

European Curators' Seminar

Memories, histories: between representation and commemoration, what are the issues for museums?

Dates From Monday, June 3 to Saturday, June 8, 2013 inclusive

Context The European Curators' Seminar, inaugurated in 2004, is an initiative of the Ministry of Culture and Communication (General Secretariat, Department of European and International Affairs; Directorate General for Heritage, Museums of France Service, Department of European and International Affairs), within the framework of its educational programs implemented by the Maison des Cultures du Monde, in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs.

It will bring together from Monday, June 3 to Saturday, June 8, 2013 inclusive, in Paris, the city of Nantes, the Picardie region and Belgium, with the support of the Regional Cultural Affairs Departments involved, a dozen foreign curators and museum professionals working in the member countries of the Council of Europe and the French regions. They can thus pool their knowledge, practices and projects. This seminar will help create and develop networks of contacts between French and European professionals.

Topic *"Memories, histories: Between representation and commemoration, what are the issues for museums?"*

Museums are par excellence places where communities of individuals recognize themselves in the objects chosen, whether they are the expression of what is beautiful, in the reality of a taste or a history, rarely unambiguous. Museums are a sanctuary of legitimacy: a site of its references and for its manufacturing.

Starting from this observation and working with a conception of the institution in which museums fully fulfill their civic role, how can we compare the distanced contributions of history and take into account contemporary phenomena in which the importance of oral accounts, the necessary appropriation by the public of the references of the society in which they live, and the expectation by certain people or communities of a form of recognition come into play in museums? For museum institutions, appropriation, which is desired and expected by populations, raises the issue of the limits to be defined with regard to the social expectations in terms of commemoration: how far should they go? With regard to documentation, or even the acquisition of collections, how can they accept the sharing of authority, or acknowledge a right of expression, while remaining as close as possible to the requirement of objectivity of a public service? Up to what point and with which contacts should they carry out collecting as an enhancement of funds and collections?

Form *Exchanges and interactivity*

The seminar is being organized in the form of a series of visits to museum sites and with the teams that work in them, in Paris, in different regions and in Belgium. These meetings will cover several types of museums, both historical and memorial. Ample time reserved for discussion every day will give the participants an opportunity to further explore the issues raised during the visits. French curators will also take part in this seminar in order to allow for exchanges of knowledge, practices and projects with their foreign counterparts. A presentation by each of the participants is expected, in the form of a short contribution (20 minutes, based on images as a support for comments and not a conference-type lecture) covering one aspect of the topic of the seminar. In view of the motivation of the applications, the formulation of the questioning, of professional rather than academic form, will be deciding for the selection of the applications.

A report of the seminar, summarizing the main exchanges and evaluations and covering the work carried out, will be drafted and distributed.

The seminar will be in French with simultaneous translation into English.

Conditions for participation

Conditions of participation for French professionals:

- Be a heritage curator or conservation agent
- Have a good knowledge of English
- Be interested in the subject for professional reasons

Conditions of participation for European professionals:

- Be a museum curator, manager of a collection in a public sector museum or the manager of a collection intended for the public
- Be a citizen of one of the 47 member countries of the Council of Europe (not including France)
- Be a French speaker or, failing that, an English speaker with good oral comprehension of French

Applicants must be directly involved in the proposed topic, have already carried out projects through partnerships, and have been involved in projects with an international dimension if possible.

Costs covered:

For European professionals, the following costs will be covered by the Maison des Cultures du Monde:

- The costs for the seminar program
- Living expenses during the seminar (accommodations and *per diem*)
- Travel within France for the needs of the program
- Insurance

The international transportation tickets for the participants must be paid for by their establishments, by themselves, by the Embassies of France of the countries involved or by other partners or sponsors.

Procedure

Procedure to be followed to submit an application:

The application form can be obtained from the cultural service of the Embassy of France or from the French Institute in the applicant's country of residence.

It can also be downloaded from the web site of the Maison des Cultures du Monde: www.maisondesculturesdumonde.org (section *Programmes Courants*)

Deadline for receipt of applications by the Maison des Cultures du Monde: April 5, 2013 (electronic application including the appreciation of the French Embassy or Institute)

Information, forms and contact person for submitting applications to the Maison des Cultures du Monde:

Catherine ANNOEPEL

Tel : +33 (0)1 45 44 08 39

Fax : +33 (0)1 45 44 11 85

Courriel : annoepel@maisondesculturesdumonde.org

Site : www.maisondesculturesdumonde.org (section *Programme Courants*)

A copy of the application in paper form must be sent to Mr. Kevin Riffault, civil administrator, deputy to the sub-director for museum policies and Mr. Bruno Favel, Head of the Department of European and International Affairs of the Directorate General for Heritage - 6, rue des Pyramides 75001 PARIS. It is essential to send an electronic copy of these dossiers to Ms. Sylvie Grange and Ms. Orane Proisy, at the following addresses: sylvie.grange@culture.gouv.fr, orane.proisy@culture.gouv.fr