

CALL FOR PAPERS

Symposium on The Legacy and Impact of Latin American & Caribbean Museology

The International Council of Museums-International Committee for Museology (ICOFOM) announces a call for papers for its 46th annual symposium on the theme of The Legacy and Impact of Latin American and Caribbean museology. The symposium will take place November 6-10 in Recife, Brazil, in collaboration with the ICOFOM Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) symposium Histories of Latin American and Caribbean Museology. It will be held in a hybrid format, both in-person and online, with simultaneous translation into English/Spanish/Portuguese. **250-word abstracts are due for consideration by August 31.**

Ten years ago, ICOM met in Rio de Janeiro for a triennial with the theme Museums (memory + creativity) = Social Change. As Carlos Roberto Ferreira Brandão wrote in his report for *Museum International*, the premise of the event was that “museums work to promote change. ... Numerous individuals form part of this equation, notably museum professionals and the public, who are the drivers of this movement. The memory activated by creativity in the museum environment is what promotes social change in our society.” This idea, seemingly so commonplace to the study of museums today, would have seemed radically unusual to previous generations. The shift in understanding of the purpose of museums is part of the impact of Latin American museology on the rest of the world.

From the 1958 UNESCO Regional Seminar in Rio to the 1972 Round Table of Santiago, the 1992 Caracas Declaration, the 1998 Xochimilco Charter, and up to the leadership role the region played in the 2020-2022 ICOM Define effort, the work of museologists and other intellectuals from throughout Latin America and the Caribbean has moved the museum community from its roots in Eurocentric collection to global participation in, as the new definition terms it, institutional structures that exist “in the service of society[,]...open to the public, accessible and inclusive...foster[ing] diversity and sustainability” (ICOM, Museum Definition, 2022; see also Brown and Mairesse, 2018).

In our 46th annual symposium, ICOFOM hopes to field papers that remember and celebrate this long tradition as we examine the theoretical legacy and impact of the histories of Latin American and Caribbean museology.

The social role of museum and their ideal as *museos integrales* or integral museums – ideas central to much of Latin American and Caribbean museology – have permeated everything from the ecomuseum movement, community partnerships (with both local and diasporic communities), hybrid and creole representations of national identity, sociomuseology, and “museums are not neutral” campaigns, as well as the current global efforts to decolonise museums and museum practices (see Brulon Soares, 2021; also ICOFOM’s *Decolonising Museology* series of publications).

But how are these ideas disseminated? Whose university and museum initiatives attract global attention? Whose research is considered publishable, or citable (see Brulon Soares and Leshchenko, 2014)? And as ICOFOM explored during the ICOM Prague conference, whose language is spoken/written/understood?

Therefore, ICOFOM also invites papers that explore the barriers—historical and contemporary, ideological and practical—to greater Latin American and Caribbean participation in global museology.

The work and theory of museologists and intellectuals from the region could be read in schools of museums studies and quoted in articles in the same way that North American and European intellectuals are studied (and cited) around the world today. Yet they are not – including in the articles submitted to our own journal. ICOFOM, particularly under the leadership of our past chair, Bruno Brulon, has published several monographs aiming to highlight the region’s contributions¹ – but their impact is currently underutilised. The fertile output of Latin American and Caribbean intellectuals, however, is more frequently noted by the diaspora of Latino and African-origin scholars working in North America and Europe, just as this diasporic work and that of African scholars circulates with increasing frequency across the Southern hemisphere.

Finally, then, as we look toward the future, with “memory activated by creativity”, we hope to find symposium participants discussing the possibilities for overcoming identified challenges and bringing further into the global conversation the rich diversity and plurality of the histories of Latin American and Caribbean museology.

We invite abstracts of 250 words (maximum) on the following themes:

- The impact of Latin American and Caribbean museology on museum theories and policies
- Unveiling the influence of Latin American and Caribbean intellectuals in contemporary museology
- Exploring barriers to Latin American and Caribbean museology’s global recognition
- Unexplored pathways and the potential of Latin American and Caribbean museology in a global context
- The role of ICOFOM in advancing Latin American and Caribbean museology

To submit a proposal for the symposium, please fill out and submit the form here: [ICOFOM2023](#).

A selected number of symposium presenters will be invited to submit their papers as full articles to be considered for publication in the 52nd issue of the *ICOFOM Study Series* journal.

References:

- Brandão, Carlos Roberto Ferreira. A report on the 23rd ICOM General Conference in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. *Museum International* 253-256, pp. 88-98.
- Brown, Karen, and François Mairesse. 2018. The definition of the museum through its social role. *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 61.4.
- Brulon Soares, Bruno. 2021. Decolonising the museum? Community experiences in the periphery of the ICOM museum definition. *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 64.3 439–455 <https://doi.org/10.1111/cura.12436>
- Brulon Soares, Bruno, and Anna Leshchenko. 2018. “Museology in colonial contexts: A call for decolonisation of museum theory.” *ICOFOM Study Series* 48, pp. 61-79. <https://doi.org/10.4000/iss.895>
- ICOM. Museum Definition. 2022. <https://icom.museum/en/resources/standards-guidelines/museum-definition/>

¹ See all ICOFOM monographs here: <https://icofom.mini.icom.museum/publications-2/the-monographs-of-icofom/>