

## **Session 221 Turning the Tables: Documenting Art in a Global Context**

**Chair:** Sandra Ludig Brooke (United States)

### **A Great Idea at the Time: Cataloguing South Africa's Artist's Book Production**

David Paton (University of Johannesburg, South Africa)

*Since 2006, Jack Ginsberg, the internationally renowned private collector of artists' books and I have set about creating a database of every artist's book produced in South Africa. By isolating the South African books in the Ginsberg Collection as well as the books I had come across in my research, we began to construct not only a bespoke database but also a wild bibliographic dream. It was hoped that this dream would gain such momentum within the South African book arts community that awareness of its existence as an index of a fledgling activity might promote the making of more objects which would then surpass the database's ability to keep up with production. One of the most well documented problems facing appropriate mechanisms for the cataloguing for artists' books is grappling with the hybrid nature of the items to be catalogued, each of which claims some territory within the disputed space of the book arts. This paper examines the progress of our database and discusses problems associated with its necessary refinement. Taking Anne Thurmann-Jajes' *Manual for Artists' Publications* (2010) as a point of departure, the paper examines three South African artists' books which represent both the diversity of the field and the complexity of the cataloguing task. The paper suggests a local set of descriptors of types of artists' books that help to describe the South African output more meaningfully.*

### **Searching for a Sami Identity in the Contemporary Arts of Sweden: The Personal, the Political and the Poetical in the Art Works of Katarina Pirak Sikku, Liselotte Wajstedt and Carola Grahn**

Liselotte Winka (Konstfack / University College of Arts, Crafts and Design, Sweden)

*Last year the city of Umeå, situated in the North East of Sweden, was acknowledged as the Cultural Capital of Europe 2014. One reason for being nominated was the origin of the Sami culture in the region. The Sami are the indigenous people and original population of a land area called Sápmi (Sami land). It includes the northern parts of Sweden, Norway, Finland and a small part of north western Russia in the Kola Peninsula. The Sami people have traditionally been nomads following their reindeer migration from the mountains to the coast, depending on where to find grazing for the reindeer.*

*In 2014 Bildmuseet, a museum for contemporary and visual arts in Umeå, showed eight exhibitions with artists of Sami descent corresponding in time with the eight seasons of the Sami. Three of the artists were Katarina Pirak Sikku, Liselotte Wajstedt and Carola Grahn, and this paper discusses the personal, the political and the poetical aspects of their art works in the exhibitions.*

*There are about 20,000 Sami people living in Sweden today. With the colonization of Sápmi and the exploitation of the natural resources in the region many of the Sami were forced to relocate and lost their rights to land and waters. The colonization also led to a loss of language, religion and sometimes also a loss of cultural identity.*

### **Documents for Brazilian Concrete Art: Dialogues Between Library and Archives of Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo**

Isabel Cristina Ayres da Silva Maringelli (Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo, Brazil)

*This paper describes some perspectives on the exhibition archive and the role of libraries and archives in the process of documenting art. The first section of this article provides an overview of current discussions on the intersections between libraries, museums, and archives. The second section gives an overview of documentation about the Concrete Art exhibition carried out at the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo in 1977. Exhibition records pose challenges to the documentation standards of museum, library and archives. This section describes how evidence of past exhibition activity documentation can contribute to providing art information sources for Brazilian art history and how libraries and archives can work together to provide access to this material.*

### **The Elephant in the Room? Discovering African Art and Design at the Victoria and Albert Museum and Britain's National Art Library**

Elizabeth James (Victoria and Albert Museum, United Kingdom)

*The Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) in London is a world-leading museum of art and design which has always positioned itself in a global context. Its collections are however necessarily selective, with not all cultures represented equally. Among others, the arts of Africa were understood to be outside the V&A's remit for much of its history. In 2005 however, the museum embarked on a capacity building project, seeking to relate to a wider audience, including the UK's ethnically diverse communities. Among the results was the discovery of far more artefacts relevant to and originating in Africa and the African diaspora than had been expected. The museum accepted this finding positively, and implemented new policies to uncover existing holdings and encourage new acquisitions. This paper reports on these developments with particular reference to the National Art Library and its sister collections, which together comprise the Word & Image Department at the V&A.*

### **Artistic Cultural Heritage Protection Services: Building a Library of Treasured Local Resources**

Bin Chen (Hangzhou Library, China)

*In China, at the regional level, the collection and preservation of local documents related to historical and cultural artifacts and institutions is one of the fundamental tasks of the library as a cultural soft power. Global libraries also place high value on the collection and curation of local documents and the development of regional cultural resources. Documentation of local history is a long-term global public library objective. Research on art and cultural heritage, the protection and preservation of these assets, and information exchange services have now become an important part of the documentation of local cultural history.*

*Libraries have long neglected material culture, and specifically documentation related to visual arts and culture. Documents and artifacts related to material culture and the visual and performing arts are often ephemeral, and frequently disappear due to historical circumstances and environmental degradation, never to be seen again. Combining the work of art and cultural heritage protection with the scientific and technological tools at our disposal, my objective at this 81<sup>st</sup> IFLA World Congress is to appeal to the global library community to attend to regional culture and artistic heritage. Through modern service technologies and humanistic ideals, we can build a sound repository of local history and culture that will remain available for generations to come.*