Roskilde Bibliotekerne, Denmark)

# Open and free for all, focusing on knowledge and relations between people

## Melanie Holst

Development Consultant and Project Manager



Roskilde Libraries, *CulturalCases* project. Photo: Roskilde Libraries

**Melanie Holst** is an integration specialist with a background in educational science and pedagogy. Through her work, she has gained a great deal of experience and insight into the social and cultural relations that make up the basis of human development. As a project manager and concept developer on several integration projects, she has succeeded in putting innovative ideas into practice involving migrants and refugees on a local, national and international level. Roskilde Libraries has provided her with a unique platform and opportunity to develop new ideas and collaborations with a wide range of partners on both sectoral and cross sectoral levels, thereby widening the outreach and effect of the projects. The driving force behind her work is to provide migrants, refugees and other minority groups with access to a vision of possibility for their lives, and offering the opportunity to have their cultures and resources discovered, thereby dismantling generalisations, and fostering greater understanding. Email: melanieh@roskilde.dk

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## **In your view, what is the role of a library in the society in general and with regards to the integration of migrants and refugees, in particular?**

In my view, the main role of a library is to promote knowledge, democracy and active citizenship through the creation of an open and free environment which provides information that inspires all citizens to enrich their lives and participate in the community. With regards to the integration of migrants and refugees, I believe that the role of the library is to open itself and the surrounding community up to this task by promoting social inclusion and the sharing of information and culture as a two-way process that includes all citizens.

## **Government policies have not been very friendly towards migrants and refugees in the last months. Where does this leave your organisation? How does it limit or reinforce your work?**

The role of our library is not directly influenced by specific policies aimed at migrants and refugees, linked to different political agendas. We are a cultural institution whose main role it is to provide a free and open space for all citizens to seek information, engage in the community and, thereby, enrich their lives. However, as an organization, we are looked upon as a resource in this regard, partly as a result of the political focus on the subject. An example of this is the launch of our latest project, *A Million Stories*, co-funded by the EU, promoting the social inclusion of migrants and refugees through culture, for which we have received a lot of support from our local community and collaborators.

We also experience a great deal of participation and engagement from the local

community in some of our other activities and projects aimed at migrants and refugees. For example, one of the volunteers in our library cafés said in an interview that she felt that the library can be used as a representative of the humanitarian welfare society in a way that gives citizens the opportunity to offer an alternative to the discourse that society in general perceives as somewhat hostile towards migrants and refugees. She said that she considers her participation to be “... *an active reaction against the tendency that refugees are not welcome. We want to show that we are not all against refugees*”. This does reinforce our work in the sense that there is a lot of support in general to promote our role in inclusion and active citizenship, both among local citizens and with regards to the municipality’s focus on integration activities.



Roskilde Libraries, *CulturalCases* project. Photo: Dorrit Birklund

**Roskilde Libraries has developed a number of projects recently, aimed at migrant and refugee communities. There have been exhibitions, library cafés, local mentorships involving refugees and Danes, work with kindergartens, family and active citizenship activities, etc. Would you like to tell us a bit more about them? What are your specific objectives and how do you evaluate them so far?**

The overall objectives of our projects and activities relate to our role as a library in general, as described above. To provide an open and free environment that includes all citizens, to provide and distribute knowledge and information that enriches lives and inspires citizens to participate actively in society. These objectives require different approaches for different target groups, which is one of the reasons why we, at Roskilde Libraries, have employees with a wide range of backgrounds and professional expertise. Among the focus areas of our recent projects have been social inclusion, access to information about the Danish society and aspects pertaining to communication with local authorities, language training, networking and cultural exchanges between Danes and migrants and refugees.

As I said before, we experience a great deal of support and engagement from the local communities and institutions. Danes volunteer in our cafés and visit our exhibitions, and local institutions participate in our projects. The migrants and refugees in our local communities also show a great willingness to share their stories, cultures and experiences and to engage with the local population.

### **What have you learnt in the process? Both regarding dealing with migrants and refugees and mediating their encounters with the locals? What does it take the newcomers to trust you? How open are they to your approach? Can you manage to involve people who are not very favorable to migration and the presence of migrants and refugees in Denmark?**

As our most recent project, *A Million Stories*, is relatively new, I will answer this question in a more general way.

Regarding the refugees and migrants I have worked with, the first thing that comes to mind is their remarkable resources. Despite their traumatizing experiences, they seem willing and able to participate in our projects and activities, and really make an effort to learn Danish and take part in society in general. For example, a couple I've worked with on several projects, that lives in the local asylum centre, has managed in a very short period of time to make its way to the top of the cultural scene in Denmark. They have volunteered as extras, alongside 22 other refugees, in the Bertolt Brecht piece *Mahagonny* in the Royal Danish Opera House in Copenhagen. This is not only a testimony to the incredible resources they bring to our society, but also to the openness that a lot of Danes and Danish institutions have towards refugees.

At a more local level, my experience is that a lot of Danes are very interested in learning about the experiences, stories and cultures of migrants and refugees, and



to offer support and friendship. In what concerns gaining trust, it is, as in all aspects of life and work, impossible to make a general statement that covers such a wide variety of people with so different backgrounds. It is, of course, always a matter of explaining the intentions of our work and agenda, so they are able to make qualified decisions on whether they wish to participate or not. I believe this to be the case with most people. There have been instances where refugees, mainly asylum seekers, were desperate for news about their situation and who think I can help them with that. I must disappoint them. But I have never experienced elements of distrust or hostility in any way.

It is difficult to measure or know whether or not any of our activities or projects has managed to involve anyone who was not favorable towards the communities of migrants or refugees. All we can do is provide and disseminate information, and invite citizens of all backgrounds to participate.

## **Tell us a bit more about your most recent project, *A Million Stories*.**

*A Million Stories* came about as a result of a call for projects dealing with social inclusion, migrants and refugees from Creative Europe's Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, under the European Commission. We teamed up with Future Library in Veria (Greece), Malmö Public Library (Sweden) and Stadtsbibliotek Cologne (Germany) to create a proposal that dealt with the following objectives:

- Help refugees and migrants socialise and express themselves without necessarily speaking the host country language;
- Create learning platforms that foster respect and understanding for diversity, intercultural and civic competencies, democratic values and citizenship;
- Give EU citizens the opportunity to discover, learn from and understand the values and cultures of refugees and migrants, and rediscover and enrich their own;
- Showcase the co-creation of cultural and/or audiovisual works across Europe;
- Offer the possibility of collaboration with organizations in other sectors, in order to stimulate a more comprehensive, rapid, effective and long-term response to this global challenge.

*A Million Stories* will create a multipurpose digital platform – a memory bank precious for today's generations but also for generations to come. It will involve:

- Storytelling and expression through audio/visual and written stories (fostering active participation, intercultural understanding and



tolerance, the documentation of history and positive development of the refugee situation);

- Exhibitions of photos and artifacts that tell stories (museum of culture);
- Information exchange (fostering networking and the possibility of family reunification);
- Skill improvement (training for and participation in digital storytelling);
- Information about library and integration activities (exchanges between EU-citizens and refugees fostering social inclusion and intercultural understanding);
- Interactive activities in support of cultural association.

During the course of this project, that runs for two years, the partners will engage 640 refugees in these activities. The project will be proactive in obtaining a 'critical mass' of digital stories, as refugees most likely will have very few resources available to pursue activities which they may not, at first, consider to be essential to survival. It will therefore be very important for the libraries to work in local partnerships with 'gatekeeper' organizations who are already working with refugees, and can assist in gaining outreach, explaining the storytelling possibilities etc.

Once the stories have been created, they have the potential to become a valuable resource for social and cultural history research. The project itself will not be resourced to carry out this research itself, beyond the level of statistical and category-related data expressed through the *Million Stories Dashboard*. The project partners will take a proactive approach towards communication and making accessible the corpus of stories to the social science and digital humanities research sector, including prominent universities and social agencies working in this field.

## **You seem to focus the expected results on research. What will the benefit be for those involved?**

The focus on research is to be understood as an added result of the project, the main one being the exchange of stories and experiences in order to foster greater understanding and respect for diversity among refugees and host country populations. The benefit of research may be to provide knowledge about the conditions in their home countries, routes of migration and destination countries. We may also gain insight into correlations between the way refugees perceive themselves, their situation and resources depending on the conditions they came from and in particular the conditions they arrive to, be they political, social and otherwise.

TODOS – Caminhada de Culturas (Portugal)

# Interculturality in the development of the city of Lisbon

## Miguel Abreu

Director of the Academia de Produtores Culturais



*Todos por Janelas de Vida* photography exhibition by Rosa Reis TODOS 2016. Photo: Céu Guarda

**Miguel Abreu** is a cultural producer, actor and director. In 1987, he created the production company CASSEFAZ, which he directs until today, and in 1990 CENTA–Center for Studies of New Artistic Trends. Co-founder of Forum Dança. He was the director of Maria Matos Municipal Theatre (1999–2004) and responsible for the theater programming of Centro Cultural de Belém (2000–2004). In 1999, he created the Academy of Cultural Producers. He was responsible for the theatre programming as well as Director of Production of Faro 2005 – National Capital of Culture. In 2009, he created the festival Todos – Caminhada de Culturas, which he has directed ever since. This is a project of the Academy of Cultural Producers for the Lisbon City Council, whose artistic programmers are Giacomo Scalisi, Madalena Victorino and Miguel Abreu. Email: [abreuabreu@gmail.com](mailto:abreuabreu@gmail.com)

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## **TODOS is held since 2009 and seeks to contribute to the elimination of territorial ghettos. What tools do you use to do this?**

Our main strategy to prevent the creation of territorial ghettos associated with immigrants in the city of Lisbon is to combat prejudices, creating opportunities for social interaction among the different people that make up the social fabric of the city. How? In our case, through the arts, valuing their contemporary and community nature, and demanding professional quality.

Through projects associated with various artistic expressions (photography, theater, dance, music, new circus, etc.) and diverse social expressions (gastronomy, guided tours, conversations and meetings, creative participation, volunteering, etc.), we are able to attract to the territories where the festival is held interested and interesting outsiders, because they are also curious and creative. Therefore, they are dynamic, critical, proactive and transforming. We believe that, in this way, we create conditions for recognition and dialogue, bringing these people together for the construction of a common space, regardless of their diverse origins and ages, whether exogenous or endogenous to the territory. The arts are, therefore, the main *stimuli* of personal communication (relational/interpersonal between residents and between residents and outsiders, spectators) and media communication (the promotion of an image of development, creativity and cosmopolitanism of the city of Lisbon associated with interculturality).

## **Does all this have a continuous effect? Do you wish it to be continuous?**

We expect these relationships to be more complicit and lasting in the medium and long term. Here, and in Culture in general, the “time” factor is a variable that we cannot accelerate.

The festival itself has a nomadic character. Every three years it moves to a different neighborhood. Thus, we affirm our willingness to raise awareness among citizens and policy makers regarding the importance of thinking about the city as a whole, where everyone should be close to everyone else. Identifying and strengthening the artistic, cultural, associative, commercial and political agents of each territory, and in relation to the production of each edition of the festival, we stimulate, afterwards, the creation of artistic and sociocultural projects, or others of a creative nature, or others still of a commercial nature, tending to be more cosmopolitan. It is in this perspective that we want to understand the continuity of TODOS, in every territory it takes place.

## **After eight years, what has been the impact of the festival on the lives of the immigrants?**

We can consider several types of impacts: direct and indirect, qualitative and quantitative, short and medium/long term impacts.

Regarding specifically the the immigrants who collaborate in the festival, we value, essentially, a set of emotional aspects: the high self-esteem and the pleasure they have in collaborating, being part of a Festival that makes them feel proud. We have a few dozen immigrants who have been with us since 2009, in every edition. Their children grow up knowing that in September there is that party where they can meet the friends from previous years, and this is very beautiful. On the other hand, they get to know other neighborhoods in the city, they establish new contacts, enriching their human and professional relations.

There is also another important aspect: TODOS also reaches people from other European countries who, technically not being immigrants, are not Portuguese either. It is possible to blur boundaries and prejudices regarding the hierarchies of the richest and the poorest, since they all work for the festival on equal terms, without hierarchies or paternalisms. TODOS has also helped to weaken the prejudice that drug trafficking, prostitution and the degradation of public space are associated with immigrants, especially from non-European countries.

## **And regarding life in Lisbon, in general?**

Here, we can also speak of the relationships of greater proximity and complicity between neighbors. In fact, many times there are neighbors who only got know each other after the festival. In addition, artistic programming, the intervention of artists, performances inside buildings, gardens and streets, in shops, etc., all contribute to the creation of more creative and contemporary imaginaries, which allow residents to value their neighborhood's heritage and to create a sense of belonging.

We must also mention the efforts of TODOS, and especially of Madalena Victorino (who together with me and Giacomo Scalisi designs the festival's artistic programme), to integrate the most solitary and isolated populations within the "big city", namely the elderly and the homeless, as we know that in that period they have more company, they feel useful and more comforted.

There is also the symbolic weight of TODOS in the affirmation of Lisbon as an intercultural city. The festival's ability to contribute to the affirmation of the value of interculturality and the importance of immigrants and foreigners to the city, progressively values all immigrants and foreigners who live and work in the city.

Finally, the media impact of the festival in the written press, radio and television, has helped to spread the vision and intercultural mission of the festival, and of the city that promotes it, making people familiar with thoughts, languages, social practices, which sometimes are still, "foreign".

I would like to point out, however, that we are aware of certain associated risks, namely the fact that some changes in the territories go towards their gentrification, with the danger of creating new forms of exclusion. TODOS is aware of this and we have also warned the Municipality about it.



*Quer flor?* Photo for the poster of the first edition of TODOS, 2009. Photo: Georges Dussaud

## Are there ways, or is there even an interest, to involve people who oppose immigration? Who are afraid of immigrants?

Those who are most resistant to the “Other” must have opportunities to be included in one way or another, sooner or later, in activities where the “Other” is part. An example: in the neighborhood of Mouraria, being confronted with the resistance of a lady born and raised there to live with immigrant neighbors, we invited her to guide a photography exhibition, presented at the Municipal Archive of Lisbon. For this, she got some training and much information on the habits and traditions of immigrant families which had been photographed in her neighborhood and whose portraits were in the exhibition. And, in fact, the lady’s perception of these families has changed.

We cannot always achieve our goals, of course, but persistence is our best option. Basically, what we observe is that artistic and/or social mediation, with the participation of diverse people in various activities, stimulates the normalisation of everyday relationships, directly or indirectly, generating new relationships of empathy and complicity, fighting fears resulting from prejudices and poor quality information.

## What have you learnt over the years and through this contact and collaboration with immigrants and refugees?

As far as the refugees are concerned, we do not have much experience in working with them - I think it is important to realise that the situation of immigrants is different from that of refugees. And although we involved a significant group of refugees into our activities in 2016, we have mostly reflected on the immigrants.

Thus, we confirm that these processes imply an enormous willingness and availability on our part to get out of our comfort zone, to listen and to understand, as well as to stimulate the participation of those who are afraid, or ashamed, of expressing themselves. We confirm that we should avoid paternalism or commiseration towards immigrants and refugees, that we should stay close, committed and critical.

We also understand that a significant majority of people, no matter where they come from, are conservative and distrustful, being themselves victims of their many prejudices and capable of much discrimination. It is also true that some immigrant communities resist opening up to third parties and creating ties of proximity and common spaces. However, we find that most people are very proud of their roots and traditions. We then learned that, this pride being the starting point, by inviting people to share their traditions and memories, we can also get them interested in the traditions of others, in a dynamic of conviviality and inclusion in artistic and sociocultural projects.



We also learned that the case of the second and third generations born in immigrant communities, already in Lisbon (mainly communities of African origin), is another reality we can work on, parallelly and permanently.

Anyway, we learned that there is a lot of work to be done and that it is urgent to share experiences; to establish local, national, European and international networks and partnerships, with projects similar to TODOS. But we need to be quick and willing to act “on the ground” - that’s the hard part! As artistic-cultural agents we stimulate curiosity, create expectations and hope, promote human connections that generate rich and interesting social capital, but we do not have the capacity to advance much more without structured, complementary and duly concerted political and social actions.

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NOESIS – Thessaloniki Science Centre and Technology Museum (Greece)

# Science meets humanity

**Athanasios  
Kontonikolaou**

Director



Noesis, Technology Park. Photo: NOESIS

**Athanasios Kontonikolaou** is the General Manager and the Technical Director of NOESIS – Thessaloniki Science Center and Technology Museum. Besides the administration and custody on the construction of new infrastructures of TSCTM, he is responsible for the new projects, competitions surveillance, evaluation of tenders, composition and checking in projects, services and supplies contracts. During 2002-2008 he was responsible as Head of Surveillance and Checking of the project funding from EFTA (European Investment Bank), as well as for finding new sources of funding. He has a degree from the School of Electrical Engineers from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and he is a member of Experts Committee of the Technical Chamber. Email: [kontonikolaou@noesis.edu.gr](mailto:kontonikolaou@noesis.edu.gr)

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## What is the Mission of Noesis?

NOESIS – Thessaloniki Science Centre and Technology Museum is a non-profit cultural and educational foundation that promotes the public understanding of Science and Technology, in a way that is both educational and recreational. The main objective of the Centre is the popularisation of modern scientific and technological knowledge and its dissemination to the public through exhibitions, movies, educational programmes, seminars and lectures. The brand name of the Centre intends to emphasise the connection between its operation and human “noesis”, since the intention is to make scientific knowledge available to everybody. The Centre aims to become a leading attraction in the field of Science Culture and Technology not only in Greece, but in South-Eastern Europe as well.

## How does this mission relate to migrant communities and refugees?

NOESIS welcomes children from the refugee camps of Thessaloniki and offers them a scientific, educational, cultural and social programme. The institution would like to contribute with its know-how and cultural value to the integration of the refugee children and their families to the Hellenic society and educational system.

Science must be accessible to all and we believe NOESIS is accomplishing its mission by offering, for instance, to the refugee children the ability to watch an educational film that deals with the wonders of the universe narrated in their native language. They also visit the Technology Museum with the assistance of a guide that speaks their language. They have the opportunity to play and learn in the technology park with interactive exhibits making physics a fun yet educative activity for them. In the ancient Greek technology exhibition, they get acquainted with the ancient technology and the inventions of the ancient Greek scientists. They realize that technology is a dynamic field and that future technologies will be built on past knowledge. Finally, the children visit the automobile exhibition where they learn about

the history and technology behind the manufacture of a car and the development of that industry.

The activities take place in the children's language. This makes sense for now, but it also means that the children stay among themselves, they don't mix with local kids. At the same time, the Greek government is providing Greek lessons, therefore, in a short time, they will be able to take part in all our activities along with local children. Our objective is to help them integrate and not to keep them apart.

It must be noted that the programme runs in association with the High Commission of the United Nations, the Municipality of Themi and of Thessaloniki, numerous non-profit organisations and the support of local companies.

## Who made the decision to get involved with the refugees?

All decisions in our institution are made by the Board of Trustees. In the beginning, the staff were reluctant. They felt concerned, as these people have been through a lot and education was not their first priority. Additionally, we were all aware that differences in culture and religion made certain people question whether it would be a good idea to incorporate the refugees in our society.

Both the Board of Trustees and the staff of NOESIS embraced the idea of our institution taking part in the integration of the refugees to our society. It is the least we can do for those who are less fortunate than we are. The few reservations that appeared were related to the reactions that the rest of the visitors could have. Still, by welcoming refugee children in our premises and giving them the opportunity to experience the magic of science in a creative way gives us the sense that we accomplish our institutions' mission – science for all!

## How did the refugees respond?

The children are very excited to take part in this programme. They have a precious smile on their faces as they leave our science centre! That is all we need to continue our effort, knowing, at the same time, that we are doing the right thing.

The parents take part in our programmes as well. They are also very pleased because their children have the opportunity of education, which was one of the reasons they fled home. It also allows them to have a break from the hard conditions they live in.



Noesis, Technology Park. Photo: NOESIS

## How did the rest of your visitors respond?

At first, other visitors may have had some reservations, mainly regarding the integration of the refugees in our society. However, we have the sense that, in a short period of time, our visitors, as well as the community in general, have been really supportive as a token of solidarity and good will to those in need. At the same time, we have registered a positive response from the media, which have embraced our initiative. The government's programme to include refugee children in the educational system is also a way of pushing things forward.

## What did you learn from this process?

Thanks to our long experience in hosting visitors from other countries, it was fairly easy for us to design something for the refugees. We did not have any problems with the programme so far. From all the stories they tell us, we become wiser and we have a better understanding of what is important in life.



Portuguese Refugee Council (Portugal)

# RefugiActo, The voice and echo of refugees through theatre

**Isabel Galvão** Teacher of Portuguese

**Sofia Cabrita** Actress and Director



RefugiActo, *Fragmentos*, developed within the project *Refúgio e Teatro: dormem mil gestos nos meus dedos*. Photo: Carlos Porfírio



**Isabel Galvão** has a degree in Languages and Modern Literature – English and French Studies, and training in Portuguese as a Foreign Language for teachers. She works at the Portuguese Council for Refugees since 1997 as a Portuguese teacher, using and developing teaching-learning methodologies targeting the specific needs of refugees, including the design and adaptation of teaching materials and the carrying out of social-cultural activities. Founder and promoter of RefugiActo. She coordinated the project PARTIS – *Refúgio e Teatro: Dormem Mil Gestos nos Meus Dedos*, funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. Email: [isabel.galvao@cpr.pt](mailto:isabel.galvao@cpr.pt)

**Sofia Cabrita** is an actress and theater director. She has a postgraduate degree in Communication and Arts from the Universidade Nova de Lisboa and has graduated from the Escola de Gesto Estudos de Teatre (Barcelona) and Kíklos-Scuola Internazionale di Creazione Teatrale (Padua). She has also got a degree in Actors Training from the Escola Superior de Teatro e Cinema (1999). Founder and artistic director of *Casear Creation* – a collective of research and creation in the areas of gesture, performative objects and masks. She has been involved in several artistic training projects, especially at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, where she also works as a museum artistic mediator. She has been collaborating with RefugiActo since 2008 and was the artistic director of the project PARTIS – *Refúgio e Teatro: Dormem Mil Gestos nos Meus Dedos*, funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. Email: [sofiacabrita@yahoo.es](mailto:sofiacabrita@yahoo.es)

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## About the RefugiActo project, how did it come about, what were the motivations and objectives?

**Isabel Galvão (IG)** – RefugiActo was created in 2004 as a result of the Portuguese language classes at the Portuguese Refugee Council (PRC). It is an amateur theater group where people share emotions, knowledge and experiences. People from many different countries: Afghanistan, Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Kashmir, Colombia, Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Ghana, Georgia, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Iran, Iraq, Kosovo, Palestine, Myanmar, Nigeria, Portugal, Rwanda, Russia, Sri Lanka, among others.

Portuguese classes at PRC began in 1997. We believe that language is much more than vocabulary and grammar; it contains history, traditions and different social, cultural and behavioral codes. Since then, we have been adapting methodologies, bearing in mind the needs of the refugees, as well as organising social-cultural activities, aiming to facilitate intercultural dialogue and to bring together different cultural expressions and knowledge.

In classes refugees shared many adventures and experiences. The idea to turn them into theatre came up in the middle of 2004 with a view to present them in the end-of-the-year event. We started with small *sketches*, in an ironic and humorous way, about situations related to their experience as asylum seekers, and their arrival in Portugal; we joked about the misunderstandings and constraints inherent to a Reception Center, the learning conditions and difficulties of the Portuguese language, with some aspects of their integration process, making fun, for example, of

bad customer care at the Health Center, the obstacles in obtaining documentation, illegal work, the difficulties in renting a house, etc.

For the refugees, being in a group and making theatre out of everyday stories or dramatic situations, where everyone participated, was a way of creating a support network, of making themselves heard, learning the language, getting to know the “Other”. Those months of creation, adapting the texts and rehearsing, were so impressive and positive for students that no one wanted to stop with those sessions. So, it became clear for all of us that theater could, in fact, raise awareness for the refugee cause and become an active, interventionist and transformative voice.

In the first years of this project, we had the help and commitment of many people, from those who participated in the plays, to volunteers, family and friends, the PRC (which made its venue available and gave logistic support), as well as professionals from the performing arts.

**Sofia Cabrita (SC)** - We believe that combining language learning with theater has stimulated expression and creativity, communication through words and the body, self-awareness, knowing the “Other” and the world, dialogue and relationships between people. Additionally, it has improved the confidence and autonomy of each participant. Through RefugiActo, refugees can make their voice heard, play an active role and raise awareness within the Portuguese society regarding this reality.

In 2014, RefugiActo joined the project *Refúgio e Teatro: Dormem Mil Gestos nos Meus Dedos*, with the support of a Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Programme, PARTIS (Artistic Practices for Social Inclusion). The project is divided into two parts. The first part includes regular and open sessions of dramatic expression (once or twice a week, in the auditorium of the Reception Centre for Refugees - RCR, in Bobadela, Loures), which complement the learning of the Portuguese language (sessions are jointly designed by the artist responsible and the teacher of Portuguese Foreign Language). The second part aims to create and set up a play of medium duration.

RefugiActo has always been a group open to new elements, however, between 2014 and 2016, the period coinciding with the PARTIS project, we could only involve people who had already participated, regularly and for some time, in previous sessions of dramatic expression and whose process of acquiring a visa was in a more advanced phase. This situation allowed for more stability.

The group has always had many requests to present its performances (practically always of short duration and with few technical requirements) all over the country and in different contexts. In these three years, although we tried to reduce the number of presentations so that we could focus on the creative process, there was a huge growth in media attention regarding the refugees, as well as a significant increase in asylum applications in Portugal. This was beyond the RCR’s and PCR’s

capacity and this situation changed some of the project's guidelines, forcing us to adapt. On the other hand, it made clearer the need and urgency of using theater as an artistic practice for social inclusion.

## What have you learnt from this project?

**SC** – We have learnt that doing theater is difficult if you are not ready to work intensely on yourself. This kind of work asks a lot, both of you and of the others, and requires great support, courage and availability. The vision that is “sold” is much lighter, based on the games and the pleasure of being on stage in one's free time, the applause and what one can learn from this process. But it is more about giving than receiving, and it is necessary to make people understand, as well as the institutions that support and fund the project, that, in order for this practice to be successful, there are requirements to be met, which don't always correspond to the results that were initially imagined or expected.

On the other hand, we have learnt that art unites people in a unique way, creates empathy, ties, understanding, and generates human, social and cultural knowledge that otherwise would be impossible to achieve. And this is essential when we talk about the relationship between refugees and host societies.

**IG** – As founder and promoter of the group, I always felt that very peculiar dynamics were being developed, in part because of the different cultures involved in the group, and many ideas emerged, which were being debated and enriched us all. But in order to transform these ideas into theater, we needed professional guidance and support. We always tried to do better and we were aware that we needed tools to enhance the performance of the group. In this sense, we took training courses, occasionally we had some help, and we tried to share this learnings with other elements coming into the group.

Having permanently with us an artistic director in the past three years was fundamental to help make a work like this, with such unique characteristics, more systematic. First of all, in order to understand theater and the disciplines that form part of it, broadening our knowledge and theatrical vocabulary, improving our way of working in groups, improving and developing body awareness, critical ability and self-criticism, in planning and organising, in getting to know the technical aspects for producing a play, and in the process of creating and interpreting it. We discovered new ways of working, more focused on a path to follow, under the coordination of someone who knows how to move along it, and has got the human and artistic qualities necessary to deal with a group of non-artists of different origins.

In the process, RefugiActo created a play of a longer duration and greater artistic quality, *Fragmentos*, and today it has got greater technical support to face new challenges.



RefugiActo, World Refugee Day, 2014. Photo: PMR Photography

## In your opinion, what was the impact of participating in RefugiActo on the lives of the refugees?

**IG and SC** – The testimonies of some refugees who have participated in the project may help to understand this impact:

“For me, it’s a group that wants to demonstrate to all refugees and immigrants in Portugal that life goes on, and can be better.” (Ajet Bunjaku, Kosovo)

“It’s my family! But it is also a shelter in a world where there is peace, freedom and a rainbow.” (Yana Schmid, Belarus)

“Since I arrived in Portugal, the first time I smiled was at the theater.” (Felix Aganze, Democratic Republic of Congo)

## Have the plays of RefugiActo made a difference to the audience?

**SC** – Theater has a much greater effect on people than any briefing, communication or image. Theater is made of, by and for humans, here and now, it takes place in a unique and unrepeatable moment. All of this generates empathy and emotions bring people together. This is what happens every time we present a play with RefugiActo.

On stage, there are not people who are weakened by an inhuman situation that surpasses them. On the contrary, there are strong people, doing an actor's job, getting our attention, speaking Portuguese, carrying a story that makes us travel to wonderful countries, presenting a creation of their own, in group. All this reminds the audience that, after all, refugees are people full of courage and culture, who remind and teach us that we should all have hope in life! And, then, they bring us the mountains of Iran, the snow from Russia, the *fou fou* from the Ivory Coast... We can only make these journeys through their eyes, these journeys are also our story.

**IG** – The empathetic reaction of the audience and the many invitations RefugiActo has received demonstrate that these performances have got an effect on people, because they are facing a refugee who is expressing him(her)self in Portuguese, reciting Portuguese poetry, telling his/her story in the first person, sharing and questioning... The audience identifies with this, feels surprised and realises how strange some of our behaviors might seem, while widening their knowledge regarding other cultures living next to us.

## Do you see any changes in the perception of the institutions which promote and fund this type of initiatives regarding their relevance?

**GA and SC** – Early in 2013, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and the PARTIS jury understood that refugees (a small group at the time) were, unfortunately, a group with a tendency to grow and that this issue needed attention. Today, after the end of the project under PARTIS and after major changes, the Foundation continues to support the PRC in maintaining artistic practices in the process of inclusion. We now feel it is possible to make funding applications at a European level and to create events linked to artistic practices for inclusion, something that did not happen before. In neighboring countries, where the number of asylum and refugee applications has always been much higher than in Portugal, there are many artistic projects. However, the case of RefugiActo is exceptional, since the group has existed for 11 years, almost always in self-management, and was born of an internal motivation and need, without the intervention of an artist.

## How do you evaluate the project?

**GA and SC** – With this project it became clear that art is an area that brings people together and unites them through sharing, helping to reflect and by giving them another perspective on their problems, which positively influences their self-esteem, their emotional status, as well as stimulates creativity. However, in the course of this project, doubts have often arisen as to the best way of implementing

some actions: should we insist on monitoring and evaluating in a more systematic way with the help of PCR professionals from the social field? How to evaluate or measure the results? Should we be more demanding in terms of artistic commitment? How to manage the fatigue associated to this kind of artistic work? What is more important (for the many stakeholders): the process or the result?

Despite these doubts, our evaluation is largely positive. We succeeded in clarifying the group's ultimate goal, separating, where necessary, personal life from stage, having a clearer vision regarding the needs of an artistic creation, greatly improving individual performances and recognising the potential of each element. RefugiActo has grown a lot, both as a group and as an art maker, aiming to continue being the voice and echo of refugees through theater. "Feeling for the other to help others feel" has become a motto.

## What are the main difficulties in terms of making the project happen?

**GA and SC** - The difficulty has mostly got to do with the unexpected: the huge increase in arrivals at RCR, the different nationalities and the different levels of knowledge of the Portuguese language, rejections and barriers in the asylum process in Portugal and abrupt changes in the participants' lives. Some of these difficulties are hard to overcome, but we have tried to keep the project flexible enough to continue to respond to all stakeholders. In the case of RefugiActo, we accept that, sometimes, it is not possible to accomplish everything that we want. After all these years, and especially these last three years of the PARTIS project, it has become established that at the PCR there will always be a prominent place for artistic practices and that these must be part of the activities plan. Among so many urgent requests at the PCR, it is only possible to keep the theater going by recognising its importance and giving it voice, space and time. We think we have achieved this through RefugiActo.

## From this experience, what advice would you give to other professionals who would like to get involved with refugees through culture?

**GA and SC** - Cultural initiatives can be one off and/or regular, but what is important is to properly contextualise all stakeholders (participants and promoters), offer quality experiences (designed and run by professionals) and outline general and specific goals taking into consideration the participants' needs. The establishment of partnerships with different cultural institutions is essential, involving community and refugees, as well professionals from several areas (legal support, social support, employment support, learning the Portuguese language, etc.). It is also important to



note that artistic practices for inclusion should be in the way of *interaction* and not an *appropriation* by the artists for their individual creation (this is perhaps another area to explore, equally valid, but we consider that it is something different).

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National Museums Liverpool (United Kingdom)

# Thinking strategically about inclusion in museums

## David Fleming

Director



Museum of Liverpool, *Easter Rising* exhibition. © National Museums Liverpool

**David Fleming** (OBE, MA, PhD, AMA) became Director of National Museums Liverpool (NML) in 2001, since when NML audiences have risen from 700,000 to more than 3 million per year. He has been responsible for the creation of two influential museums, the Museum of Liverpool (2011) and the International Slavery Museum (2007). David is President of the UK Museums Association, a member of ICOM's Ethics Committee, Convener of the Social Justice Alliance of Museums (SJAM), Council Member of Museum Slaskie (Katowice, Poland), and President of the Federation of International Human Rights Museums (FIHRM). David has written extensively and lectured worldwide on management and leadership, city history museums, social inclusion, human rights and politics, and museum ethics. Email: [David.Fleming@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk](mailto:David.Fleming@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk)

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**Inclusion has been a key word in National Museums Liverpool – NML (eight museums altogether), underlined in its mission statement: *To be the world's leading example of an inclusive museum service*. What do you mean by inclusion? How can museums achieve that? And how does this relate with cultural diversity, migration issues or the refugees in terms of approach?**

We mainly ensure that people from all backgrounds and lived experiences can access our museums, programmes and projects, as they want to. It also means that we look to ensure that our work makes a specific and concerted effort to include people and people's histories that have often been excluded from recorded history and cultural provision. It is a statement of intent and, in this way, it helps us as a museum service to make choices about what we want, based on principles of social justice.

In terms of museums as part of the overall cultural life of a society, we can be a platform to enable people to be visible, not hidden, we can encourage empathy, respect and understanding, we can be a positive platform, we can be a supporter, campaigner and active participant/collaborator. Museums are places that can enable many voices to be heard. All of this work comes down to the teams working within museums being aligned with the framework of a strong mission and linked policies. Being active about inclusion means being outward facing, aware of societal and global inequalities and their causes, and seeing contemporary life and the future as being influenced by the past. Being active about inclusion is a mind-set and means working hard to include. Encouraging participation takes time (so strategy, alignment of resources and continued work on messaging and development of teams, and the way they work, are all important).

Museums working with an inclusion mind-set will think about the broader context of any subject or theme they deal with. They will need to take a fresh look at the past, working with people whose histories have often been excluded from the main narrative, looking at uncomfortable (or controversial or contradicted) subjects in an honest and open way. But working with culturally diverse people/communities, migration and refugees is not always about a museum being a campaigning organisation and a platform for debate; it can also be about being a 'safe' place. Creating opportunities within museums - for displays of varying scale, exhibitions and places for events/education or other programmes - can also be about giving opportunity and visibility.

In terms of approach, it is ensuring a museum thinks about humanity and human rights, and how they relate to our contemporary world. Thus, being clearly anti-racist is vital, as is explaining Britain's imperial past and the long history of diverse communities/global diasporas and the continuum of the histories of migration.

***NML has an Equality, Diversity and Disability Policy currently under review, and had previously an Equality and Diversity Policy (since 2006). Why is it still relevant to have a public statement on these issues? And what have you learnt from the first policy implemented, which is now embedded in the new one?***

It is essential that we have a policy framework as a guiding light for ourselves, for our supporters, and for our potential supporters. This statement on inclusion, which needs to embrace the law and public policy, needs really to push us further in terms of our stated intent on inclusion. Since the current policy was published, the UK is operating under the Equalities Act 2010, which means we need to do more, especially in the field of people with 'protected characteristics'. The Act is very much about how we operate as an employer, and the cultural diversity of NML's workers needs more work to ensure better representation and support of those employees. The workforce remains an area for development. Because of our statement on inclusion, then we take museum ethics seriously, and our work on ethics also needs to be applied.

***In the NML strategic plan (2016-2019), one of the aims for the coming years is to increase the diversity of the museum workforce. In what terms is the notion of "diversity" being applied?***

We believe that we need to debate this internally and, at a minimum, it should be about people with 'protected characteristics', as in suggestions above. We need to look at how we relate to the Liverpool City Region (LCR) and nationally in relation to this matter. At a minimum, our work should focus on making sure we are representative of wider society and of LCR. To do this, we need to recruit externally in an active and positive way. Purely internal recruitment due to funding cuts is decreasing our diversity.

It is also about leadership, about role models, training/development, and support. For leadership and role models, we may need to be honest and look outside the museum sector. We need to train staff in 'unconscious bias' and in understanding the diversity (historic and contemporary) of this region. We also need to consider the indices of deprivation, poverty and lack of access, which continue to make this urban area such a challenging place to live for so many people.

### **NML have developed several long-term projects regarding migration and refugees. Could you tell us a bit more about some of these projects and programmes?**

I can give some examples from three of our museums: Museum of Liverpool (MoL), International Slavery Museum (ISM) and Merseyside Maritime Museum (MMM).

At MoL we have invested in active collecting throughout the development of the museum and since opening in 2011. An example would be two projects that contributed to the content in the *Liverpool, Shanghai and China* exhibition in our *Global City* gallery. In one we worked with Liverpool Chinese people who experienced the forced migration, or 'repatriation', of their seafaring fathers after the end of the Second World War in the making of the film: *Where has my Father Gone?* In a second project, we worked with three Liverpool Chinese families to research their family histories for a large-scale family tree in the exhibition. We started working with five families and three stayed with the project and were brave in sharing their findings. A big contribution was made through collecting oral histories for the *Liverpool Voices* collection. The current MoL Collections Development Plan continues to focus on active collecting by being more culturally representative, especially in relation to diverse communities.

In terms of co-production, we developed and continue to develop displays through participation – examples of this are from the on going *Our City, Our Stories* programme (MoL). A recent example of this relates to Irish history and migration in Liverpool, with a display looking at *1916 Easter Rising: The Liverpool Connection* in 2016. This partnership with the Easter Rising Commemoration Committee analysed the contested story.





Museum of Liverpool, *Global City* gallery © National Museums Liverpool



Museum of Liverpool, *Galkoff's and the Secret Life of Pembroke Place* project  
© National Museums Liverpool

Currently, at MoL, we are working on a large-scale project – *Galkoff's and the Secret Life of Pembroke Place* – with the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine and many stakeholders from different groups, schools and community organisations which represent Liverpool's Jewish community. They are working with us to look at the history of this area of the city that many Jewish people migrated to and settled in at the turn of the 20th century.



At ISM, we organized the exhibition *Brutal Exposure: The Congo* (2015). This was a photographic exhibition that looked at the treatment of those who were forced to 'work' in the Belgian Congo more than a century ago. Liverpool's Congolese community wanted the exhibition to show the horrific truth, but found it very painful. The museum works with many partners and one of them is City Hearts. City Hearts supports people who have been trafficked into the UK, as well as awareness-raising activities and events. ISM is used as a safe place for people to meet and access support. Some of ISM's content relates to the Liverpool Black community by featuring three families who trace their story to the transatlantic slave trade. Since the museum opened in 2007, one of the family members remains a volunteer, giving tours to visitors every week.

At MMM we have done research and an exhibition on child migration – *On Their Own: Britain's Child Migrants* (2014–2015); the on-going Collections Development Plan especially considers culturally diverse seafarers for *The Sea Galleries* – new displays to open at the end of 2018. Current work includes the project *Black Salt*, looking at the work and role of seafarers of African descent, to create an exhibition for autumn 2017.

In addition to the active collecting plans, research and exhibitions developed with partners and communities, ISM and MoL are both 'hate-crime reporting centres' (working with the Merseyside Police). Also, we are using our museum galleries for English as a Second Language (ESOL) courses. ESOL courses are available for anyone lacking the English skills or confidence they need to get involved in society.

## What have you learnt through your projects or programmes dealing with migration or refugee issues?

From our experience, there are some key-ideas:

- It is important to have good participation levels for specific projects;
- It is hard to evaluate long-term impact;
- It is hard to find material culture to illustrate stories, but we have improved the cultural representation of history collections in the case of MoL, ISM and MMM;
- Sometimes, projects and their outputs have had to change in response to what people wanted and what was available;
- Any work is intensive; it needs a lot of support, so we often underestimate because it is harder and more time-demanding than projects that just use the museum's own material;
- We need to develop opportunities for people to stay in touch on an on-going basis;

- Sometimes a real challenge is to maintain relationships when staff leave; however, much we want the relationship to be with the organisation, in the end it's people to people contact that makes things work/happen;
- It is a "long game", where building trust and respect is key, and it takes time and resources.

## What would you have to say to other culture professionals that wish to create their own projects involving migrants and refugees? What should they be careful about?

Much of what we are sharing is not written down, but, in our opinion, here is some advice from years of working on participation in many forms and guises:

- First: listen;
- Prepare – understand global diaspora histories; acknowledge controversy and contested histories;
- Be clear about what is on offer; this is vital to manage expectations;
- Don't over-commit;
- Be open and be prepared to change (the final output is not certain at the start and we have often found ourselves at odds with standard 'museum process');
- Plan so that work is embedded in the museum and doesn't need additional (and thus uncertain) resources/funding;
- Develop staff – in this matter we need to be emotionally resilient;
- Be outward-facing and have examples of similar work to share;
- Don't be afraid of being honest and open (especially about what you have done before). Museums, like modern leaders, need to be authentic and able to share vulnerabilities;
- Start with small steps and then develop;
- Share any strategy or framework;
- This is vital work, so don't listen to those who comment on using resources working with small numbers of people; you don't know what impact a museum *could* have. Museums make a contribution to 'thought leadership';

- Partner with like-minded organisations; together museums are stronger and need to learn as well;
  - Focus on stories, human interest, humanity and human rights, and use material culture and the human voice to interpret or create memorable experiences.
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Museum Rotterdam (The Netherlands)

# Translating *hyperdivercity* for the museum **Nicole van Dijk**

Curator, Programme Leader Research and Community Participation



*Authentic Rotterdam Heritage 0001*, adopted by Museum Rotterdam, owned by Kamen Vladimirov, 2016. Photo: Salih Kilic

**Nicole van Dijk** is a curator and leads the research and development programmes of Museum Rotterdam. In 2016, she led the opening exhibition *Rotterdamers and their City* for the new museum venue in central Rotterdam. She is also responsible for participatory research and community projects. Nicole's practice is driven by both using the experience and collections of the museum, and combining it with the contemporary experience of people living in the city today. This creates a fusion of collections and participatory approaches to programmes and governance, which helps shape the role of the 21<sup>st</sup> century museum. She is currently also working with museums in Belgium and in the United Kingdom on projects around participation. Nicole studied at Art School and holds a master's degree in Cultural Anthropology. Email: [n.vandijk@museumrotterdam.nl](mailto:n.vandijk@museumrotterdam.nl)

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**The Museum Rotterdam has changed from a traditional historical museum (founded in 1905 as the Museum of Antiquities) into the city museum of Rotterdam, featuring interaction and participation as the backbone of its work, where stories about contemporary and historical heritage are being told and shared. The museum reopened in 2016 at a new venue in the centre of Rotterdam, choosing the contemporary transnational city and its diversity to be the main focus of its strategies. How do you understand cultural diversity?**

We are very much inspired by what Professor Steven Vertovec said about "hyper-diversity" (*Super-diversity and its Implications*, 2007) and by what is now being developed by several universities. "Super-diversity" or "hyper-diversity" means that diversity is not only caused by cultural, ethnically different, backgrounds. Diversity is also the result of other factors, such as different ages, religions, genders, lifestyles, etc. Thus, this diversity is not only ethnic; it is much more than that.

**You have said that "urban diversity is an asset and can be used to create more cohesive, more creative and productive cities". How can this translate into the museum practice?**

In our museum exhibitions, we focus on different themes, which we believe are important or a challenge for the city, right now and in the future as well, but also on themes that have their roots in our history (i.e. *Care in the City*; *Arrival City*; *City of*

*Diverse Cultures; Innovative City, and Sustainable City*). For example, we have been focusing on the theme *Care in the City*: how do we care for older people or children? How do we care for people with health problems? In our collection, we have a number of objects that tell this story, for example, statues that represent the entrance of older women in hospice care homes in the city (up to the 1930s, there were hospice care houses created especially for older people, mainly financed by the Church). In the 1950s and 1960s, we had a social system which gave people the financial possibility to care for themselves even when they were old. Today, though, we are being challenged by problems such as loneliness. People live alone in their houses and no one is really connecting with them anymore. Thus, how do the city and its citizens deal with this?

The museum is focusing on themes by looking to very personal stories in the city. For instance, how does a woman in the south of Rotterdam with an Antillean background deal with care? She brings in a different way of caring for older people, much more informal and inclusive. She naturally embraces people living around her and suffer from loneliness and organises all kind of activities for them. Therefore, this is another way of managing these problems, which constitute a collective challenge. We are focusing on all daily practices of people with different backgrounds and different approaches.

**Half of Rotterdam's population is foreign-born. Museum Rotterdam has recognised the city's transnational profile through several projects, by involving migrants and bringing their stories to life. Can you give some examples of those initiatives and the museum approaches towards migration topics?**

The museum mainly concentrates on how people live together in this city right now, with all the differences – some caused by migration, but also by different lifestyles. It is not just one group we are focusing on, but on the way all these different groups are living together.

For instance, we had a project – *Caring in the West* – in a very diverse shopping street in Rotterdam. In that context, we did some research together with university students in the field of social work. This project resulted *in situ* in the exhibition *Caring in the West* with different stories being told of how people care for each other, with all the differences they bring along, and how to make the street a better place for everyone.

In 2010, we started a project with the Bulgarian community. We saw the cars and vans coming in from Poland and Bulgaria and other countries in Central Europe – the museum had not managed to keep a good record of the influx of labour migrants



from Turkey and Morocco in the 1960s and 1970s – and wished to follow this movement. So, we started a project on a construction site and set up a lunch canteen. Every day, we had lunch with the Bulgarian communities of workers and learned about their history, their reasons to migrate and their lives. They didn't really know a lot about Rotterdam, so we told them about the history of the city through a small exhibition in the canteen. We met a person who is featured in the current exhibition *Rotterdamers and their City*, Kamen Vladimirov. He is a special man who organised all kinds of things for the Bulgarian community, as well as for other migrants coming to Rotterdam, helping them with housing or the language. We have been following him for six-seven years and built up a very good relationship with him.

That's the way we work, we build a long-term relation with a lot of key figures in Rotterdam's communities. By developing these relationships and seeing how people live, we can also learn more about the impact migration has on lives, communities and the city.

For the opening exhibition in our new museum, *Rotterdamers and their City*, we honoured these people who are embodying important themes for the city. For each theme, we looked for a personalised story in the projects we did and we identified five people who embody the themes: Kamen Vladimirov (*arrival city*), Joyce de Lima (*care*), Marco van Noord (*innovation*), Max de Korte (*sustainability*), and Zeynep Altay (*transnational city*), who are now represented in the exhibition through big life-size statues created with the newest 3D milling techniques.

We worked together with these five persons in a process of co-creation. We asked every one of them how they wanted to be represented in the museum and how they wanted to work on that. Kamen, for example, chose his journey between Bulgaria and Rotterdam. Together, we developed the idea to make a road movie of that journey. Kamen took some filming courses and together with two friends he made the trip and the film. He did this journey in his Volkswagen van, which he had driven many times back and forth between the two countries. The exhibition presents the van and the film, together with his statue. We used the same method with all other participants, reaching five different results.

We are developing a method to capture all kinds of stories and important themes in the city through theatre. The first step is collecting stories. The museum is not the only one collecting stories in Rotterdam, there are all kind of organisations doing that, and we try to work together.

For instance, they can be stories about migration, but also stories about living in the neighbourhood, where there are all kinds of urban problems. Through theatre, we try to interact with other groups. We bring in objects related to this play and these stories and incorporate them in the museum, connecting them with existing collective stories about the city. Volunteers trained by theatre companies we work with are the ones telling the collected stories. These are being shared with museum

visitors, because we found out that a story written on a label in the museum does not have a big impact, visitors don't read it most of the times. We are translating these stories for visitors; we are interacting with them and registering their reactions. The main idea is to bring these stories to life rather than just present an object or a label.

We are also developing a new way of collecting through a project called the "active collection". The traditional way of collecting objects in a city, where one takes them and keeps them in storage, makes these objects inactive, they are not being used, they are just described and remain in a scientific context. We found out that there are a lot of objects, persons and activities that embody the story of daily life in the communities. We can't take those items away from the communities, but we can follow them; see why they are important for those communities and how they are using them. In that sense, we started an "active collection", which means giving an object a sort of mark, a stamp like "Authentic Rotterdam Heritage", and we follow the objects periodically. This is a way of tracking the stories of the city, collecting them, and it also gives recognition to the communities. We do it with objects and persons. Later, this information goes to the exhibitions and the storytellers talk about these processes and objects.



Museum Rotterdam, *Rotterdamers and their city* exhibition, 2016. Photo: Museum Rotterdam

For example, Kamen's van is an object in this collection, embodying the story of migration in Europe. The criteria we use for this process of active collection are simple: we collect objects that are connecting persons or communities to each other or the city. The growing diversity in Rotterdam has put a focus on this. Connections and networks gain an important resilient power. We want to follow these connections. By telling the stories about this collection and making new connections, we want to help making the city more resilient and involved.



Bulgarian workers at Museum Lunchcanteen, 2012-2013. Photo: Museum Rotterdam

## **The Museum Rotterdam is concerned with the tracking and evaluation of the impact of its projects. In your opinion, what worked well or went wrong in projects that dealt with migrants or refugees?**

Sometimes, the voices of people are not heard enough, not as much as we would like. The museum as an organisation, as a sort of grid in itself, can be too conservative and too dominating. Sometimes, it feels it is not proper to deal with all the contemporary challenges we are facing.

On the other hand, it is a way – and we see this a lot – for people to feel honoured, safe or acknowledged in terms of their needs and their place in the city. In a way, the museum is not flexible enough, but in another way, it has the status of an institution that tells the truth, it is of importance and it has a say in the public debates. In that sense, the museum is an important institution that can make the stories be heard and connect them to History. Furthermore, earning people’s trust and making them come with you all the way in a project is a major challenge.

## **What would you have to say to other museum professionals that wish to get involved and create their own projects and programmes involving migrants and refugees?**

A lesson learnt is to keep projects open-ended and try to understand the needs of the groups we are working with. As a museum professional, one can focus on collecting stories, photos or objects, for instance, but that can be beyond what people need for themselves. In that sense, there should always be a connection between what you want to achieve as a museum professional and what people we are working with want to achieve. That can be very different. It is often hard to make that happen and the result of the project may not be that glossy exhibition one had initially planned. It is always a bit messy and “in between things”, but you will have to take that for granted when you work with all kinds of people, who are not museum professionals, but have their own needs in the process.

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Migration Museum Project (United Kingdom)

# *My art can travel do England, but I cannot*

## Sophie Henderson

Director



Migration Museum Project, *Call me by my Name: Stories from Calais and Beyond* exhibition, installation *The Dignity of Life* © branding by Garden

**Sophie Henderson** is the director of the Migration Museum Project since 2012, overseeing its transition from voluntary to funded organisation. Before that, she was a barrister at Tooks Court, Chambers of Michael Mansfield QC, where she specialised in immigration, asylum and human rights law. She was also a judge of the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal and charged appeals for the Social Security and Child Support Tribunal. Email: [sophie@migrationmuseum.org](mailto:sophie@migrationmuseum.org)

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## **Migration is not a new phenomenon, yet is a hot topic nowadays, which is not only complex but also urgent. In your opinion, how can a museum make a difference in this debate?**

It can make a difference because you can take the conversation about migration away from the heat of political debate and the media, where arguments tend to be framed in extreme terms and become polarized, and there is sometimes a dearth of real information. If you can take this conversation into a calmer cultural space – and the cultural world is where people are accustomed to test what they think about things – then that is a benefit. I think that people go to see films, read books or visit museums in order to see the world through other people’s eyes. This automatically makes you question your own attitudes, and your relationships with other people. I think that the medium of culture is often where we process our emotional responses. People sometimes have feelings about migration that are complicated or internally inconsistent; it is the topic that is on everybody’s lips nowadays – indeed it has been for decades, but the focus is particularly intense right now. If we can help take these conversations into a well-informed cultural space then I think that we can make a real contribution to a calmer, more reasoned public conversation about migration.

## **The Museum Migration Project has been working since 2013 hosting temporary exhibitions across UK, programs and events about emigration and immigration. What is the museum’s mission?**

We now have a permanent home in London, but our aspiration is to have a national footprint, through a network of heritage partners committed to bringing out migration stories within their own collections. In the past, we discussed various potential models for the Migration Museum, for example as a moving entity travelling around the country in shipping containers or as an enabling hub working in partnership with other museums to tell migration stories locally all around the country. But in the



end, we felt that the issue of migration is so important and the story of the movement of people into and out of the country over hundreds of years so central to our national narrative, that nothing less than a permanent Migration Museum would do to give this story the dignity and prominence it deserves. We feel that London, as the most diverse place in Britain on every measure by far, is the natural home for a permanent Migration Museum for Britain. But, in recognition of the fact that Britain's migration story has been, and still is, very much a national story and not just a London one, we aim to work throughout the country by developing a network of strong partnerships nationwide.

The Migration Museum can make a public statement that migration is a sufficiently important part of Britain's national narrative that it merits representation in a dedicated cultural institution of its own. In my view, nothing less will do. This is a way of showing what is culturally valued by the nation and providing a place where people can tease out what they really think about the topic of migration, because this is an issue that really matters. And in giving prominence to Britain's migration story and inviting people to find their own place in it – because we *all* have some sort of migration story somewhere in our past, whether of immigration or emigration – we are inviting people to look at Britain's shared history, and at things that we have in common rather than things that divide us.

The other important thing we can do is to engage people with telling the stories in the Museum by creating content that is co-produced with the communities that are represented. In this way, I think that we can bring people together and draw out common themes so as to aid better understanding between groups and individuals.

### **Regarding the temporary exhibition *Call me by my Name: Stories from Calais and Beyond*, hosted in London in June 2016, how did the idea come up? What were the motivations and aims?**

We wanted to test ourselves by tackling a particularly pressing contemporary topic, which was the current migrant and refugee crisis, with particular focus on the 'Jungle' refugee camp in Calais. Our curator, Sue McAlpine, was particularly taken by this as a subject and that was also quite a driver. Whilst the exhibition was on, the 'Jungle' camp was under constant threat of demolition and was very much a front-page news story. It was quite a challenge to curate and deliver an exhibition in relation to a story that was so rapidly changing.

In mounting the exhibition, we wanted to address a number of burning questions that people had in their minds. I think many people were asking themselves why there was a refugee camp in Calais. And why it was that there were 6,000 people there – closer to London than Birmingham – all trying to get to Britain, with some

of them dying in the attempt? We wanted people to think about their responses to these questions, and to consider what their responsibilities might be. We wanted to get behind the newspaper headlines, and the anonymity, and to dig into the humanity of people's individual stories. Also, to show that this is a complicated topic, that there are no simple solutions, and that there is a range of legitimate opinions. We wanted to reflect that range of voices and not to present any answers but simply to ask people to reflect on what their own responses might be.

**This exhibition used different means of representation (art, films, audio, photography, installations, recreations, etc.), presenting works of emerging and well-established artists, but also the art and testimonies of refugees, camp residents and volunteers. The result was a multi-layered and multi-media assemblage that reflected a broad range of voices.**

All sorts of materials were used and that's what we felt worked well. One is very accustomed to see pictures of people in overcrowded boats in the Mediterranean and there is perhaps a certain familiarity or even fatigue with that imagery now. We felt that varied mediums of representation would be a way of bringing the stories and the issues alive, and of provoking and interesting our audiences.

For example, we had an installation of life jackets (*The Dignity of Life* by Sarah Savage) picked up on a beach in Kos (Greece) that were left behind by migrants. They were fake life jackets, filled with cheap packaging material of the kind that would drag you down in the water rather than buoy you up, of a type frequently distributed by people smugglers.

We also had photographs, film and audio. There was a 'listening hut' where you could listen to a range of voices, from Nigel Farage to Calais lorry drivers to those of the refugees themselves and those who work with them. We had a fantastic display of art made within the 'Jungle' camp itself, including paintings and sculptures, and extraordinary things made out of objects that were found. There were wonderful things made out of plastic bottles and cups, really inventive, uplifting works of art. Another thing that we wanted to get across in the exhibition was the sheer creative energy and the spirit of the people within the camp. What you see on the television is the mud, the cold and the fires, but underneath there is music, books and art, there is a wealth of cultural life going on, so we wanted to bring a little bit of that into the exhibition as well.

One very poignant picture was by a Mauritanian refugee artist called Alpha Diagne (subsequently granted refugee status in France) for which the caption read: "My art can travel to England but I cannot". Another desperately moving painting, by the child of a Syrian refugee, depicted her father drowning.

Another striking piece, as you entered the exhibition, was a sculptural installation, *Wanderers*, by an artist called Nikolaj Bendix Skyum Larsen. This contained about 300 anonymous-looking figures on a plinth representing the 'hordes' of migrants that are so often referred to in the press. As the visitor went through the exhibition, the humanity of these people emerged, and right at the end there was an actual recreation of part of the camp itself, complete with tents and shelters. That was the trajectory of the exhibition.



Migration Museum Project, *Call me by my Name: Stories from Calais and Beyond* exhibition, installation *Wanderers* © Nikolaj Bendix Skyum Larsen

## What has the Museum Migration Project learnt with this exhibition?

This exhibition was popular, attracting more than 4,000 visitors in three weeks, and so we have learnt that people have a real appetite to come to contemplate and engage with tricky and provocative issues, that may make them feel a bit uncomfortable. I think that this is because people truly want to try to understand the issues surrounding the topic of migration and what their own views are. Most people aren't crudely 'pro' or 'anti' migration, but instead have quite complicated views; they might feel that there is too much migration, but at the same time feel that migration

is in many respects very beneficial for themselves and for the country. Anti-migration views don't necessarily make people bigoted or racist. Sometimes people hold contradictory views within themselves that they find difficult to reconcile.

Another thing that we've learnt is that we can engage visitors interactively with an exhibition such as this. One thing we liked very much was having "pop up" professors from Oxford University and the Open University, who were available in the exhibition to answer visitors' questions at specified times. We learned that there was great potential for academic collaboration such that we could elucidate aspects of the exhibition with expert knowledge, and they could take their learning beyond the confines of their universities to non-academic arts audiences.

I wish we could have had the exhibition on for longer than three weeks! Having a more permanent space now, we plan to show much of *Call Me By my Name: Stories from Calais and Beyond* from April to July 2017 and thereafter to put on a new exhibition about pivotal moments in Britain's history, from a migration point of view.

Another thing we might have improved with the exhibition was to encourage greater exposure to different audiences – many of those who came, though ethnically diverse, and spanning a range of ages, were largely highly educated and fairly highly engaged with the cultural sector. The school children who visited the exhibition with their teachers, by contrast, tended to be underprivileged with much less prior cultural engagement than our adult visitors. Ideally, we would like to broaden our reach, so as to bring in a different kind of adult audience. We lack the resources for now to take this exhibition outside London, but it would be really interesting to test its appeal and impact in different areas of the country, particularly where attitudes towards migrants are less sympathetic.

## **From your experience, what advice would you give to other professionals that want to engage with migrants and refugees, and want to plan activities in their museums?**

I wouldn't presume to know what other people ought to do, but if I had any advice, it would be just not to be afraid of going there. It seems to me that migration is a topic that people are truly interested in. We ought to give people credit for having subtle and complicated views that they have a real desire to unpick. I would say, look hard at your own collections and your own institution and see where there are migration stories to be told – because there are bound to be migration stories there – and bring them out where you can. I suppose you also want to engage communities in telling those stories as far as possible, so people truly have a sense of ownership and feel that it comes – at least in part – from their own 'trusted' source.

Some of the pieces in the exhibition *Call me by my Name: Stories from Calais and Beyond* were created by refugees from the Calais Camp but the rest of the exhibition largely wasn't. If we were to take this exhibition outside London, it would be great to produce more co-created content, because that brings it to life. For instance, we could add another gallery right at the end, which is the post-arrival 'journey', once an asylum-seeker has reached the UK. Our exhibition covered, to some extent, the extraordinary journeys many refugees and asylum-seekers have undertaken – sometimes across the Sahara, then across the Mediterranean and through Europe, then from Calais to Britain. But after that, another very lengthy 'journey' often begins to regularize an asylum-seeker's status in the UK. This can take many months or even years to complete – that is an often-untold part of the story. In future, we'd like to tackle that, telling that part of the story in partnership with asylum-seekers who have already arrived in the UK, through creation of artworks or other means.

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Institute for Canadian Citizenship (Canada)

# Diversity is a reality. Inclusion is a choice.

## Charlie Foran

CEO



McCord Museum, *Ahlan* project. Photo: ICC/Nadia Zheng



**Charlie Foran** is CEO of the [Institute for Canadian Citizenship \(ICC\)](#). He has degrees from the University of Toronto and the University College, Dublin, and has taught in China, Hong Kong, and Canada. He has published eleven books, including five novels. A past president of PEN Canada, he is a senior fellow at Massey College, and an adjunct professor in the Department of English at the University of Toronto. In 2014, he was named to the Order of Canada. He lives in Toronto with his family. Email: [Julie Phillips jphillips@icc-icc.ca](mailto:jphillips@icc-icc.ca)

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**Let me ask you first about the *Ahlan Project*. Why was it created? Why did you think that taking people to Canadian cultural attractions would be a way to help them feel welcome and get to know the country they recently arrived to? To build relationships and connect to Canada’s shared culture?**

The *Ahlan Canada* programme was created by the Institute for Canadian Citizenship (ICC) in response to the arrival of Syrian refugees in 2015 and 2016. We found many of our partners from the *Cultural Access Pass* (CAP) programme wanted to open their doors to these newcomers. It seemed to make sense. Because we have a wide and deep network of cultural partners, it put us in the unique position to create connections between the newly arrived Syrians and the wonderful community cultural places and spaces in our network. Working closely with our partners, we develop family-friendly tours of Canadian cultural attractions. *Ahlan* (Arabic for “welcome”) helps newcomers build relationships and connect to our shared culture.

**Why culture? In most countries, governments and organisations concentrate on immediate, practical needs: housing, health care, employment, education. Rarely is culture part of the policy.**

We believe that culture is a portal into belonging and it’s important to accelerate the familiarity and comfort of newcomers with Canada’s cultural sector. As I said in [this Quartz article](#): “Welcoming people is a series of gestures that can take many forms. Art takes away the idea of otherness, of people being strangers...it’s fundamentally about how humans are connected.”

The other needs were being looked after by private sponsors and the government.

Integration requires many metrics. There are the more immediate concerns you mentioned – housing, health care, employment, education. But a familiarity with

the local culture, an opportunity to explore the parallels between this new culture and one's own, is a good beginning. We've had Syrian newcomers encounter Norval Morriseau's 1977 masterpiece *Man Changing into Thunderbird* at the Art Gallery of Ontario and draw parallels between the artist's transformation and their personal journeys. These are tremendous moments of mutual recognition.

As for reciprocity, we're an unfinished, ongoing cultural project. Our shared cultural spaces and imaginaries evolve and expand with our new Canadians. What is needed for this experiment to proceed in the right spirit is an openness to this process.

### **The programme is funded by a government department, the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. How significant is this support for the ICC? What is its meaning?**

The ICC has a funding agreement in place with the federal government to cover other ICC programme delivery. When we responded to the Syrian arrivals, and very quickly developed the *Ahlan* programme, we were very lucky to request, and to quickly be given approval, to reallocate some of our existing funding to this unanticipated initiative. It's worth noting that the *Ahlan* programme, like our *Cultural Access Pass*, is not an expensive programme. It was a success thanks to the generosity of our cultural partners, who opened their doors to *Ahlan* participants at no cost to the program; the settlement agencies that connected us with Syrian new arrivals; and a group of wonderful language volunteers who donated their time to act as informal translators during the cultural visits

We've been fortunate to receive government funding for our *Ahlan Canada* programme. We won't presume to speak for government policy at large, but we do believe that shaping and inhabiting shared cultural spaces is key to creating truly inclusive societies.

### **The *Ahlan* project draws from another ICC project, the *Cultural Access Pass*. I found out about it a few years ago, when I read that citizenship ceremonies were taking place in museums. I saw a great symbolism in it. What is the CAP exactly? What role do you think cultural organisations play in building a more inclusive society?**

The ICC's *Cultural Access Pass* (CAP) is a national programme that gives new Canadian citizens the opportunity to explore, travel and discover during their first year of

citizenship, by providing free admission to more than 1,200 of Canada's premier cultural attractions, including museums, art galleries, science centres, and national parks and historic sites. The programme is used by more than 50,000 new Canadian citizens each year. It is the only programme of its kind in the world. It's effective because it connects new citizens and their families to Canada's shared culture and identity, building for them a unique sense of inclusion and belonging.

Culture is by definition inclusive. Both of these ICC programs – *Building Citizenship* (our ICC community citizenship ceremony programme, where Canadian citizenship ceremonies take place in unique cultural locations) and CAP – emphasize cultural spaces as shared spaces and speak to our larger desire to make new Canadians feel these institutions and spaces are theirs too. We know that over 240,000 new Canadian citizens have gained access to iconic cultural spaces through the CAP program; that kind of active engagement within the cultural landscape is transformative, for the individual and the institution.

## **What feedback are you getting from CAP users? Do the project's results correspond to the initial objectives?**

CAP's success is evidenced by the numbers I just mentioned – since CAP began in 2008, more than 240,000 new Canadian citizens have registered for the program. More new citizens join the CAP programme every day. Here's a sample of what they tell us:

"I think the CAP is an awesome gift for new citizens of Canada. I cannot think of a better gift than this to encourage new citizens to get out and explore his or her new country."

"Thanks for this great opportunity that make us (me and my wife) feel welcomed to the Canadian family."

"I think CAP programme is a wonderful gift to new Canadians. It let me explore various museums, cultural and historical sites and I wish I had more time to visit other wonderful places that I have missed. Overall, thumbs up from my side on this programme."

"Thank you so much for this programme! It was a very sweet surprise after I got my citizenship. I would not have become so immersed in the culture if it wasn't for it. It was one of the best years of my life thanks to all of you involved in the programme. Thank you again!"



Museum of Anthropology at UBC, *Ahlan* project. Photo: ICC/Lisa King

**The ICC states that its aim is to inspire Canadians to be inclusive, embrace fresh thinking, practice active citizenship, and own our collective culture and spaces. What is a collective culture? Is it a mono-culture? How is it negotiated? Don't people keep their differences? Which differences can they keep without setting themselves apart from society?**

Justin Trudeau confounded the rest of the Euro-American world by calling Canada a post-national state, but to most Canadians, the remark was unexceptional. There's a long and complex history to what might be called post-nationalism here – from the first settler encounter with indigenous ideas of welcome, to our slow awakening from colonial slumber, to the literary and intellectual projects over the last half-century that have criticized, exalted, and ultimately normalized the idea (Marshall McLuhan once said that "Any sense of identity we have is our sense of density"). We're an experimental cultural space. We may not have the vocabulary yet to make a case – maybe it's our predisposition for self-effacement – but we've been thinking differently about inhabiting our complex, layered cultural landscape for a while. Post-nationalism is thinkable here, in a way that eludes the current European or American model.

ICC co-founder John Ralston Saul often speaks of the words of Chief John Kelly – “as the years go by, the circle of the Ojibway gets bigger and bigger.” This is the vision for Canadian multiculturalism – a circle, ever edging outwards, making room for those who join. It’s a national narrative that is not one but many.



Glendon College, Citizenship Ceremony. Photo: ICC/James MacDonald

***Your Canadians on Citizenship survey (2012) showed, among other things, that most people think that to be a good citizen is to accept others who are different, as well as to share Canadian values. This might sound contradictory. Is it?***

For Canadians, who tend to embrace the messiness of identity, this, actually, wouldn’t be contradictory. Newcomers can both keep their identity and value their heritage and history, and accept the basic principles that define Canadian society – democracy, fundamental human rights, etc. Just because someone is “different” doesn’t mean they don’t support those things. Furthermore, identity is constantly shifting/evolving, particularly the longer one lives in another place. One of the issues with the survey is that it doesn’t actually define “Canadian values”.



Quoting from the survey: “While the survey did not define which values would apply, Canadians’ views on what makes a good citizen (e.g., gender equity, respect for others and environmental responsibility) are indicators of the types of values to which they are likely referring.”

**In most countries, there are people, citizens, expressing concern that the influx of immigrants and refugees will make them lose their own culture and affect their way of living and values. Why is Canada choosing inclusion? How does ICC’s work fit into current government policy? And how is it affected by changes in government?**

Canada’s commitment to inclusion isn’t naïve optimism. There are practical reasons for supporting immigration. Since the 1990s, a low fertility rate and an aging population have slowed the population growth rate; ten years ago, we owed two-thirds of our population growth to immigration. That number is poised to grow. There are economic reasons; we’ve heard it from the government and seen it in our statistics – diversity fuels economic prosperity. There’s also that philosophical openness to complexity and contradiction, experiment and irresolution. At the ICC, we referred to 2016 as the year of our collective “citizenship test.” There will be more tests, if the dark clouds of negativity gathering around immigration are any indication. We’ll meet them with the same optimism and composure we showed this year.

The ICC has been able to partner with the Government of Canada to celebrate new citizens through our community citizenship ceremonies. We’re also fortunate to work with an incredible national network of partners and volunteers who share our commitment to inclusion. As the ICC’s work expands, as our networks grow, we’ll continue to move forward with thoughtful, deliberate, and engaged programming.



# Part II

## Museums, Migration and Cultural Diversity: Recommendations for Museum Work

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Migration is part of human history
- 1.2 Aim and structure of the guidelines

### 2. A new perspective on collections

- 2.1 Re-examining and re-exploring existing collections
- 2.2 Collecting new exhibits
- 2.3 Questions and input

### 3. Exhibiting migration and cultural diversity

- 3.1 Incorporating contemporary witnesses and family history
- 3.2 Temporary exhibitions

**3.3 Permanent exhibitions**

**3.4 Questions and input**

## **4. New opportunities for outreach work**

**4.1 Inspiring interest in migration history and cultural diversity**

**4.2 Promoting intercultural dialogue**

**4.3 A productive approach to social diversity**

**4.4 Addressing new target groups**

**4.5 Developing intercultural skills**

**4.6 Questions and input**

## **5. Recommendations**

**5.1 Intensify the level of visitor research**

**5.2 New communication channels**

**5.3 Active contact initiation**

**5.4 Participation and training**

**5.5 Additional expertise**

**5.6 Appointed contacts**

**Glossary**

**Further reading**

**Editorial team**

**Collaboration and input**

**Suggestions, critical feedback and comments**

# 1.

# Introduction

Our society today is shaped by people with a wide variety of lifestyles and backgrounds. Recognising this diversity as the norm is a task that we face in our social interactions on a daily basis and in the long term. In a society with a high level of immigration as in Germany, cultural diversity leads to new perspectives and new directions in museum work. This follows from the definition of museums set out by the International Council of Museums, which describes them as non-profit institutions “in the service of society and its development”.<sup>3</sup> These guidelines aim to show museums in Germany what approaches they can take to playing an active part in addressing this social challenge.

Engaging with the issue of migration runs in parallel to the efforts that many museums are making to become more open and to develop new ways of working with and for the public. Museums have the potential “to explain society as a society in transition, in motion, in perpetual transformation, as a society characterised by cultures in the plural and thus by continuous encounters with otherness, by continuous experiences of contact and contrast.”<sup>4</sup> The experiences and needs of people with and without immigrant backgrounds should play a bigger role in museums and exhibitions in the future.

The trend is moving towards participative museums that encourage involvement from all social groups and that understand integration as a two-way process. A change of perspective will allow people to see the museum in a new light, and the museum to see the world in a new light. Active involvement from visitors will ideally facilitate a new understanding of the past and the present, culture and the environment, and much more besides.

The “museum for all” might well remain a utopian dream, but the “museum for as many as possible” should become a reality. In order to achieve this goal, new strategies for museum work are needed for museums of all categories and sizes.

## 1.1

# Migration is part of human history

Migration is not just happening now, in the globalised modern world. Rather, it has been a feature of every era since the first people left Africa and spread across the world. Migration has thus been the norm throughout history.

Migration leads to a temporary or permanent change in the place where individuals or groups live. Immigration and emigration can take many different forms, including cross-border migration, migration within a single territory and circular migration. The reasons for migration are as diverse as the forms the movements can take. For centuries, factors such as the availability of natural resources, work, prosperity, settlement, family, religion and cultural needs have been motivating people to leave their homes. In these cases, migration can be a conscious part of a person's life plans. However, political persecution, wars, dictatorships, revolutions, discrimination on ethnic or religious grounds, natural disasters and poverty are triggers for forced migration that are still relevant today. Furthermore, the boundaries between voluntary and involuntary migration are often fluid.

Since the beginning of the modern era, the emergence of nation states, territories and religious conflicts have encouraged a sense of the familiar and the foreign, and of borders and violations thereof. However, the industrial and post-industrial societies of our globalised world are also characterised by a high degree of mobility, which has given migration a new importance.

## 1.2

# Aim and structure of the guidelines

The theme of cultural diversity and the challenge of museum work for a pluralistic society call for new points of view and new narratives. This applies to every category of museum: natural history museums, art museums, museums of technology, ethnological museums, museums of history, regional museums, city museums, local heritage museums, children's museums, open-air museums, etc. The actual form that this new perspective takes can differ depending on the type of museum.

These guidelines contain recommendations on what strategies might look like in the specific context of the core museum tasks collecting (including conservation and research), exhibiting and outreach. They describe smaller measures that can be implemented at a reasonable cost, as well as extensive changes that affect the whole museum and require longer-term processes. The range of tasks will vary according to the capabilities, resources and goals of the individual museums. The guidelines also touch on other aspects that are important for museum funding bodies and patrons, and for policymakers and culture enthusiasts. In line with the structure of the Bunte Reihe, a series of guidelines and recommendations published by the German Museums Association, the present guidelines are not an academic treatment of the subject. Rather, they are intended as a practical support for everyone who works for and with museums.

The glossary in the appendix explains important keywords and how they are used in these guidelines. The bibliography is designed to encourage readers to delve deeper into the subject matter.

If museums begin to see the challenges of social plurality and engagement with the topic of migration as tasks that traverse all areas of their work, they will have achieved the first goal of these guidelines.

## 2.

# A new perspective on collections

A museum's foundation is its collection, and the nature of the collection characterizes each museum. The topics of migration and cultural diversity do not just have an important role to play in cultural history museums and archaeological museums. They are relevant to every kind of museum.

- For instance, aspects of global technology transfer could be of interest in museums that focus on the history of technology.
- For art museums, migration and cultural diversity could be relevant in terms of questions related to style and the sociology of art, and as a social phenomenon explored by artists.
- Migration is also a principle of nature. Scientific collections can show the many changes to biodiversity caused by human influence – in particular changes to the habitats, existence and geographic ranges of different species. A critical reflection on the history of the collection and the consideration of cultural aspects could provide numerous points of departure for natural history museums.

## 2.1

# Re-examining and re-exploring existing collections

Migration and cultural diversity are not yet explicit topics within the existing collections of all museums. However, the collections can and should be re-examined and re-explored from this perspective. Museum employees can do this, though it should be in collaboration with external specialists and special interest groups.



When looking through and re-assessing the existing collection, it is important to avoid relying on handed-down knowledge; instead, staff should deliberately expose the objects to different questions. This is the only way to establish how certain orders and rationales came about in the display, and how historical contexts and (pre-)interpretations influenced the archive and collections. It should be kept in mind that a fair number of collections originated within the context of colonialist and racist views, and have been influenced by them. The original contexts of the collections should be reconstructed and then deconstructed so as to open up new perspectives and create scope for displaying them.

German national history is the frame of reference in most cultural history museums in Germany, irrespective of their local or regional focus. Despite the aim of achieving culture for all, this aspect has yet to change fundamentally. The mind of Germany's immigration society continues to lack shared memories and awareness for transnational contexts in the past and the present.

For decades, people's everyday lives have been poly-local and transcultural. Repeatedly reminding oneself of this is the key to avoiding any implicit continuation of the dichotomy between "us" and "them" when documenting objects linked to migration. The aim is to narrate a history of migration and cultural diversity that is integrated into the history of society as a whole.

## 2.2 Collecting new exhibits

In addition to re-examining and re-exploring existing collections, museums should also actively collect new exhibits linked to migration and cultural diversity. There are various ways of doing this.

### Collecting with associations and organisations

Special interest groups, associations and organisations of people with migrant backgrounds differ in terms of their regional roots, religious beliefs, political orientation and national, cultural and social interests. When it comes to collecting exhibits about migration history or histories, they can be key initial points of contact for links to people, for stories, for mementos and for information about private collections that might already exist. The organisations should be made aware of the museum's activities and be invited to help develop its collections.

## Collections in public offices and agencies

Municipal and state archives are important potential sources for texts about migration history. They usually document the official, administrative perspective. Company archives can also contain documents or diagrams that show how the company has changed as a result of labour migration.

Beyond the archives and official records, other public authorities and agencies (e.g. hospitals, social services departments and refugee commissions) are often sources of written material and even three-dimensional objects. However, details about the specific history of these objects or about to whom they should be ascribed are often undocumented or impossible to research.

## Collecting in public spaces

Museums can supplement their collections by running activities in relevant public places. Specific occasions, such as intercultural weeks, anniversaries of labour recruitment agreements, seasonal and religious festivals, and thematic events (family, music, corporate), can also make it easier to communicate the motivation for the collection activities. These types of initiative are a good opportunity for making initial contact with interested parties and for using this as a basis for establishing a dialogue.

Collecting in a particular locality or part of town is another way of accessing people's life stories, photographs and objects in a neighbourhood context. This strategy reaches immigrants and those without an immigrant background from different social milieus. Engaging with a specific place makes it easier to develop more than one perspective on a topic. This can also be achieved via joint projects with schools.

Dialogue-based collaboration with contemporary witnesses can open up access to objects and their meanings that have so far not been represented in the museum's collection. Temporary loans for exhibitions are an opportunity for lenders and museums alike to explore the layers of meaning attached to the exhibits and to strengthen mutual understanding and trust. The visible appreciation of an object's history that comes with its exhibition can inspire lenders to allow their mementos to remain permanently in the museum's collection as part of a shared cultural heritage.

## 2.3

# Questions and input

### Origins of the museum's collection

Every museum should have a collection plan that is set out in writing and updated regularly.<sup>11</sup> Given that museum collections might have come about for many different reasons and might have different origins, it is a good idea to look at the development one's own collection more closely:

- How did the museum's collection come about?
- Did a specific collection profile exist from the outset (regional, national, scientific or thematic – e.g. technical and industrial history, commercial history, everyday culture)?
- What questions or interests were in focus (key topics)?
- When and how was the collection profile altered?
- Have the collection profile developed and/or changed over time? Have new topics been added?

### Catalogue of questions for objects

In order to guarantee the consistency and quality of a collection, it is generally advisable to develop an in-house catalogue of questions that can be used to query and assess possible additions to the collection. This catalogue of questions should be expanded to ensure that the topics of migration and cultural diversity are incorporated into the collection.

- What questions have been asked of the objects so far?
- What frames of reference were used for interpreting the objects (e.g. local, regional or national frameworks, a scientific system, socio-political issues)?
- Were questions related to migration and cultural diversity taken into consideration during the scientific exploration of the collection?

## Examining and re-evaluating the existing collection

Existing collections should be deliberately subjected to different questions to those asked in the past. This approach reveals how certain orders and rationales came about in the interpretation of the objects. It also shows that objects are always ambiguous in their statements and must be read against the backdrop of historical contexts and (pre-)interpretations.

- What questions appear significant today in terms of society's cultural diversity? Can these questions be applied to all areas of the collection? Are they relevant to all areas?
- How can the object be read or interpreted from the perspective of migration and cultural diversity?

## Skills for exploring objects via new questions

- Do the museum employees have the skills necessary to ascertain key testimonial qualities of an object – e.g. knowledge of the language, the history and the (everyday) culture of the country of origin and knowledge of the object's context of use?
- Could people with specialist knowledge, such as members of self-organised migrant groups, be brought in as consultants?
- Could contemporary witnesses contribute their experiences and skills?

# 3.

## Exhibiting migration and cultural diversity

Exhibitions are places of social representation and cultural dialogue. Engaging with the exhibits encourages the formation of individual opinions and can trigger conversations between visitors, thereby helping to develop an understanding of similarities and differences. Exhibitions can make visible the history and presence of people with and without migrant backgrounds. They provide a space for illustrating reciprocal processes and the significance of migration in history. This creates multiple points of reference and opportunities for identification.

While permanent exhibitions show a representative cross-section of the museum's collections, temporary exhibitions focus on specific topics, such as current research. They can also be used to experiment with different exhibition approaches or formats.

The long-term goal is to duly incorporate migration history and cultural diversity into the permanent exhibitions as intersecting topics and to increasingly bring multi-perspective approaches to the temporary exhibitions.

### 3.1

## Incorporating contemporary witnesses and family history

All categories of museum can use approaches that focus on biographical history, everyday history and art to encourage people with and without migrant backgrounds to participate in conceptualising and designing exhibitions and accompanying events.

Through this collaboration, traditional attributions of meaning can be questioned, new questions developed and new perspectives adopted.

Presenting autobiographical recollections in exhibitions gives people the chance to tell their own stories in their own voices. It can open up new perspectives and close systematic gaps in the heritage. Autobiographical recollections can communicate subjective points of view and insights into experiences, attitudes and impressions. These can also be expressed via artistic approaches.

Everyday objects and documents often acquire significance for migration history through the personal stories attached to them. The object's personal significance and broader historical context create the various layers of meaning and thus ultimately the object's relevance to individuals and the public as a whole.

## 3.2 Temporary exhibitions

Temporary exhibitions are especially well suited to addressing current topics and trying out different forms of collaboration, exhibiting and outreach. They can also be used to gradually explore the history of migration and cultural diversity within the museum's region, its category or its thematic focus.

Anniversaries and jubilees provide opportunities for linking the past with the present. They attract increased public attention and can open up possibilities for acquiring financial and other means of support. Exhibitions on migration history and cultural diversity can serve as an example to the public and can stimulate collaborations with new partners.

In line with the idea of participation, general topics can also be examined with regard to their different aspects in a diverse society. For instance, subjects such as "love", "family" and "work" can be investigated and presented in terms of their different meanings and significance. Similarities and differences often do not correspond to reputed national or ethnic attributes. They provide opportunities for discussions and new insights, and thereby make the diversity in society visible. Exhibitions can highlight trends, question causes and mechanisms, and point out the changing, malleable nature of circumstances.

Temporary exhibitions can be used to trial loans. Lenders can see how the museum approaches the loan and its meaning in the exhibition, and what effect this approach has on them and the visitors to the exhibition. On the other hand, the museum can test out the meaning and interpretation of the loan. On the basis of these experiences, both parties can develop ideas for continuing the collaboration or for making the loan a permanent part of the collection.



Presenting temporary exhibitions in locations outside the museum can inspire visitor groups that the museum has not yet reached to get involved in museum work and collaborations. It can also bring the topics of migration history and cultural diversity to the public's attention in new ways.

## 3.3 Permanent exhibitions

Permanent exhibitions are subject to lengthy innovation cycles. Partial or complete changes often have a very long planning phase and require significant financial input. To ensure that museums can better represent migration history and cultural diversity, we recommend that they also make changes to their permanent exhibitions. First steps towards developing the exhibitions in this way can be taken via different routes and without spending a great deal of money.

Without having to completely overhaul the exhibition, targeted interventions (e.g. changing the way the exhibits are arranged, including additional exhibits or using artistic devices) can introduce new aspects into existing permanent exhibitions.

In keeping with the goal of encouraging participation, viewing and discussing the exhibition with people from different cultural backgrounds and with different perspectives can shed light on new layers of meaning, on flaws and on desired additions.

Expanding the exhibition labels, adding comments or using digital media and different lighting can make these aspects visible and create new connections. Additional aspects and meanings often emerge through new constellations and by adding or removing exhibits. Media in different language versions and/or in-depth commentaries can help with this.

Ideally, museums will systematically develop their permanent exhibitions over the long term so that a common thread can emerge from the individually revised sections.

## 3.4

# Questions and input

### Concept, target groups and aims

- What is the basic conceptual orientation of the exhibition?
- Does it focus on the process of migration or on the development of a society with a high level of immigration?
- Is the aim to show the past and the present of a specific group?
- Which historical era is relevant for demonstrating the chosen aspects?
- Does the exhibition aim to show a general topic from different perspectives in relation to specific social groups?
- Are transcultural connections relevant to the exhibition's core narrative?
- Which target groups can be reached with which focus?
- How can target groups be included in developing the exhibition concept?

### Dialogue and participation

- What common goals unite the partners in the collaboration?<sup>12</sup>
- How extensive should the participation be?
- How can collaboration be incorporated into the conceptualization phase?
- Should contemporary witnesses be interviewed?
- Can objects and their layers of meaning be jointly examined and explored through dialogue?<sup>13</sup>
- Is there a desire for discussions about the type of presentation and the design?
- How will the participatory process be steered? Are the various expectations, aims and decision-making pathways clear?

## Attracting cooperation partners

- Which groups of people, multipliers, special interest groups, associations and organisations are relevant to the selected topics and target groups? What interests do they represent?
- What are the most suitable communication channels? Personal contact, personal networks, announcements, notices at meeting points, multipliers, professional settings, leisure activities, social networks, new media?
- Which reliable contact partners with sufficient time and linguistic/ intercultural skills can the museum provide?
- Should the collaborations continue beyond the exhibition? If so, to what extent?

## Staging the exhibition

- How can the exhibition present multiple perspectives and different interpretations?
- Does the exhibition shed light on or address different cultural contexts and possible interpretations?
- How are the objects contextualised? What is the relationship between individual objects, personal histories and history in general?
- Do the selected objects and the way they are presented touch on cultural or religious taboos? Was this a conscious and deliberate choice?
- What language is used for the texts, media and accompanying materials?

# 4.

## New opportunities for outreach work

In terms of museums opening up interculturally, outreach work has an extremely important role to play. This is especially true in the case of communicating new content, promoting intercultural skills for handling long-standing social diversity and attracting new target groups.

Outreach work creates a dialogue between the audience and the museum, incorporating visitor interests into museum work. Outreach must be closely linked to the areas of collecting, research and exhibiting.

Museums should always orient their outreach work towards the target groups. The definition of the groups should be guided by the social milieus and migration should not play a prominent role. As the Sinus studies<sup>14</sup> show, the use of culture and media among people with migrant backgrounds matches that of the rest of the population. It is linked to education and milieu. Thus, service development and target group communication should initially be oriented towards people's surroundings and their affinity for museums. For some target groups, intercultural issues will be the main focus, while for others it will be an interest in migration history, the culture of the country of origin or the history and culture of the place of residence, the region or Germany.

Using the milieus defined in the Sinus study as a guide can help to develop ideas and concepts for targeted audience development, especially with respect to people who do not tend to visit museums.

## 4.1

# Inspiring interest in migration history and cultural diversity

In the area of education and outreach, greater public interest in migration history and cultural diversity can be achieved through themed activities and by introducing specific focus areas in the general education programme. In order to be effective, outreach work requires appropriate points of reference in exhibitions and collections. Instead of narrowly focussing on labour migration to western Germany during the past few decades, the topic of migration should be placed in a wider context. Issues relating to inclusion and diversity can then be addressed in nearly all exhibitions in the areas of history, art, nature and technology.

## 4.2

# Promoting intercultural dialogue

The task of outreach is to initiate an engaging dialogue between people in which everyone is treated as equals. Their contribution of cultural expertise – e.g. special knowledge about objects and their context, linguistic aspects, and knowledge about certain techniques or rituals – enriches the museum experience for everyone. By moving away from traditional guided tours to dialogue-based forms of outreach, this intercultural approach can become an elementary part of the educational methods employed by museums. This requires an open-minded attitude and flexibility. Rather than focusing on communicating specific content, the emphasis is on facilitating a dialogue between visitors with their individual expectations and what is being presented in the museum.

To enable people to participate in the everyday cultural life of a city or community, cooperation projects need to be developed that enable a concrete form of collaboration. Museums have to actively approach potential cooperation partners, for example autonomous migrant organisations, charities, other social interest groups, associations and schools. In practical terms, this means developing initiatives outside of the museum as well.

## 4.3

# A productive approach to social diversity

Many visitor groups, particularly school classes, are culturally diverse. For outreach work, a special level of sensitivity and intercultural skills are required to draw attention to different points of view and engage visitors in a dialogue. This especially applies to historical, cultural historical and ethnological museums, as they are often dominated by national perspectives by virtue of the way they have developed over time.

Social diversity also means linguistic diversity. Museums are ideal places for trying out and encouraging multilingualism. Every museum can enable creative access via language and can overcome language hierarchies.

Re-interpreting existing exhibitions from the perspective of migration and cultural diversity is also a suitable approach for museums of all categories. It can be implemented through outreach initiatives such as guided tours or workshops. In fact, it is a basic tool for outreach work. The necessary information must be provided to put the objects into context.

## 4.4

# Addressing new target groups

Museum exhibitions and collections do not sufficiently reach all sections of the population, irrespective of whether a migration background applies or not. Museums must therefore open themselves up more widely to the whole of society. They can do this by reflecting social diversity in their exhibitions to a greater extent, developing new concepts for special target groups and eliminating barriers. Potential approaches range from projects within the framework of language and integration courses to events on transculturality and globalisation.

A key task in addressing new visitor groups that have made very little use of museum services in the past is to find effective forms of communication. This involves using relevant communication channels to make the target groups aware of what museums have to offer.



Outreach should also be based on the principles of audience development: supply and demand are mutually influential – the museum develops its visitors and the visitors also develop the museum. A similar trend can be seen in communication in the digital age, where users are used to getting involved and contributing actively. These resources can also enrich museums – not only in the virtual world but also in the real world. They present a major opportunity for the future development of museums, as they combine authenticity and dialogue.

## 4.5

# Developing intercultural skills

In the area of outreach, the expertise of museum educators is especially important because they have direct contact with the audience. Apart from professional skills, this also requires a high level of intercultural skills, meaning that regular training sessions are necessary. It is also desirable for the mix of permanent employees and freelancers to reflect the level of diversity in their respective society.

## 4.6

# Questions and input

### Inspiring interest: Cultural diversity as a key question

- What points of reference do exhibitions and collections offer?
- What event formats (guided tours, workshops, etc.) can be developed?
- Which objects enable the permanent exhibition to be re-interpreted from the perspective of migration?

### Intercultural dialogue

- With which partners can initiatives for intercultural dialogue be developed?
- What common project goal unites the partners?

- What points of reference are there for this in the exhibitions?
- Who are the initiatives aimed at and how are they communicated to the target groups?
- How can the different skills and knowledge be jointly used?
- How can the results be transferred to daily work?

## Initiatives aimed target groups

- Who is the initiative aimed at?
- Which organisations, e.g. associations, educational institutions or similar, can help to jointly develop the initiative?
- What partners can be found for developing, communicating and implementing the initiative?
- How will the initiative be financed?
- How will feedback be incorporated into further development?
- What structural links will remain in place after the project has finished?

## Continuing professional development in museums

- How are outreach workers trained in intercultural skills and for which audiences?
- How can the proportion of outreach workers with a migration background be increased?
- What partners outside the museum can support these processes?
- Which museum employees are specifically assigned to this area?
- Which long-term audience development strategies can be realistically developed?
- How will the implementation of these strategies be evaluated?

## Language and integration courses as museum partners

- Who conducts these courses and which cooperation partners can help to develop them?
- What are the institutional guidelines of the partners? What scope is there for the museum?

- What organisational prerequisites (time, premises, technology) need to be clarified?
- What abilities must participants have?
- What longer-term connections can be established with the project?
- What follow-up projects can be developed?

# 5. Recommendations

When a museum incorporates the topics of migration and cultural diversity into its collection, exhibition and outreach work, this has an impact on the museum as a whole. It becomes more open to society and can thus attract new visitors. The following recommendations are designed to facilitate this process.

## 5.1 Intensify visitor research

Museums that are serious about focusing on visitors need to invest more in visitor research. This is an aspect whose importance is still not valued as highly as it should be in the German museum landscape.

How can museums use the insights gained from milieu research for the purposes of audience development? Depending on the available financial resources, the necessary basis can be established through targeted surveys, discussions with experts, or online platforms. What expectations do potential visitors have with regard to the museum? What interests connect them with the museum? What prevents people from visiting the museum? How can museums increase their attractiveness for which target groups? At the same time, an active dialogue with the (potential) audience can also be used to raise the museum's public profile.

A higher level of reception research should also be conducted with regard to the way in which content is structurally presented in permanent and temporary exhibitions, and with regard to the comprehensibility of the accompanying text. The same goes for the evaluation of medium-term projects, initiatives and programmes.

Without these empirical foundations, it is difficult to ensure that human and financial resources are used in a more targeted and effective manner.

## 5.2

# New communication channels

An important task in addressing new target groups that have previously made little use of the museum's exhibitions or outreach initiatives is to find appropriate forms of communication. Traditional communication channels such as daily newspapers, local media, flyers and posters are only effective here to a limited degree.

In each case the "right" communication channels, in other words the most suitable methods of communicating, need to be exploited in order to make the target groups aware of the museum's initiatives. These communication channels vary according to the target group and should be as specific as they are diverse and age-appropriate: for example, internet radio and television, target group-specific and multilingual press, digital and analogue social networks. Digital social media open up new opportunities for dialogue and collaboration.

## 5.3

# Active contact initiation

In a society with a high level of immigration, the involvement of people with and without a migration background is an essential factor for successful museum work, however this is not yet the norm. A first step is to find suitable partners in the community, which in principle exist in every city and every context.

The recommended method here is field outreach work. With the help of multipliers, targeted invitations to the museum and visits to organisations, meeting places and events of potential partners, it is possible to overcome information deficits and access barriers while also building up trust.

## 5.4

# Participation and training

Museums rely on individuals, associations and organisers as advisors and collaborators in order to document and present migration history. Without people and their experiences, it is not possible to ask new questions about existing collections or develop new perspectives.

Training on both sides is necessary to ensure positive collaboration with new partners. Training in intercultural skills is key for all museum employees – from the security guards to the management. Actively considering cultural similarities and differences as well as reflecting on our own stereotypical ideas, clichés and prejudices form an important basis for working together, enabling us to strengthen our empathy, tolerance and understanding of roles. It is the task of the museum management teams to organise suitable training in this area.

During the process of collaboration, the cooperation partners receive specialist museum training. Insights into the standards and mechanisms of museum work as well as the agreement of shared rules play a key role in the joint working process. Offers to provide special “behind the scenes” insights can cultivate an existing interest in the work of the museum.

## 5.5

# Additional expertise

Depending on the origin or situation of the cooperation or interview partner, it is helpful and sometimes even essential to acquire language skills or the support of a “cultural translator”. Not only do language skills make it easier to communicate with the people, they are also indispensable for de-coding certain objects.

Knowledge about the history and cultures of the country of origin, and knowledge about the current political situation are likewise just as important.

In order to be able to ask meaningful questions when discussing different perspectives and to put information and objects into the correct contexts, museums either need staff with relevant knowledge or reliable individuals who can provide the necessary information.

In the medium to long term, museums should therefore strive to ensure that the composition of their workforce reflects the diversity of society.



## 5.6

# Appointed contacts

Contact with new partners should be actively maintained in order to establish a basis of trust. The continuity of staff is of great importance here and the task should not be performed by external contract workers or temporary staff. Rather, it should be handled by individuals acting as clearly defined points of contact, comparable with the community officer role which has been established at certain British museums.

As the workload for addressing the topic should not be underestimated, especially during the initial phase, a commitment is necessary within the institution and, where applicable, also from the funding body.

Museums should promote participation among all social groups. To do this, access needs to be simplified and opened up to everyone. A new perception and reception of culture needs to be developed in order to foster exchange between museums and visitors, to better recognise the needs of visitors and to approach new visitor groups in a targeted fashion. This process also requires the development of inter-cultural skills – in both the workforce and the museum visitors.

# Glossary

The topic of migration is currently being discussed in the context of numerous political, social and cultural interests. As a term, it is sometimes ambiguous and is not without controversy. To prevent misunderstandings, a glossary has been included with these recommendations.

## Assimilation

Complete adoption of the culture in the host country and relinquishment of one's original identity. In the light of cultural pluralisation in the age of globalisation, the assimilation model is criticised as being outdated. Cf. hybridity, integration, interculturality, transculturality.

## Audience Development

Strategic development in order to attract new audiences to cultural institutions. Approaches from cultural marketing, cultural PR, art outreach, etc. are employed in order to develop, communicate and disseminate cultural initiatives for different target groups.

## Communities

Social networks of people from the same culture of origin. They are based on shared values and practices, and have been established for a relatively long period of time. Within communities a common cultural identity can be maintained through structures such as sporting and cultural associations or religious groups.

## Cultural diversity

The term describes the existence of different cultural groups within a society. Diversity simultaneously refers to differences and variety, group membership on the basis of language, behavioural norms, values, life goals, thinking styles and world-views. In their political declarations, both UNESCO and the EU speak out in favour of preserving cultural diversity and promoting cultural dynamism and development.

## Diversity

Variety and differences in life concepts. The concept of diversity involves accepting and respecting differences of all kinds, for example with regard to cultural and ethnic backgrounds, sexuality, beliefs and lifestyles.

## Guest workers

This term was coined in a political programme to describe a limited stay in Germany during the labour recruitment period that ran from 1955 to 1973. The term is no longer used today. It described individuals and their family members who immigrated to the Federal Republic of Germany up to around 1990 on the basis of labour recruitment agreements or in order to join such family members. Due to the irony of having a guest carry out work, the term is nowadays regarded as euphemistic. Today, Germany uses the terms *Arbeitsmigrant* (migrant worker) and *Arbeitsmigration* (labour migration).

## Hybridity

Result of hybridisation (the process of forming new identities through blending). It refers to a combination of identities that extends beyond the original identities. Due to widespread travel and mobility in the age of globalisation, cultures cannot be solely defined on the basis of geographical territory. Nevertheless, the local connection remains important. The analytical usefulness of the term “hybridity”, which stems from genetics, is criticised for the assumption that previously pure cultural identities have been blended by globalisation. The cultural theorist Homi Bhabha describes hybridity as the “third space”, which does not constitute a fixed identity but rather a process of identification and a discursive negotiation. Cf. interculturality, transculturality.

## Inclusion

Equal rights to social and cultural participation for all groups of the population. Individuals and their different characteristics are accepted, without the expectation that they should adapt to an alleged norm. Cultural and physical diversity are viewed as a self-evident fact of today’s society. The task for everyone is therefore to enable barrier-free access to social participation.

## Integration

Process that is based on commonly held values and leads to equal participation in society including all rights and duties, without the obligation to give up one’s ethnic, cultural or religious identity. Cf. assimilation.

## Interculturality

The relationship or interaction between one's own culture and foreign cultures, i.e. their mutual influence in the form of acquiring, blending and overlapping. Boundaries between cultures are continuously being relativised and redrawn. According to the concept of interculturality, intercultural dialogue between two or more cultures in society is characterised by mutual understanding and respect, which results in mutual influence. Cf. hybridity, transculturality.

### Intercultural skills

The ability to communicate between different cultures. At the level of personal communication, the emphasis is on expressing and understanding emotions and value systems (e.g. physical distance, intonation, gestures and facial expressions, gestures of politeness). At the collective level, it refers to communication within and between (sub-)cultures, e.g. with reference to territories, migration and processes of discursively constructing cultures and nations. It is often linked with the aim of overcoming prejudices and ethnocentrism, mediating in conflict situations or productively using conflicts for innovation and criticism. Cf. interculturality.

## Migration

Migration leads to a temporary or permanent change in the place where individuals or groups live.

### Forms of migration

Forms of migration include cross-border migration, migration within a single territory (internal migration), immigration, emigration, circular migration and re-migration.

A model has been developed based on the different forms of migration. It identifies five types of migrants, which are not mutually exclusive: The classic ideal type is either an "immigrant" (from the perspective of the host society) or "emigrant" (from the perspective of the country of origin) who takes up permanent residence in the host society. When migrants later return to their country of origin, they are described as "return migrants". In particular, "recurrent migrants" maintain connections with their country of origin, leaving their country only occasionally or for seasonal periods of less than a year. "Diaspora migrants" also maintain a connection with their country of origin, but instead of being economically motivated they are motivated by religious or political reasons or by organisations. "Transmigrants" migrate for economic reasons, e.g. as managers or specialists. They might spend a long, indefinite period of time moving from place to place and have multidirectional relationships. New plurilocal social structures or spaces are therefore formed, i.e. participation in different social systems is spread between multiple locations.

## Reasons for migration

Reasons for migration range from voluntary to involuntary and the boundaries can be fluid. A person's reasons can be influenced by a variety of factors in the country of origin and destination as well as by personal factors (e.g. economic, political, religious, environmental, familial).

## Migration background

The person or one of his/her parents has experience with migration, in other words they have immigrated from another country. In 2005, the German Federal Statistical Office defined Migrationshintergrund (migration background) as follows: all persons who have immigrated into the territory of today's Federal Republic of Germany after 1949, and all foreigners born in Germany and all persons born in Germany who have at least one parent who immigrated into the country or was born as a foreigner in Germany. The term was introduced to describe people who have been naturalised or whose parents (and not the person him/herself) have immigrated. Over time and depending on the institution, different criteria have been put forward for the definition.

## Multiculturalism

The joint or co-existence of different cultures within a society. The concept views the different cultures as internally homogenous and externally delimited. It is based on the assumption that different cultures do not merge together but rather co-exist alongside each other. According to this model, migrants can maintain their original identity in private while forming another public identity at the political institutional level. Cf. interculturality, transculturality.

## Participation

Social participation. With reference to museums, the American museologist Nina Simon outlines the concept of the "participatory museum" in which museum professionals, participants and the public are involved in a framed and supported form of exchange. Depending on the relationship that the institution has with its participants and the public, who exactly is involved in participation and how much control is given to them, she defines different degrees of participation: contributory, collaborative, co-creative and hosted participation. Museums can progress through the following stages in a flexible way: 1. Visitors consume content; 2. Visitors interact with the content; 3. Visitors relate their own interests to those of the institution's wider audience; 4. Contact is established with specific other visitors and museum employees who share similar interests and activities; 5. The institution is seen as a social venue with enriching potential for engagement.

## Social associations

Welfare organisations such as Caritas, Diakonisches Werk, Arbeiterwohlfahrt that are mandated by the state to provide life guidance for people with a migration background and to support their integration.

## Social milieu

The Sinus studies conducted by the market and social research company Sinus Sociovision have identified target groups in Germany based on demographic characteristics (education, occupation, income) and everyday life worlds (life views, way of life). According to the basic orientation of their values (tradition, modernisation/individualisation, new orientation) and social situation (lower-middle class/lower class, middle-middle class, upper class/upper-middle class), these target groups can be classified under the following types: Traditional milieu, New Middle Class milieu, Precarious milieu, Escapist milieu, Adaptive-Pragmatist milieu, Socio-ecological milieu, Established Conservative milieu, Liberal Intellectual milieu, High Achiever milieu, Movers and Shakers milieu.

## Transculturality

Concept of cultural identity in modern societies (cf. hybridity). It is assumed that today's cultures are made up of various cultural identities and have cross-border contours. The term refers both to crossing borders and to overcoming or eliminating them. In the view of philosopher Wolfgang Welsch, transcultural societies differ from intercultural societies in that cultures in the former no longer discriminate between own and other. The prefix "trans" indicates the concept of being transversal, as the cultural determinants cut through the cultures. It also reflects the idea of "moving beyond", in the sense of modern cultures becoming different to their earlier forms. Depending on one's perspective, increased mobility, flexibility and indeterminacy can be perceived as representing an increased risk or as opening up new freedoms. Overcoming boundaries can either primarily focus on understanding multiple cultures or on finding or establishing a critical impetus that traverses multiple cultures. Cf. hybridity, interculturality





Museum Rotterdam, *Rotterdammers and their city* exhibition, 2016. Photo: Museum Rotterdam

# Further Reading

Map for ID Group (Simona Bodo, Kirsten Gibbs, Margherita Sani) (2009): Museums as places for intercultural dialogue: selected practices from Europe

Lisa Chandler (2009): 'Journey without maps': unsettling curatorship in cross-cultural contexts

LEM (The Learning Museum) Working Group (2013): Museums and intercultural dialogue

MeLa Project (Christopher Whitehead, Susannah Eckersley, Rhiannon Mason) (August 2012): Placing Migration in European Museums: Theoretical, Contextual and Methodological Foundations

MeLa Project (Luca Basso Peressut and Clelia Pozzi) (March 2012) Museums in an age of migration

François Matarasso (2013): Bread and Salt. Stories of Artists and Migration

Politecnico di Milano (Luca Basso Peressut, Francesca Lanzand Gennaro Postiglione) (February 2013): European Museums in the 21st century. Setting the framework

More Europe Initiative (2014): Engaging the World: towards Global Cultural Citizenship

Eurocities, KEA and ERRIN (2014/2015): Culture for Cities and Regions. Catalogue of practices

Julien Dorra (2015): Building an open community: a new opportunity for scholarly projects

NEMO (last updated March 2016): Collection of initiatives of museums in Europe in connection to migrants and refugees

NEMO (2016): "Revisiting the educational value of museums: Connecting to Audiences"

MAPSI (2016): Managing Art Projects with Societal Impact. Study Book for Students, Stakeholders and Researchers.

# Appendix

The guidelines were developed on the basis of intensive dialogue between experts from museums, self-organised migrant groups and other social institutions. These individuals are listed here together with the institutions in which they were employed at the time of their collaboration.

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# Part III

## Useful contacts

### Portuguese Cultural Sector

#### **Biblioteca de Livros Digitais**

[www.observalinguaportuguesa.org/bibliotecadelivrosdigitais](http://www.observalinguaportuguesa.org/bibliotecadelivrosdigitais)

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Tel. +351 217 577 816

#### **Enciclopédia dos Migrantes**

[www.encyclopedia-dos-migrantes.eu](http://www.encyclopedia-dos-migrantes.eu)

#### **Espaço T**

<http://www.espacot.pt/>

Email: [espacot@espacot.pt](mailto:espacot@espacot.pt)

Tel. 22 608 19 19 | 20 | 21

#### **Festival ImigrArte**

[www.festival-imigrarte.com](http://www.festival-imigrarte.com)

Email: [festivalimigrarte@gmail.com](mailto:festivalimigrarte@gmail.com)

Tel. 218 870 713

#### **Festival Olhares do Mediterrâneo**

[www.olharesdomediterraneo.org/o-festival](http://www.olharesdomediterraneo.org/o-festival)

Email: [olharesdomediterraneo@gmail.com](mailto:olharesdomediterraneo@gmail.com)

#### **Festival Todos**

[www.festivaltodos.com](http://www.festivaltodos.com)

Email: [festival.todos@gmail.com](mailto:festival.todos@gmail.com)

Tel. 213 420 136

#### **Palco Planisfério**

[www.renovamouraria.pt/palco-planisferio](http://www.renovamouraria.pt/palco-planisferio)

Email: [geral@renovamouraria.pt](mailto:geral@renovamouraria.pt)

Tel. 218 885 203

#### **RefugiActo - Grupo de Teatro**

[www.facebook.com/refugiacto](http://www.facebook.com/refugiacto)

Email: [geral@cpr.pt](mailto:geral@cpr.pt)

Tel. 218 314 372

#### **Transmouraria**

[www.transmouraria.com](http://www.transmouraria.com)

Email: [carlalrosado@gmail.com](mailto:carlalrosado@gmail.com)

Tel. 914 967 463

## Portuguese Social Sector

### **Associação de Refugiados em Portugal**

<https://www.facebook.com/Associa%C3%A7%C3%A3o-de-Refugiados-em-Portugal-303682035420/>

Email: [associacao.refugiados.portugal@gmail.com](mailto:associacao.refugiados.portugal@gmail.com)

Tel. +351 920 088 824 / 920 249 487

### **Conselho Português para os Refugiados (CPR)**

[www.cpr.pt](http://www.cpr.pt)

Email: [geral@cpr.pt](mailto:geral@cpr.pt)

Tel. 218 314 372

### **FEMAFRO**

[www.facebook.com/femafroportugal](http://www.facebook.com/femafroportugal)

Email: [femafroportugal@gmail.com](mailto:femafroportugal@gmail.com)

### **Renovar a Mouraria**

[www.renovaramouraria.pt](http://www.renovaramouraria.pt)

Email: [geral@renovaramouraria.pt](mailto:geral@renovaramouraria.pt)

Tel. 218 885 203

### **Serviço Jesuíta aos Refugiados**

[www.jrsportugal.pt](http://www.jrsportugal.pt)

Email: [jrs@jrsportugal.pt](mailto:jrs@jrsportugal.pt)

Tel. 217 552 790

### **Solidariedade Imigrante**

[www.solimigrante.org](http://www.solimigrante.org)

Email: [solidariedade\\_imigrante@hotmail.com](mailto:solidariedade_imigrante@hotmail.com)

Tel. 218 870 713

## Portuguese Governmental Organisations

### **Alto Comissariado para as Migrações (ACM)**

[www.acm.gov.pt](http://www.acm.gov.pt)

Email: [acm@acm.gov.pt](mailto:acm@acm.gov.pt)

Tel. +351 218 106 100

On the ACM website:

Immigrants' Associations in Portugal

Municipal Teams of Intercultural Mediation (EMMI)

Local Centres to Support Migrants' Integration (CLAIM)

Embassies in Portugal

Cabinets for Immigrants' Access to Employment (GIP)

National Centres to Support Immigrants (CNAI)

Cabinets of Specialised Support for Immigrants (GAEI)

### **Comissão para a Igualdade e Contra a Discriminação Racial (CICDR)**

[www.cicdr.pt](http://www.cicdr.pt)

Email: [cicdr@acm.gov.pt](mailto:cicdr@acm.gov.pt)

Tel. +351 218 106 100

### **Observatório das Migrações (OM)**

Email: [om@acm.gov.pt](mailto:om@acm.gov.pt)

Tel. +351 218 106 170



**Plataforma de Apoio aos Refugiados**  
[www.refugiados.pt](http://www.refugiados.pt)

**Programa Escolhas**  
[www.programaescolhas.pt](http://www.programaescolhas.pt)  
Tel. +351 218 103 060

**Programa de Mentores para Migrantes**  
[www.om.acm.gov.pt](http://www.om.acm.gov.pt)  
[mentores.acm.gov.pt](http://mentores.acm.gov.pt)  
Tel. +351 218 106 170

## Academia

**Centro em Rede de Investigação em Antropologia (CRIA)**  
[www.cria.org.pt](http://www.cria.org.pt)  
Email: [cria@cria.org.pt](mailto:cria@cria.org.pt)  
Tel. +351 210 464 057

**ISCTE/IUL**  
[www.iscte-iul.pt](http://www.iscte-iul.pt)

**Projecto “Living in a Different Culture”**  
CRIA | ISCTE-IUL | Câmara Municipal de Lisboa (Pelouro dos Direitos Sociais)  
<http://cria.org.pt/wp/formacoes/>

## International

**International Organization for Migration (OIM)**  
[www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)  
[hq@iom.int](mailto:hq@iom.int)  
+41 22 717 9111

**Le Réseau Européen des Migrations (REM)**  
[rem.sef.pt](http://rem.sef.pt)  
[GEPF@sef.pt](mailto:GEPF@sef.pt)  
214 236 200

## Migration Museums

**Argentina**  
Museo de la Inmigración  
[www.migraciones.gov.ar](http://www.migraciones.gov.ar)

**Australia**  
Immigration Museum  
<http://museumvictoria.com.au/immigrationmuseum>  
Migration Museum  
<http://migration.history.sa.gov.au>

**Belgium**  
Red Star Line Museum

[www.redstarline.be](http://www.redstarline.be)

### **Brazil**

Museu da Imigração

<http://museudaimigracao.org.br>

### **Canada**

Canadian Museum of Migration at Pier 21

[www.pier21.ca](http://www.pier21.ca)

### **Denmark**

Danish Immigration Museum

[www.danishimmigrationmuseum.com](http://www.danishimmigrationmuseum.com)

### **France**

Musée national de l'histoire de l'immigration

[www.histoire-immigration.fr](http://www.histoire-immigration.fr)

### **Germany**

Ballinstadt

[www.ballinstadt.de](http://www.ballinstadt.de)

German Emigration Center

[www.dah-bremerhaven.de](http://www.dah-bremerhaven.de)

### **Irlande**

Cobh Heritage Center

[www.cobhheritage.com](http://www.cobhheritage.com)

### **Italy**

Fondazione Paolo Cresci

<http://museo.fondazionepaolocresci.it>

Galata-Museo del Mare e delle Migrazioni

[www.galatomuseodelmare.it](http://www.galatomuseodelmare.it)

Museo Interattivo delle Migrazioni

[www.mimbelluno.it](http://www.mimbelluno.it)

Museo Nazionale dell'Emigrazione Italiana

[www.museonazionaleemigrazione.it](http://www.museonazionaleemigrazione.it)

Museo Regionale dell'Emigrazione Piemontese

[www.museoemigrazionepiemontese.org](http://www.museoemigrazionepiemontese.org)

Museo Regionale dell'Emigrazione Pietro Conti

[www.emigrazione.it](http://www.emigrazione.it)

### **Japan**

Japanese Overseas Migration Museum

[www.jomm.jp](http://www.jomm.jp)

### **Norway**

The Migration Museum

<http://migrasjonsmuseet.no>

### **Poland**

Emigration Museum

[www.polska1.pl](http://www.polska1.pl)

**Portugal**

Museu da Emigração Açoriana  
<http://museuemigracao.cm-ribeiragrande.pt>  
Museu das Migrações e das Comunidades  
[www.museu-emigrantes.org](http://www.museu-emigrantes.org)

**South Africa**

Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum  
<http://lwandle.com>

**San Marino**

Museo dell'Emigrante  
[www.museoemigrante.sm](http://www.museoemigrante.sm)

**Spain**

Museo de Historia de la Inmigración de Cataluña  
[www.mhic.net](http://www.mhic.net)

**Sweden**

The House of Emigrants  
[www.kulturparkensmaland.se/1.0.1.0/14/2/](http://www.kulturparkensmaland.se/1.0.1.0/14/2/)

**The Netherlands**

Humanity House  
[www.humanityhouse.org](http://www.humanityhouse.org)

**United Kingdom**

Migration Museum Project  
<http://migrationmuseum.org>  
19 Princelet Street  
[www.19princeletstreet.org.uk](http://www.19princeletstreet.org.uk)

**United States of America**

African American Museum in Philadelphia  
[www.aampmuseum.org](http://www.aampmuseum.org)  
Immigration Station  
[www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=1309](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1309)  
Arab American National Museum  
[www.arabamericanmuseum.org](http://www.arabamericanmuseum.org)  
Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration  
<http://libertyellisfoundation.org/immigration-museum>  
Japanese American National Museum  
[www.janm.org](http://www.janm.org)  
National Museum of African American History and Culture  
<https://nmaahc.si.edu/>  
Nordic Heritage Museum  
<http://nordicmuseum.org/>  
Tenement Museum  
[www.tenement.org](http://www.tenement.org)

# Part IV

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A Rotterdam family with Bulgarian roots, 2012–2013. Photo: Joop Reijngoud

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Heritage Park Historical Village, *Ahlan* project. Photo: ICC/Neil Zeller