



Vetlanda Museum

The Way of Dialogue

Collections Co-operation and Contemporary Collecting

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Agenda



Introduction



Collections management



Collections co-operation



Sharing collections and repatriation



Contemporary Collecting



The Dialogue Way



Introduction



Collections, collections, collections...!

- Beautiful
- Magical
- Fantastic
- Knowledge
- Inspiring
- Links to the past, present, future...



Photo: Västerbottens Museum



Collections – the links to...

- ...US
- Now and then
- Everyday life, party
- Happiness, sorrow
- Work, spare time
- Life and death
- Creativity



Photo: Vetlanda Museum
The chasuble with the happy skull





The collecting predecessors

- Often teachers or priests
- Often men
- Collected the old, the disappearing, curiosities
- Recorded ownership, function, shape & size
- Did often not record the context together with the object: *"The object speaks for itself"*



Photo: Vetlanda Museum



The collecting predecessors

Did sometimes record the context together with the object: the cube or amulet example!



Photo: Vetlanda Museum



Photo: Vetlanda Museum





The curator of today

- Curious about the person(s) connected to the objects
- Seeks stories and lived experiences
- Often gets upset about the lack of context connected to the objects...
- ...and the lack of inclusion and diverse perspectives
- Starts a contemporary collecting project with dialogue, using an intersectional perspective



Photo: Vetlanda Museum





What to do with collections without context?

- Do research on your collections and learn about the objects!
- Invite people to share their knowledge and collect different perspectives on the same object!
- Use the powerful tools of dialogue and contemporary collecting! 😊
- See to that the museum has a good collections management work flow as a foundation to build on!



Photo: Vetlanda Museum





Makes it easier to enrich, develop, exhibit

Gives understanding about how to use your funding wisely

Makes the everyday work easier & smoother

WHY COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT?





Educated specialized staff

Working groups with colleagues from different departments in the museum.

Must be a formal decision together with the director and perhaps the board to get the right focus within the museum – and the right funding

Best-practices and standards are important!

WHO WILL MANAGE THE COLLECTION?





Spectrum – collections management

- A UK standard for collections management
- 46 countries have adapted it
- Tried-and-tested advice to museum professionals
- Daily and occasional activities: procedures
- Policies

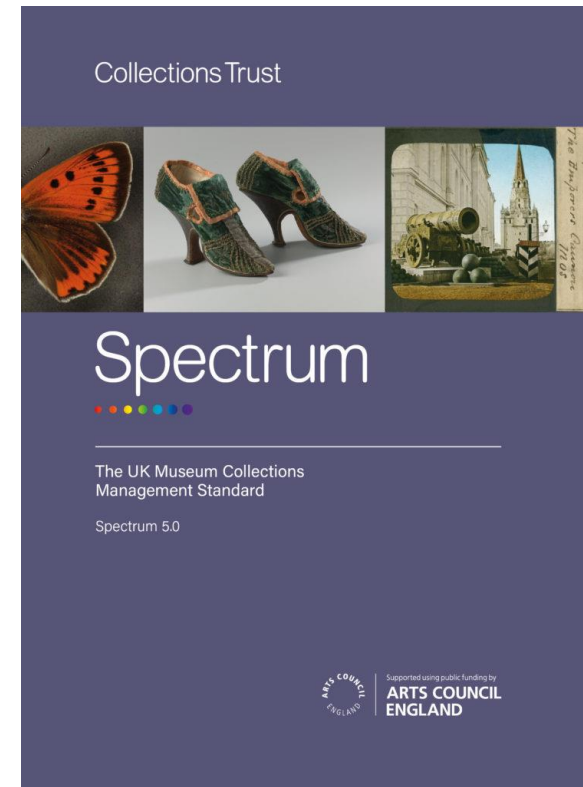


Photo: Collections Trust, UK.





Spectrum – nine primary procedures

- Object entry
- Acquisition and accessioning
- Location and movement control
- Inventory
- Cataloguing
- Object exit
- Loans in (borrowing objects)
- Loans out (lending objects)
- Documentation planning





Spectrum – twelve other procedures

- Condition checking and technical assessment
- Collections care and conservation
- Valuation
- Insurance and indemnity
- Emergency planning for collections
- Damage and loss
- Deaccessioning and disposal
- Rights management
- Reproduction
- Use of collections
- Collection review
- Audit – check the info





Spectrum policies



Collections development



Collections information



Collections access



Collections care



www.collectionstrust.org.uk





Next step: collections development

After a thorough
collections management
process...

- ...you want to make
object entries and exits
to and from the
collections
- A great tool is
Significance 2.0



Photo: Vetlanda Museum





Significance 2.0

- A tool for assessing the significance of collections
- Developed in Australia
- Used in collections management



Photo: Collections Council of Australia.



Significance 2.0

‘Significance’ refers to the values and meanings that items and collections have for people and communities.

It is a way of telling compelling stories about items and collections, explaining why they are important.





Five main steps in the assessment process



Analysing an item or collection



Researching its history, provenance and context



Comparison with similar items



Understanding its values by reference to the criteria



Summarising its meanings and values in statement of significance



Four primary criteria when assessing significance



Historic



Artistic or aesthetic



Scientific or research potential



Social or spiritual



Four comparative criteria evaluate the degree of significance



Provenance



Rarity or representativeness



Condition or completeness



Interpretive capacity



Co-operation and collaboration: Swedish and International examples

- Samdok
- DOSS
- TAKO
- Norsam
- ICOM COMCOL



Photo: Kulturmagasinet, Helsingborg





Collections co-operation: Samdok

- Established in 1977
- Collaboration between cultural history museums
- Deepen the knowledge on humans and society
- Study the present
- Describe social and cultural processes
- Emphasize importance of historical and contemporary contexts
- Innovation to museum work!

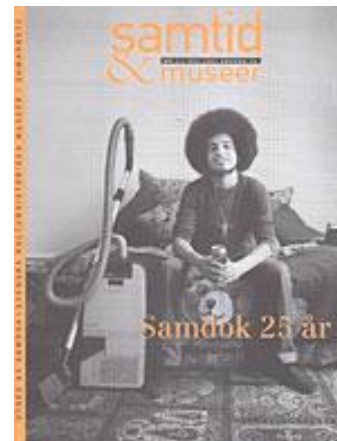
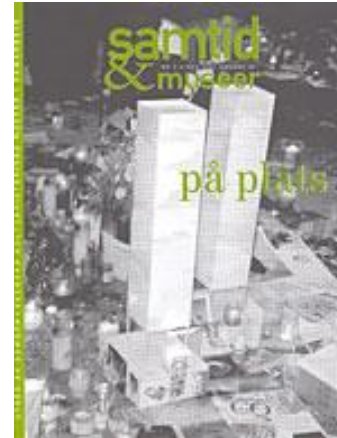


Photo: Riksförbundet Sveriges Museer



Collections co-operation: Samdok

- Forum for scholarly discussions
- Professional development
- Education
- Sharing experiences:
 - Empirical
 - Methodological
 - Theoretical
- Creation of collecting and collections
- Inspiration for networks, TAKO, Norsam, COMCOL

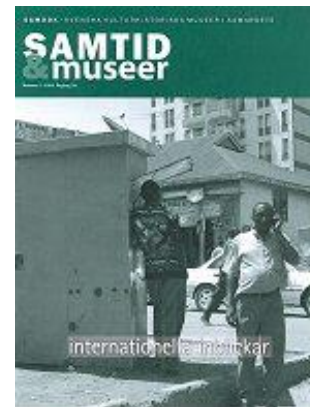
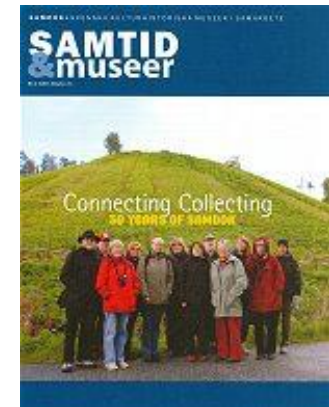
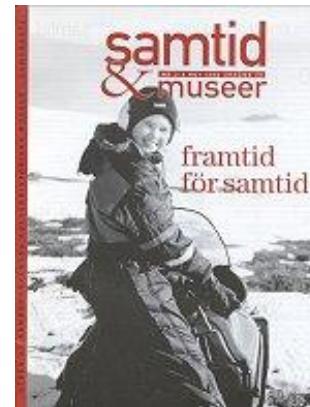


Photo: Riksförbundet Sveriges Museer





Samdok working groups

To share responsibility for collecting and collections

Different collaboration topics:

- Domestic life and leisure
- Manufacturing and services
- Local and regional rooms
- Society and politics
- The countryside and land management
- Sami life
- Multiculturalism



Photo: Björn Grankvist, Murberget



Photo: Petter Engman, Västerbottens museum





Contemporary Collecting Sweden

- Samdok was put down 2012
- A threatened collaboration!
- 23 museums wanted to continue
- Six museums in a board responsible for building the new network
- Museums from different parts of Sweden
- Contemporary Collecting Sweden (DOSS) was formed



Photo: Kulturmagasinet Helsingborg

DOSS

Dokumentation av Samtida Sverige





The best of Samdok is still in DOSS

- Focus on contemporary collecting
- Professional development
- The autumn meeting!
- Inspiration and sharing of good practices
- Colleagues within the network
- Collaborations between museums
- Working groups – new and old
- Closer collaboration with documentary photographers
- An important community



Photo: Birgitta Witting, Kulturmagasinet Helsingborg

DOSS

Dokumentation av Samtida Sverige





News in the network

- The award for the "Best Contemporary Collecting Project of the Year"
- Dialogue through Facebook
- No costs except participation fee for the autumn meeting
- Autumn meetings in different parts of Sweden
- Inclusive and equal board
- You can be a board member for six years



Photo: Riksförbundet Sveriges Museer
The Best Contemporary Collecting of the Year 2015

DOSS

Dokumentation av Samtida Sverige





ICOM COMCOL

- ICOM International Committee for Collecting

COMCOL is an International Committee of ICOM which aims to deepen discussions, and share knowledge on the practice, theory and ethics of collecting and collections (both tangible and intangible) development.

COMCOL is a platform for professional exchange of views and experiences around collecting in the broadest sense. The mandate includes: collecting and de-accessioning policies; contemporary collecting; restitution of cultural property and respectful practices that affect the role of collections now and in the future, from all types of museums and from all parts of the world.

M COMCOL ICOM
international
committee
for collecting



ICOM COMCOL

- Inspired by Samdok
- Yearly conferences - Russia 2020
- Publications and Newsletter
- A new board since september
- WG:s on contemporary collecting and sharing collections
- How to be a member? See the website!
- Join COMCOL on facebook



Photo: ICOM COMCOL





Contemporary Collecting in Sweden

- Cultural history and art museums
- Ethnologists and documentary photographers

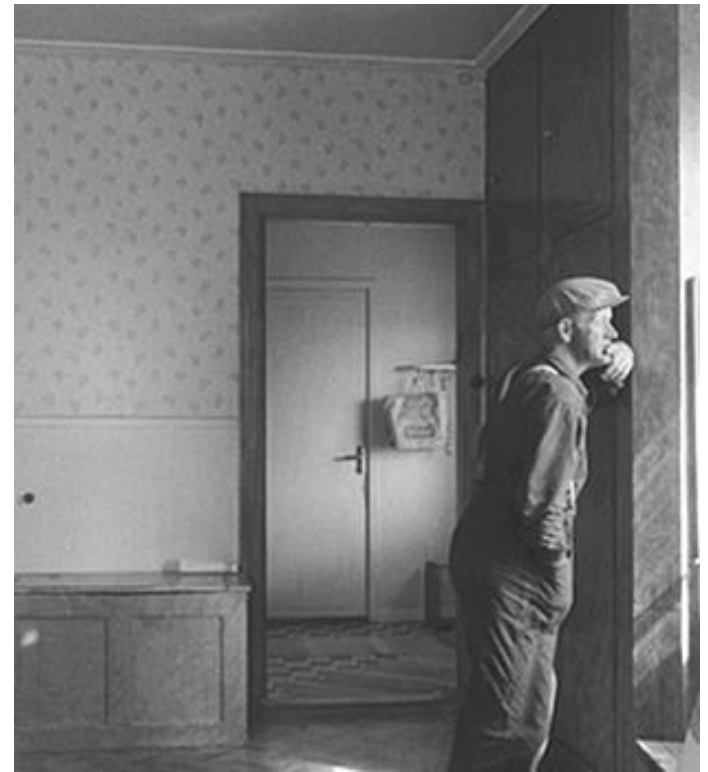


Photo: Sune Jonsson, Västerbottens museum



Contemporary Collecting Tools

- Analyse the present
- Make interviews
- Photography and film
- Participative observations
- Field journals
- Questionnaires
- Collecting of objects
- Always reflexivity!
- Inclusive perspectives
- Intersectionality



Photo: Birgitta Witting, Kulturmagasinet Helsingborg





Intersectional perspective

"With an intersectional perspective you mean the understanding that the experiences, identities and possibilities of the humans are given from the positions in the society that can not be understood isolated from each other. Experiences, terms and conditions don't solely emanate from gender. Age, national or ethnical origin, sexuality, gender identity, disability, language, economic situation, home district and religion are examples of elements that influence the possibilities for individuals to participate and influence. Awareness of and acting from this is crucial to give everyone the possibility to participate in culture.

It is important that every state funded part of culture actively work with equality, diversity and accessibility."

Swedish Arts Council 2015





CC Example: Priority Minority

- Analyzing collections
- Missing the National Minorities own voices
- Inviting to collaborate
- Building trust
- Exhibition for a year with an ethnologist in the exhibition
- Displays without objects
- An empty room filled up, and so did the collection

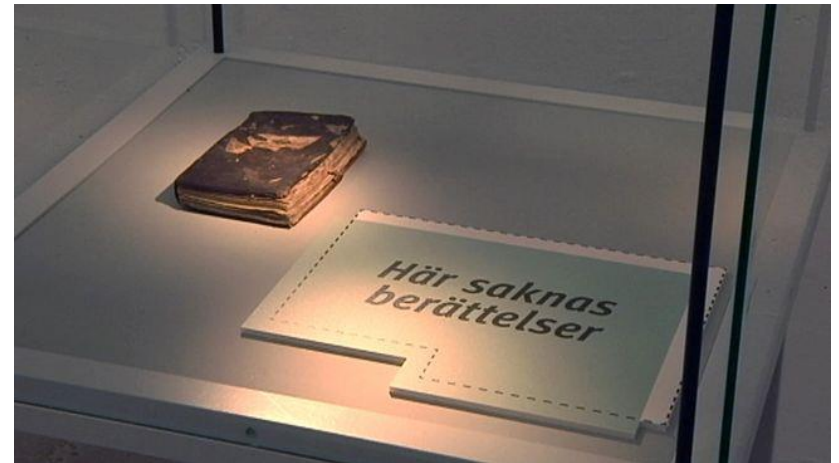


Photo: Västerbottens Museum



CC Example: Regiment collection

- A regiment museum
- Analyzing collections = interesting content
- Finding key objects
- Missing context: lived experiences & memories
- Exhibition for a year
- A lot of objects on display, dialogue
- Context was collected!



Photo: Västerbottens Museum





The Way of Dialogue

- Co-operation & collaboration!
- Work with different strategies with different target groups
- Dialogue through participation
- Be interested in, listen and collect objects, stories and memories
- Make the collections open
- Work inclusive, involve everyone!
- Think in new ways and show up in unexpected situations and places
- Use digital communication ways
- Stuff your backpack with cookies and have a lot of coffee breaks together with as many as possible



Photo: Vetlanda Museum



Photo: Vetlanda Museum





Vetlanda Museum

Thank you/kiitos!

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