

**International conference  
24-25 November 2021**

**Conférence internationale  
24-25 novembre 2021**

**Decolonizing provenance research:  
experiences in co-constructing knowledge  
and negotiating the future of colonial collections**

**Programme Wednesday 24 November 2021**

- 08:15-09:00 | Reception and coffee
- 09:00-09:30 | Introduction
- 09:30-10:30 | **Taonga, Te Moana, Tupaia**: Reflections of the *Rangiwaho Marae*, an artist, and a curator on the return of Cook collections from the UK.  
Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll, Julie Adams, Kay Robin and Jody Toroa.
- 10:45-11:45 | **Confronting Colonial Pasts, Envisioning Creative Futures**: Collaboratively researching the collections from Namibia at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin.  
Larissa Förster, Julia Binter and Golda Ha-Eiros.
- 12:00-14:00 | Lunch break
- 14:00-15:00 | **Maguta Museum: Celebrating historical memories and ancestral traditions.**  
João Pacheco de Oliveira and Salomão Inácio Clemente.

**Programme Thursday 25 November 2021**

- 08:45-09:30 | Reception and coffee
- 09:30-10:30 | **More than a *guulany* (tree): Aboriginal Knowledge Systems.**  
Brook Garru Andrew, Brian Martin, Roslyn McGregor and Kimberley Moulton.
- 10:45-11:45 | **Yahguudang.gang: To Pay Respect.**  
Jisgang Nika Collison and Lucy Bell.
- 12:00-14:00 | Lunch break
- 14:00-15:00 | **Cosme & Damião: A project for a twin collection for the National Museum of Rio de Janeiro – Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (MN), Brazil, and for the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia (MOA), Canada.**  
Nuno Porto and Renata de Castro Menezes.
- 15:15-15:45 | Debate and conclusions
- 15:45-17:00 | Aperitif



## Décoloniser la recherche de provenance : expériences de co-construction des connaissances et de négociation du futur des collections coloniales

### Programme mercredi 24 novembre 2021

- 8h15-9h | Réception et café
- 9h-9h30 | Introduction
- 9h30-10h30 | **Taonga, Te Moana, Tupaia : Réflexions du Rangiwaho Marae, un artiste, et un conservateur sur le retour des collections Cook du Royaume-Uni.**  
Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll, Julie Adams, Kay Robin et Jody Toroa.
- 10h45-11h45 | **Confronter les passés coloniaux, envisager des futurs créatifs: Recherche collaborative sur les collections de Namibie au Musée ethnologique de Berlin.**  
Larissa Förster, Julia Binter et Golda Ha-Eiros.
- 12h-14h | Pause de midi
- 14h-15h | **Musée Maguta : Célébration de souvenirs historiques et de traditions ancestrales.**  
João Pacheco de Oliveira et Salomão Inácio Clemente.

### Programme jeudi 25 novembre 2021

- 8h45-9h30 | Réception et café
- 9h30-10h30 | **Plus qu'un *guulany* (arbre): Systèmes de connaissances autochtones.**  
Brook Garru Andrew, Brian Martin, Roslyn McGregor et Kimberley Moulton.
- 10h45-11h45 | **Yahguudang.gang : Honorer.**  
Jisgang Nika Collison et Lucy Bell.
- 12h-14h | Pause de midi
- 14h-15h | **Cosme & Damião: Un projet de collections jumelles pour le Musée national de Rio de Janeiro – Université fédérale de Rio de Janeiro (MN), Brésil, et le Musée d'anthropologie de l'Université de Colombie-Britannique (MOA), Canada.**  
Nuno Porto et Renata de Castro Menezes.
- 15h15-15h45 | Débat et conclusions
- 15h45-17h | Apéritif



## SESSIONS

### 1. *Taonga, Te Moana, Tupaia: Reflections of the Rangiwahō Marae, an artist, and a curator on the return of Cook collections from the UK*

**Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll, Julie Adams, Kay Robin and Jody Toroa**

In this session, we discuss the connections created through *Taonga*. In particular, we focus on the return of a group of *Taonga* from UK museums to an exhibition mounted at the Tairāwhiti Museum, Gisborne, in 2019. We reflect on the profound experiences that occurred as the *Taonga* arrived back on ancestral lands for the first time in 250 years, and were carried on to the Marae to be unpacked and welcomed by descendants. We will bring the cultural portals that *Taonga* are to the space time continuum in which they effect the future of Māori. Looking at both the creative responses to the *Taonga* and the structural changes needed in museums to make their passage to Aotearoa possible, we speak to seeds sown for the future and ask – what will happen 250 years from now? Concepts such as the British Museum's "Global co-curation" and the Weltmuseum's "Sharing Collections, without moving them" are considered alongside the vision of those based at Rangiwahō Marae in considering the long journey of connections that brought their *Taonga* back to Gisborne.

**Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll** is an artist, professor and historian currently leading an ERC project (2021-2026) on repatriation entitled "REPATRIATES: Artistic Research in Museums and Communities in the process of Repatriation from Europe". In 2021 she is the nominee for the Derek Jarman award for video art and holds the Chair of Global Art at the University of Birmingham. She is the author of the books "Art in the Time of Colony" (2014), "The Importance of Being Anachronistic: Contemporary Aboriginal Art and Museum Reparations" (2016), "Bordered Lives: Immigration Detention Archive" (2020), "Mit Fremden Federn: El Penacho und die Frage der Restitution" (2021), "The Contested Crown: Repatriation Politics between Mexico and Europe" (2021).

**Julie Adams** works as the curator responsible for the Oceania Collections at the British Museum since 2016. Prior to joining the British Museum she worked as a Senior Research Fellow at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Cambridge and as a Curator at National Museums Scotland in Edinburgh. In recent years, she has worked on collaborative exhibition and research projects with communities in Aotearoa New Zealand, New Caledonia, Tahiti, Rurutu and Kiribati. Her book "Museum, Magic, Memory" (Sidestone Press, 2021) reflects on the challenges and possibilities of undertaking provenance research on colonial-era collections.

**Kay Robin, Jody Toroa:** "We belong to Ngati Rangiwahō, Ngai Tamanuhiri from the East Coast of Aotearoa, New Zealand. Our intention has been to reconnect present generations to those ancestors who created the *Taonga* – treasures that for the past 250 years have resided with institutions far far away. We have a responsibility to embrace the art, the knowledge and spiritual essence as we navigate connections that are relevant and respectful for these times. Relationships and partnerships founded in cultural imperatives with purpose... that is to honor our ancestors, reflect and express the chaos in our arts, which begin and end here in our cultural portal Rangiwahō Marae, Tawatapu, Te Tairāwhiti, Aotearoa, NZ."



## **2. Confronting Colonial Pasts, Envisioning Creative Futures: Collaboratively researching the collections from Namibia at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin**

**Larissa Förster, Julia Binter and Golda Ha-Eiros**

In 2019, experts from Namibia and from the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin conducted in-depth research into the Namibian collections held there. The aim was to better understand where the objects came from, how they were collected and what should happen with them in the future. While the German partners primarily sought to address the colonial entanglements of the collections, the Namibian scholars, curators and artists entered the project with a keen interest to explore possible futures of the objects beyond narratives of colonisation.

Moreover, all researchers involved brought to bear different ways of engaging with the past and of creating knowledge. How should we bring these different epistemologies into dialogue? In order to facilitate transcultural translations, sensitivity for differing historical experiences and for the emotional toll of working with collections from colonial contexts and, in particular, from contexts of genocide were key. Besides, it became crucial to address the epistemic violence of the archive. Colonial ways of categorising people and objects not only occluded and distorted historical Namibian modes of self-identification and ways of life. They also obstructed the identification of objects with people in Namibia's postcolony today. Consequently, the German-Namibian team devised ways in which to challenge the colonial archive while still trying to obtain useful information for provenance research. While the intermediary results of this ongoing research will be presented in a small exhibition at the Humboldt Forum, the long-term goal of this collaborative project is to establish a sustainable, open-ended process in which the needs and interests of all partners are heard and addressed. This includes sending selected objects from Berlin to Namibia where researchers, artists and other cultural stakeholders from the country's diverse communities will conduct further research with the objects and discuss their future potential. One of those potentials is to understand the historical clothes, jewellery and items of prestige as source of inspiration for contemporary art and design and thus, to envision creative futures.

Ultimately, the collaborative research and the transcultural translations that it necessitated not only challenged narratives about German-Namibian pasts. They also engendered new ways of narrating transcultural presents and envision possible futures. This paper discusses the strategies that the team developed to challenge the colonial archive, to introduce alternative narratives about colonial pasts and postcolonial presents and to envision decolonial futures. It also embeds this collaborative research project into the wider context of public debates about cultural goods from colonial contexts in Germany and ties it in with the recent academic, activist and political efforts of engaging with the often brutal, entangled histories of Germany and Namibia.

**Larissa Förster** is a social anthropologist. She is Head of the newly established Department for Cultural Goods and Collections from Colonial Contexts at the German Lost Art Foundation, Berlin, and Associate Member of the Centre for Anthropological Research on Museums and Heritage at the Humboldt University, Berlin. Her research focuses on the memory of colonialism in Namibia, on the nexus between colonialism and the formation of (ethnographic) museums in Europe, and on the return of objects and human remains from European collections to their countries of origin. She is a member of the project team of the Namibian-German research and visual arts project "Confronting Colonial Pasts – Envisioning Creative Futures" which centers around Namibian artefacts held at Ethnologisches



Museum Berlin and National Museum of Namibia in Windhoek and explores new ways of coproducing knowledge and narratives from historic collections. She co-edited "Museumsethnologie – Eine Einführung. Theorien – Praktiken – Debatten" (2019) and "Provenienzforschung zu ethnografischen Sammlungen der Kolonialzeit. Positionen in der aktuellen Debatte" (2018). She is also a member of two working groups of the German Museums Association for guidelines for German Museums ("The Care of Care of Human Remains in Museums and Collections", 2021, and "The Care of Collections from Colonial Contexts", 2021).


**Julia Binter** is a social anthropologist. She is currently working as a provenance researcher at the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin where she leads the collaborative research project "Confronting Colonial Pasts, Envisioning Creative Futures" about the collections from Namibia at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin. She has worked in numerous museums and, from 2016 to 2017, curated the exhibition "The Blind Spot. Bremen, Colonialism and Art" at the Kunsthalle Bremen. Julia studied social and cultural anthropology as well as theatre, film and media studies in Vienna, Paris, Brussels and Oxford where she completed her doctoral thesis on transatlantic trade, cultural exchange and related forms of memory in the Niger Delta, Nigeria. Her publications include "Unruly Voices in the Museum" (*The Senses and Society*, 9:3, 342-360), "The Blind Spot. Bremen, Colonialism and Art" (2017) and "Beyond Exhibiting the Experience of Empire? Challenging Chronotopes in the Museum" (*Third Text*, 33:4-5, 575-593).

**Golda Ha-Eiros** is the Curator for the National Museum of Namibia (NMN) responsible for the Anthropology collection. She was previously the curator for Liberation Heritage under the Office of Veterans Affairs responsible for preserving and documenting the history of Namibia's National Liberation Struggle and at the National Art Gallery of Namibia (NAGN) as Collections Curator. In 2019, she was guest researcher at the Ethnologisches Museum Berlin where she researched the historical collection from Namibia and co-curated an exhibition on the collaborative research process at the Humboldt Forum. Her publications include (together with Julia Binter) "Man kann die Zukunft nicht ohne Vergangenheit denken. Dialogische Reflexionen über das kooperative Forschungsprojekt Confronting Colonial Pasts, Envisioning Creative Futures zu den Sammlungen aus Namibia im Ethnologischen Museum Berlin", in Lurz, B., Schlag, W., Wolkinger, T., et al. "Playbook Klimakultur" (2021).

### **3. Maguta Museum: Celebrating historical memories and ancestral traditions** **João Pacheco de Oliveira and Salomão Inácio Clemente**

João Pacheco de Oliveira will describe how the Maguta Museum, located in the border region between Brazil, Colombia and Peru, was created and seek to understand the multiple meanings and uses it had for the Tikuna people. It had an enormous importance in the struggle for the demarcation of the Tikuna territory and in the political and identitarian articulation between more than a hundred local communities spread over seven municipalities, along the Amazon River.

Over three decades of existence, a political, cultural and linguistic protagonism has been established that has profoundly marked the history of the Tikunas and is an indispensable starting point for understanding the current challenges today. Although it may seem incidental, the relationship between the Maguta Museum and the National Museum [MNRJ, Rio de Janeiro] was for both constitutive,



persistent, and essential. (...) The relationship with the Tikuna also deeply marked the National Museum collections and its exhibitions. In the reopening of the new "Ethnology room" in 2009, the masks used in the "new girls" ritual occupied the central space, as well as a panel and a video introducing the visitor to the Maguta Museum, "the first indigenous museum in Brazil". It also inspired the emergence of a line of participatory curation (which was immediately expressed in the exposition "The First Nations of Brazil" (2006-2021) and in the linguistic specialization of several indigenous teachers. The fire at the National Museum in 2018 coincided with a period in which some of the former and main Tikuna leaders, such as the director of the Maguta Museum, Nino Fernandes, died. This partnership is now being reactivated by a new generation of indigenous researchers in order to face together the new challenges posed to the two museums.

Salomão Inácio Clemente will introduce himself using his Tikuna name, *Daupawee'cu*, which is translated as "the red beak of the curassow", which puts him as a person of a specific clan (the curassow) and a member of a matrimonial moiety, his affines (brother-in-law) being people whose clans have terrestrial animals or trees as eponyms. He will talk about the formation of the Maguta Museum's ethnographic collection, pointing out its composition, places of origin and clan name of the producers of these artifacts. Based on a survey carried out in 2014 on the former Tikuna collections of the National Museum, he will carry out a general assessment of the artifacts that made up the collection and the ethnographic exhibition. Focusing on the collection of drawings made on *tururis* (fibres), he will articulate such images with narratives from Tikuna cosmology. Next, he will approach the Maguta Museum room where the ritual masks related to the female initiation ritual are located, showing the different reactions of visitors to the exhibition of such artifacts. Masks and objects associated with the ritual of the new girl are placed with great prominence in ethnographic museums and are conceived by non-indigenous people as emblematic of the Tikunas, although it is worth noting that this aspect of tradition is not viewed consensually by indigenous visitors. Salomão Inácio Clemente will give a brief tour of the life and trajectory of some of the specialists and producers of these masks, showing how the celebration of certain rituals in some communities can be a generator of conflicts and tensions, as well as the simple production of some of these objects. Something that an indigenous museum (unlike other ethnographic museums) needs to reflect and deal with.

**João Pacheco de Oliveira** is an anthropologist, Full Professor of Ethnology and Curator of Ethnographic Collections at the National Museum, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. He carried out extensive research among the Tikunas, from Brazilian Amazon. He was one of the founders of the Maguta Museum, the first indigenous museum in Brazil (1991) awarded by the ICOM (1996). He is the author of three books (1987, 2001 and 2015) and many articles and collections about the Tikunas, and curator of the ethnographic collections of the National Museum since 2001. In 2006 he organized the exhibition "The First Nations of Brazil" focusing on the history and culture of the indigenous peoples of the northeast, an activity that spanned 13 expositions throughout the country; due to the pandemic, this year, it became the National Museum's first virtual exhibition. He published analytical works on the collection of indigenous people from Mato Grosso, on the formation of the Maguta Museum, and on the ritual masks assembled by Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira on trips through the region (1783-1792). He was recently one of the organizers of the book "From Colonial Collections to Indigenous Museums. Forms of protagonism and museum illusion" (2019).




**Salomão Inácio Clemente** is a Tikuna researcher and a member of Maguta Museum (Benjamin Constant, Amazonas). As an indigenous Tikuna, 31 years old, married, father of two girls, fisherman and peasant, resident in the community of Bom Intento, municipality of Benjamin Constant. After completing high school, he enrolled in 2010 for a degree in social sciences at the Federal University of Amazonas, on the campus of Benjamin Constant, finishing in 2016. In 2014, at the invitation of João Pacheco, he did an internship at the National Museum, knowing the technical reserve of ethnology and researching the Tikuna collection, writing mythical narratives related to the set of existing drawings on the *tururis* (bark of a tree specially treated and transformed into a surface on which the Tikuna artists work). In 2018 he started his Master studies in Anthropology at the Manaus campus of the Federal University of Amazonas and is expected to defend his dissertation early next year. His research topic is the female initiation ritual (*worec*: u in Tikuna language and “moça nova”/“new girl” in Portuguese). He is an active collaborator of the Maguta Museum and son of the current director, Santo Cruz Mariano.

#### **4. More than a *gualany* (tree): Aboriginal Knowledge Systems**

**Brook Garru Andrew, Brian Martin, Roslyn McGregor and Kimberley Moulton**

This presentation will share research about the significance of trees in southeast Australian Aboriginal cultures by honouring Indigenous knowledges and the lived experience of Indigenous peoples. Due to the impacts of colonialism including the removal of cultural objects for colonial collections, the destruction of culturally significant trees, and the forced removal of peoples from their traditional Country, access to our cultural heritage has been severely disrupted. Two of the authors, Brook Andrew and Brian Martin, are both Indigenous artists who for many years have challenged this disruption in their respective creative practices. Both are inspired by the knowledge of trees which surfaces through their relationality with Country, peoples, other beings and cultural practices. The research includes connecting source communities with ancestral objects in museum collections including carved tree sections and shields and identifying living trees and cultural practices that speak to this significance. Through an Indigenous-led methodology, and by using methods of collaborative art and exhibition making, the research aims to articulate the agency of trees in an expanded conception of cultural heritage, and in a reimagining of the future of colonial collections.

The presentation will focus on two carved tree sections in the collections of the Musée d'ethnographie de Genève that are attributed to Wiradjuri Country in western New South Wales. Aunty Ros McGregor will join Brook and Brian to share details of current activities in Kamilaroi Country, also in north western New South Wales. These activities are centred around the Banarway bora ground, where over sixty carved trees were removed in the 1940s by a museum expedition. The community are reawakening cultural knowledge about the significance of the site and creating pathways for healing which includes connecting with some of the carved trees which are now in the collections of Museums Victoria. This research has received funding from the the Australian Research Council's Special Research Initiative for Australian Society, History and Culture (SR200201054).



**Brook Garru Andrew** is an Australian Wiradjuri interdisciplinary artist, curator and scholar who is driven by the collisions of intertwined narratives, often emerging from the mess of the “Colonial Hole”. This practice imagines alternative futures and challenges limitations imposed by ongoing colonial actions to re-centre Indigenous ways of being. His matriarchal kinship is from the Kalar Middy (land of the three rivers) of Wiradjuri, and Ngunnawal on his mother’s father’s line, both Aboriginal nations of Australia. He was Artistic Director of NIRIN, the 22nd Biennale of Sydney (2020), and is currently Enterprise Professor, Interdisciplinary Practice at the University of Melbourne, Associate Professor in Fine Art at Monash University and Associate Researcher at the Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford. Brook is represented by Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne; Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery, Sydney; and Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris and Brussels.

**Brian Martin** is a descendant of Muruwari, Bundjalung and Kamilaroi peoples (Aboriginal nations of Australia) and has been a practising artist for twenty-seven years exhibiting both nationally and internationally specifically in the media of painting and drawing. His research and practice focus on refiguring Australian art and culture from an Indigenous ideological perspective based on a reciprocal relationship to “Country”. Professor Brian Martin is the inaugural Associate Dean Indigenous in the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture at Monash University and Director of the Wominjeka Djeembana Indigenous Research Lab. He is represented by William Mora Galleries, Melbourne.

**Roslyn McGregor** is a Kamilaroi Elder and the Senior Leader for Community Engagement at Walgett Community College High School and Chairperson Collarenebri Local Aboriginal Land Council. Aunty Ros is leading important education and cultural initiatives in Collarenebri and Walgett, western New South Wales focused around the Banarway bora ground.

**Kimberley Moulton** is a Yorta Yorta woman and writer and curator. She is currently Senior Curator, South-Eastern Aboriginal Collections at Museums Victoria and an Artistic Associate for RISING Festival Melbourne. Kimberley works with knowledge, histories and futures at the intersection of First Peoples historical and contemporary art and the archive. She has held curatorial and community arts development roles at Melbourne Museum for over ten years and independently curated across various arts institutions within Australia and North America. Kimberley has written for various contemporary art and museum associated publications worldwide and is a PhD candidate in curatorial practice in the Wominjeka Djeembana Indigenous Research Lab at Monash University, Melbourne, Australia.

## **5. *Yahguudang.gang: To Pay Respect* Jisgang Nika Collison and Lucy Bell**

By nature, museums reflect the social climate they exist within. Responsible museums bring attention to historic and current paradigms, all the while looking to the future. *Effective* museums not only have people paying attention, they inspire those people to engage in pursuing and enacting healthy public and political discourse. While not a lifeway known by our Ancestors, today museums are part of Haida culture: a dedication to those that came before us, to our children, to our future, to Haida Gwaii and to the World. In this, we have not only “Haida-ized” our own museum practices we have interrupted






those of mainstream institutions, and are working together with them to repair of our shared history and redirect common rhetoric, essentially bringing two worlds together to creating a new one.

**Jisgang Nika Collison** belongs to the Kaay'ahl Laanas of the Haida Nation. She is executive director and curator of the Haida Gwaii Museum at Kay Llnagaay and has worked in the field of Haida language arts and culture for more than 20 years. Deeply committed to reconciliation, Nika is a senior repatriation negotiator for her Nation, pursuing reparation and relationships with mainstream museums on a global scale. She consults, publishes and lectures internationally. Nika serves as a member of the CMA Reconciliation Council, Bank of Canada Indigenous Advisory Circle, Royal British Columbia Museum's board of directors and the UBC MOA Directors Advisory Council. She is a recipient of the Michael M. Ames Award for Innovative Museum Anthropology from the Council for Museums Anthropology for her work in repatriation and Indigenous scholarship and was named one of the top 10 Cultural Professionals for 2017 by the BC Museums Association. Nika is a life-long Nation-based scholar of all things Haida.

**Lucy Bell**, also known as Sdahl K'awaas is a passionate Indigenous museologist from Haida Gwaii, BC. With Jisgang and Sdahl K'awaas at the helm, the Haida have repatriated over 500 ancestral remains, many language resources and some of the 12,000 belongings held in global museums. Lucy received a BC Community Achievement Award for her work in repatriation. She has also co-curated and coordinated a number of international Haida exhibits and museum collaborations. Lucy was the inaugural Head of the Indigenous Collections and Repatriation Department at the Royal BC Museum. She and Jisgang are co-authors of the "Indigenous Repatriation Handbook" (2019). In her farewell speech, she graciously called out the museum for racism, launching an investigation and internal museum work to decolonize and create an anti-racist environment. Lucy is the recipient of the Sterling Prize for Controversy for calling out the provincial museum and demanding museums to decolonize and be anti-racist. Lucy is passionate about learning in the Haida world and the academic world. She is a learner and advocate for the Haida language. She is a distinguished University of Victoria Alumna for her Master's in language revitalization and her certificate in Cultural Resource Management. She is currently a PhD Candidate focusing on Haida museology at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia.

**6. Cosme & Damião: A project for a twin collection for the National Museum of Rio de Janeiro – Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (MN), Brazil, and for the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia (MOA), Canada**  
**Nuno Porto and Renata de Castro Menezes**

In our presentation we will be speculating on a project and we will be reasoning about this idea not so much from the intention of clarifying dubious pasts of existing collections but, on the contrary, on the project of building a twin collection in the very near future, incorporating decolonial ethics and programmatic partnerships both in the domain of representation and in the domain of museum and civic practice. The common antecedent between the NM and MOA is the intention of building a collection centered in the Afro religious characters of Cosme & Damião. Given the tragic fire at the



NM and the relatively marginal weight of African collections at MOA, the project intends to fill gaps in each institution. MOA, furthermore, will gain from the generosity of the NM of and its longstanding research on the subject, to work with an already established community and academic based research network that will be involved in all stages of the process. Potentially, MOA will reciprocate by engaging with the existing practices and bringing its own procedures on board, including tentative protocols that cut across museum practice of collecting, describing and exhibiting that may work as templates for exploring best practices within this research relationship.

A second – less obvious – antecedent to both institutions is their contemporary practices as teaching and research museums, which naturalises the notion that collecting is part of ongoing research. In fact both institutions have, in their past, profited from relations with other museums and sections of their collections (some lost in the case of the NM) were obtained by exchange with other museums. The recognition of the genealogy of institutional partnership in collection making is, obviously, informed by current civic, and political conditions in which identities are consciously fluid and, therefore, where “source community” members are also colleagues, or, at the very least, research partners. We will also explore from our respective subject positions, how a twin collection – and by this we mean that the resulting collections at the NM and MOA will be composed of interchangeable items – works differently at home at the NM, and abroad at the MOA. Exploring this divergence will likely mean to introduce awareness on international networks, scales and specific arenas of action and bring into the collecting research exercise an added layer of intentional context, explanation and translation. Last but not least, we expect that the outline of a future project may be broadened by learning from research on the past and, conversely, contribute to understanding historical provenance in its own terms.

**Nuno Porto** (PhD 2002, University of Coimbra) is Curator – Africa and South America, at the Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia, in Vancouver, Canada. He worked in Portugal, Cape Verde, Angola and Brazil, on issues of curatorship and social justice, critical museology, material and visual culture, photography, cultural heritage and contemporary art. His research is published in more than ten countries and in four different languages. He was director of the Museum of Anthropology at the University of Coimbra (2002-2006) and member of the Commission for the Reopening of the Dundo Museum in Angola (2008-2012). His most recent exhibition at the MOA (March 2017 – February 2018) “Amazon – the rights of nature” militates in favor of the recognition of indigenous epistemologies. His current curatorial project, “Sankofa – African Routes, Canadian Roots” explores contemporary ways of claiming identity by members of Vancouver’s Black and African communities. He is also the leader for the project “Decolonizing the African collections and Displays” at MOA, in partnership with UBC Black and African Students’ associations.

**Renata de Castro Menezes** (PhD 2004, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro) is Associate Professor in the Anthropology Department of the National Museum, at the Federal University in Rio de Janeiro and teaches in the Postgraduate Program in Social Anthropology. Renata is also director of the Laboratory of Anthropology of the Ludic and the Sacred (LUDENS) and a member of the Center for Studies of Complex Societies (NESCOM), both at the National Museum. Her research focuses on the fields of the anthropology of religion and of rituals and festivals, and, more recently, on the anthropology of materialities. In the area of religion, she focuses on the study of Catholicism and Umbanda. Renata was a fellow at the Center For Religion and Media at New York University (2015-2016) and an invited researcher at FMSH – Paris (October 2019). She is an associate researcher of Césor (Center for Studies in Social Sciences of Religious), EHESS – Paris, member of the Brazilian Society for the Progress of Science – SBPC, of the Association Brazilian anthropologist – ABA, of the Society of Friends of the National Museum - SAMN, serving at the board of directors (2020-2021), and president of the non-governmental organization Iser Assessoria (2019-2021).



## CONFERENCE CONVENERS

**Boris Wastiau** is an anthropologist and director of the MEG (Museum of Ethnography, City of Geneva). Since 2009 he was in charge of leading the new museum project, which reopened its doors to the public on 31 October 2014, as well as for reorienting and repositioning the institution, which won the European Museum of the Year Award in 2017. He is now implementing a new decolonial museological strategy. He was a lecturer, then an Associate professor, in the History and Anthropology of Religions Unit of the University of Geneva, from 2009 to 2019. Before that, he worked for 11 years as a curator at the Royal Museum for Central Africa (Belgium). After studying Anthropology

at the Free University of Brussels and the University of Coimbra, he submitted a doctoral thesis in the Anthropology of Art on possession cults to the University of East Anglia in 1997. Throughout his studies and his professional career, Boris Wastiau carried out numerous research missions in the field, both in Africa and in Latin America. As specialist in Central African cultures and religions and in critical museology, he also works on the provenance of African collections, illicit trafficking and restitution issues. He is the author of several books and exhibitions, including "ExitCongoMuseum" (2000), "Mahamba" (2000), "Chokwe" (2006), "Medusa in Africa" (2008), "Amazonie. Le chamane et la pensée de la forêt" (2016), "Afrique. Les religions de l'extase" (2018).

**Aude Polito** works as a researcher. She studied Art History, Political Science and Anthropology at the University of Lausanne, the University of Neuchâtel (Switzerland) and at the Università degli studi di Roma La Sapienza (Italy). She specialised in Anthropology of art in the documentation of the process of artistic creation, and in Visual anthropology through the practice of documentary, ethnographic film and photography. She is currently a scientific collaborator at the Museum of Ethnography of Geneva (MEG).

## INFORMATIONS PRATIQUES

### International conference Auditorium of MEG

Wednesday 24th and Thursday 25th November 2021

The conference will be held in English in the MEG Auditorium.

Tickets can be purchased [online](#) or at MEG reception desk, subject to availability (9/6 CHF).

The conference will be broadcasted live for free on the [MEG website](#) in English, and a simultaneous translation in French will be available. To follow it online, please register on the [MEG website](#).

#### MEG

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[www.meg-geneve.ch](http://www.meg-geneve.ch)

### Conférence internationale Auditorium du MEG

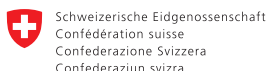
Mercredi 24 et Jeudi 25 novembre 2021

La conférence se tiendra en anglais dans l'Auditorium du MEG.

Achat d'un billet [en ligne](#) ou à l'accueil du MEG dans la limite des places disponibles (9/6 CHF).

La conférence sera retransmise en direct gratuitement sur le [site internet du MEG](#) en anglais, et une traduction simultanée en français sera disponible. Pour la suivre en ligne, merci de vous inscrire sur le [site internet du MEG](#).

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Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA  
Federal Office of Culture FOC



Lauréat 2017  
du Prix Européen du  
Musée de l'année

#### MEG at a glance

MEG (Musée d'ethnographie de Genève) is a public institution, founded in 1901, whose first director was the Genevan anthropologist Eugène Pittard (1867-1962). The Museum's mission is to care for and enhance, together with the bearers of the cultures concerned, objects designed and used by people throughout the history of the world. It houses a collection of more than 75,000 objects and its library contains more than 70,000 documents on the peoples of the world. The Museum possesses a unique collection of musical recordings, the Archives internationales de musique populaire (AIMP), containing more than 20,000 hours of music including the collection gathered by Constantin Brăiloiu between 1944 and 1958. With more than 3,000 hours of historic recordings, this constitutes the core of the collection. Admission to the permanent collection, which presents more than a thousand objects from the five continents, is free. Along with its permanent collection and temporary exhibitions, MEG offers a programme of cultural and scientific mediation, concerts, film and lecture cycles as well as shows. Since November 2014, the MEG's collections have been shown to advantage in a new building designed by the Zurich firm Graber Pulver Architekten AG on the site it has occupied since 1941.

#### Le MEG en bref

Le MEG (Musée d'ethnographie de Genève) est une institution publique, fondée en 1901, dont le premier directeur fut Eugène Pittard, anthropologue genevois (1867-1962). Le Musée a comme mission de conserver des objets illustrant la culture des peuples à travers l'histoire du monde. Il abrite une collection de près de 70'000 objets et sa bibliothèque offre plus de 60'000 documents sur les cultures du monde. Le Musée possède une collection unique d'enregistrements musicaux, les Archives internationales de musique populaire (AIMP), qui comporte plus de 20'000 heures de musique et dont la collection rassemblée par Constantin Brăiloiu entre 1944 et 1958 en constitue la base avec plus de 3000 enregistrements historiques. L'exposition permanente est gratuite et présente plus d'un millier d'objets issus des cinq continents. Le MEG offre en plus de sa collection permanente et de ses expositions temporaires, un programme de médiation culturelle et scientifique, des concerts, des cycles de cinéma et de conférences ainsi que des spectacles. Depuis novembre 2014, les richesses du MEG sont mises en valeur dans un nouveau bâtiment conçu par le bureau zurichois Graber & Pulver Architekten sur le site qu'il occupe depuis 1941.

Un musée  
Ville de Genève

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