

Feedback Questionnaire



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After the curatorial exchange program, feedback questionnaires about the symposium, specialist meeting, and excursion videos, were sent to all the participants.

About the International Symposium

- The COVID-19 theme was timely and appropriate.
- It was exciting to learn about the positive projects and outcomes that were being created in the face of adversity. It was very inspiring.
- The symposium offered many insights into how museums are creatively responding to the challenges of the pandemic, how the role of virtual engagement has expanded and new efforts to strengthen engagement with the community beyond the museum.
- The selection of panelists and topics was exceptionally well balanced. The one-on-one question and answer sessions with the respondents also worked well, though I missed the exchange of ideas among all the participants.
- Each of the speakers did an excellent job discussing his or her topic.
- The technical aspects of the symposium were fine.
- The virtual setting allowed more people from all over the world to attend the talks.
- It was nice to learn about digital initiatives and engagements of museums.
- The talks made me think how the “digital needs” of people have been evolving during the pandemic.
- It was very important to keep in touch with colleagues in the new era defined by coronavirus with closed borders and limited travel.
- The keynote speech has prompted reflections on the roots of the identity of Japanese art.
- The speech of Dr. Xiaojin Wu was particularly interesting for me because she talked about the original way of exhibiting Japanese art pieces together with pieces related to different religious tradition. This experience would also be relevant for museums that do not have substantial collections that would have allowed them to show the entire history of the art of a particular region but would allow to show them the available items within the context of other cultures.
- Interesting lectures and good coherence.
- It was very helpful to hear how colleagues from other museums dealt with similar problems. I would especially like to note the reports of Dr. Aaron Rio and Ms. Wibke Schrape.
- The lectures inspired me to try and find local connections with experts and to ask them for their advice. All speakers gave such interesting accounts of their efforts to connect, in various different ways.
- Thanks for finding a way to get together online and exchange ideas.
- Live-streaming would have made the symposium feel more participatory, especially if there had been an opportunity for questions and discussion after the presentations.
- I was delighted that TNM was able to organize this symposium under the current restrictions, and give

us an opportunity to meet and discuss albeit in the virtual realm.

About the Meeting

- The specialists meeting was wonderful—perhaps because of our long isolation, the participants seemed particularly eager to exchange ideas and observations about topics of common interest.
- Despite the limitations of the digital format, it was very good to hear about the important matters and the difficulties we face in these times of uncertainty and how colleagues from other museums are dealing with it.
- The discussion between colleagues is always inspiring and it gave me courage to see all the faces; to know that we are all still there, no matter how the situation in the world is.
- Thanks also for opening the room for chatting after the meeting.
- The topic of sustainability in museums is very important and Mr. Menno Fitski's short presentation was thought-provoking.
- Perhaps more time for comments and discussion could have been programmed.
- It would have been good to have had more opportunity to talk informally after the formal meeting had ended.
- We could have an online catch-up session halfway between the in-person events in Japan.
- It was wonderful to see all our colleagues.

(Specialists attended as "participating members" or "viewing-only members.")

- The Webinar format was successful, although it was a shame that not all involved could directly participate. Perhaps the chat function could be enabled so those watching could be more directly involved?
- It would have been better if there were an opportunity to take questions/comments from “viewing-only” attendants.

About the Workshop (Videos)

1. Handling Cultural Properties: Japanese Sculpture

- It would have been better if there were an opportunity to take questions/comments from “viewing-only” attendants.
- It was useful to see the correct way to move and handle these objects. The video was clear and informative.
- This was an outstanding and extremely informative video.
- I have shared it with my colleagues in the registration and conservation departments, who often have occasion to handle our sculpture.
- It was extremely generous of TNM to offer to answer questions about similar objects in our home collections.
- I really appreciate the opportunity to learn from the experts (even through a recording) because it is

difficult to gain knowledge and experience handling Japanese cultural properties outside of Japan.

- Special thanks to Mr. Asami Ryusuke and his younger assistants for the master-classes of handling Japanese Buddhist sculpture and mentioning important signs that help in attributing a particular monument.
- The most interesting were the comments on the methods of dating the sculpture, taking into account the size of the mount and the choice of wood.
- Very useful handling suggestions and extremely helpful to hear the comments for identification, about age, technique and style.
- The amount of information provided was just right, understandable for those less familiar with Japanese art history but informative for more experienced curators also.
- This was very helpful. I wish to share it with our art handlers.
- I wish I could have been there.

2. Kamakura Excursion

- It was a wonderful insight into a select number of temples in Kamakura and a privilege to see the parts of the temples that are normally not accessible to the public.
- I really felt as if we were visiting these wonderful sites with our host.
- I am especially grateful to TNM for giving us access to areas of the temples that are normally off-limits to the public. The curators gave very informative comments on the individual artworks. My favorite part, though, was hearing from the monks about how they understand and interpret the spaces and objects in their temples. That perspective adds another dimension to the story of Buddhist art, one often left out of traditional art historical narratives. Thank you for making it a feature of the tour.
- This video made me want to travel to Japan as soon as the pandemic is over.
- I saw some temples and hidden art pieces for the first time.
- The video was perfectly made with subtitles in English, which is very helpful.
- The expert comments really helped to understand the artworks. Both experts are very good at pointing out the specific characteristics of artworks in a clear and precise way.
- I enjoyed seeing the sculptures in situ.
- Made me so very nostalgic for Japan.
- This was very enjoyable. I would like to try the vegetable soup!
- It was an interesting experience to watch the Zen-meditation practice and to know some Zen cuisine recipes.
- It is a very easy and inspiring explanation of zazen.
- I will use the training video in my daily life to create a short moment of inspiration.
- The special sweets really make me want to go and visit...
- I wish we could do this in person!

Comments or suggestions about next year's program

(For Example: Theme of the program, topic of the meeting etc.)

- One big debate in the US right now concerns the role of museums in promoting scholarship vs. social activism. The theme for next year's program could be how museums in Japan, Europe, and North America balance the needs of scholarship and research with the call to engage with community members and advance social justice issues.
- I would be thankful if we could continue talking about sustainability and also developments in the field of exhibitions. For instance: will this crisis reduce the courier travels in the long run even when travelling will be possible again.
- Strategies and Frameworks for Future Museum Collaborations
- Sharing Resources: Travelling Exhibitions and Co-Sponsorships
- The topic of sustainability will be one that we may want to revisit, but we may need to define our terminology a bit more (What do we mean precisely by 'sustainability') and divide the discussion into a few subtopics, including 1) efforts to alleviate climate change and the production of greenhouse gases; 2) efforts to protect the artworks in our collection from deterioration (ultraviolet light exposure, hazards involved with frequent movement of the artwork, etc); and 3) the use of digital technology to display works in our collection online (instead of including the artwork in traveling exhibitions, and/or instead of producing printed catalogues).
- The inherently colonialist aspects of museology in general and of Japanese art history in particular. What do we know about how people in various parts of Japanese society feel about the fact that many of us art curators have removed works of Japanese art from their country and preserve those works in overseas collections? Are there any recent cases of art repatriation? Is there a disparity between the laws and the ethical concerns regarding the removal of artwork from Japan?
- How to increase social/cultural diversity in our audiences ("museums should be for everyone")
- Exhibitions and displays that present intercultural exchanges (through past and recent history).
- Discussion about how our respective collections are displayed and labelled. What are the expectations of our audiences?