



ASPIRE



conference 2025

programme

Sydney, Australia [Gadigal Land]



ARC would like to acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, the traditional custodians of the land this conference is being held on, and pay our respects to their Elders both past and present. Always was and always will be Aboriginal land.



Thursday 19 June 2025

→8:00 – 8:50 Registration & Refreshments
9:00 – 9:30 Welcome

9:30 – 10:30 **Armando Perla** ^{Keynote}

- *Aspiring Beyond the Archive: Indigenous Transnational Mesoamerican Museologies and the Ethics of Decolonial Stewardship*

10:30 – 11:15 Morning tea

11:15 – 11:40 **Caroline Lorentz**
State Library of New South Wales

- *Wadgayawa nhay dhadjan wari (they made them a long time ago): A case study in cross sector and community collaboration*

11:40 – 12:05 **Sabrina Baron, Zara El Mahir, Eleanor Megna, Alison Mercieca & Dr. Mariko Smith** Australian Museum

- *First Nations-Led Enhancement of the Australian Museum's Aboriginal Archaeological Collection*

12:05 – 12:30 **Cyndi Koh & Lydia Chan**
Defence Collective Singapore

- *Behind the Barracks: Organising Singapore's Military Collections*

12:30 – 1:30 Lunch

1:30 – 1:55 **Miriam Troon**
Arts Centre Melbourne

- *AI Transcription and Volunteer Collaboration: Enhancing Access to the Australian Performing Arts Collection*

1:55 – 2:20 **Belinda Hunt** National Film and Sound Archive of Australia

- *Shining a Light on Backlogs*

2:20 – 2:45 **Hannah Litherland** National Museum of the Royal New Zealand Navy

- *From Ship to Shore: Navigating Registration of the New Zealand Navy's Fleet Trophy Collection*

2:45 – 3:15 Afternoon tea

3:15 – 3:40 **Anita Robertson** Te Whare Taonga o Waikato Museum & Gallery

- *Ambition verses Reality. Working through a building redevelopment*

3:40 – 4:05 **Shannon Hutchinson**
National Film and Sound Archive of Australia

- *Nitrate, so hot right now!*

4:05 – 4:15 Closing remarks

4:30 – 5:00 ARC Annual General Meeting••

Armando Perla KEYNOTE

Aspiring Beyond the Archive: Indigenous Transnational Mesoamerican Museologies and the Ethics of Decolonial Stewardship

Armando Perla (They/Them) is a non-binary queer mestizo (Nahua and Euro-Salvadoran) international curator and museum consultant. Perla has also acted as Artistic Director and Chief Curator for the Textile Museum of Canada. They were also Vice-President of the board of the Canadian Museums Association (2021 - 2024) and previously, they were Chief Curator for the Toronto History Museums at the City of Toronto. From 2019 – 2021, they were a board member of the International Council of Museums' (ICOM) International Committee on Ethical Dilemmas (IC-Ethics). Between 2021 and 2022, they curated a major children's exhibition on historic memory and human rights for the United Nations Development Program and the Swiss Agency for International Cooperation in Central America in El Salvador. Perla also held the position of Assistant Professor on Decolonization and Race in Museums with the Master of Museum Studies, Faculty of Information at the University of Toronto and also served as International Advisor on Museums, Human Rights and Social Inclusion for the City of Medellin, Colombia. They were part of the founding team of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and Project Leader at the Swedish Museum of Migration and Democracy. During their tenure at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights they were also an adjunct professor both at the faculty of law at the University of Manitoba and in the Global College at the University of Winnipeg.

They hold a Bachelor of Laws from l'Université Laval in Canada and a Master of Laws in International Human Rights Law from Lund University and the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law in Sweden. Prior to working in the museum sector, Perla held several roles in human rights organizations in North America, Latin America, and Europe. Perla is currently a PhD candidate in Art History and Museology at the University of Montreal and in 2021 was awarded the Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Doctoral Fellowship for their research. In 2025, Perla was awarded the King Charles III Coronation Medal for their contributions to the Canadian and international museum sectors.

Presentation summary:

What does it mean to aspire toward a future of collections care grounded not only in best practices, but in relational accountability, cultural resurgence, and Indigenous sovereignty? In this keynote, curator, educator, and former human rights lawyer Armando Perla invites collections professionals to reimagine the role of registrars through the framework of Indigenous Transnational Mesoamerican Museologies. Rooted in Nahua and Maya worldviews—and informed by transnational collaboration across El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, and Canada—this museological practice challenges conventional models of stewardship, particularly those inherited from Western and human rights paradigms. Instead, it offers a land-based, community-led approach that views cultural belongings as living relatives, embedded in memory, reciprocity, and responsibility.

Drawing on projects such as Imborrable: La Tierra de Nuestras Memorias (El Salvador), Beyond the Vanishing Maya: Voices of a Land in Resistance (Guatemala/Canada), and The Museum of the Carnival of Huejotzingo (Mexico), Perla shares practical insights for registrars navigating questions of provenance, repatriation, classification, and care—particularly when those practices intersect with Indigenous communities, diaspora, or contested histories. This keynote aligns with the ARC 2025 theme, *Aspire*, by exploring how registrars can be leaders in transforming collections practices through uncommon collaborations and ethical responsibility. It asks: how might we move from custodianship to co-stewardship? From documentation to dialogue? From safeguarding objects to upholding relationships? Perla's keynote will inspire registrars at all stages of their careers to consider how aspiration—rooted in humility, courage, and kinship—can reshape the future of collections work across borders and generations.

Caroline Lorentz

Wadgayawa nhay dhadjan wari (they made them a long time ago): A case study in cross sector and community collaboration

Caroline Lorentz is Senior Registrar, Exhibitions and Loans at the State Library of NSW and has over 35 years' experience across major institutions in Sydney and London, including the V&A, Powerhouse, AGNSW and Historic Houses Trust of NSW. Caroline is a former ARC Council member and past editor of the ARC journal.

Presentation summary:

Wadgayawa nhay dhadjan wari was a 2023 exhibition at the State Library of NSW, featuring 30 Indigenous objects from five UK collections. Originating as an ARC-funded research project led by Dr. Maria Nugent (ANU), it aimed to reconnect poorly documented Sydney Coastal Region objects with community knowledge. The Library joined the project in 2022, facilitating loans, access to content, and culturally safe engagement spaces. This presentation explores the journey from research project to exhibition, highlighting collaboration with the La Perouse community, UK lenders, and the project team in celebrating continuing Coastal Sydney Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Sabrina Baron, Zara El Mahir, Eleanor Megna, Alison Mercieca, and Dr. Mariko Smith

First Nations-Led Enhancement of the Australian Museum's Aboriginal Archaeological Collection

Sabrina is a museum professional with the Australian Museum and undertaking a Master of Museum and Heritage Studies at the University of Sydney. She has diverse experience, including Visitor Services Officer at Powerhouse Museum, and Curatorial Volunteer at Chau Chak-Wing Museum where she contributed to the Human Remains Research Project.

Zara is a Project Officer working in the Australian Museum's Aboriginal Archaeology collection. She is undertaking a Master of Museum and Heritage Studies at USYD and holds a Bachelor of Archaeology from Macquarie University. She is committed to museum decolonisation and contributed to the Human Remains Research Project at Chau-Chak Wing Museum.

Eleanor is a Sydney-based museum professional at the Australian Museum, documenting the Aboriginal Archaeology collection. She has a dedicated focus in collection registration and research, with experience at the Powerhouse, Chau Chak Wing, and Hurstville Regional Museums. She holds a Master of Art Curating from the University of Sydney.

Alison is an archaeologist and museum professional working with the Australian Museum's Aboriginal Archaeology Collection. She has worked at cultural institutions including the Powerhouse, NFSA, NMA, CMAG and NAA in curatorial, education, registration, rights and permissions, and exhibitions. Additionally, she has documented archaeological collections from Australia, Asia and a highlight - Neanderthal technology in France.

Dr Mariko Smith (she/her; Yuin, Japanese) undertakes an interdisciplinary practice encompassing museology, history, art, and visual sociology. She specialises in Aboriginal community-led initiatives involving cultural resurgence and incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing into museum and artistic practices. Mariko is Head of First Nations Collections & Research at the Australian Museum.

Presentation summary:

The Australian Museum's Cultural Collection Enhancement Project involves the implementation of new strategies in museum registration and documentation. Under First Nations' leadership, our work with the Aboriginal Archaeology Collection is improving accessibility and providing the platform for First Nations communities to engage with their objects and interpret their own cultures. We have navigated and embraced challenges in working with historical data, the colonial legacy of collecting, alongside the complexity and scale of this collection. We aim to balance creating a framework for classifying objects which remains relevant to archaeological collections with prioritising object agency and community knowledge.

Cyndi Koh & Lydia Chan

Behind the Barracks: Organising Singapore's Military Collections

Cyndi Koh is Senior Manager (Collections) at Defence Collective Singapore, leading collections strategy and coordination with the Ministry of Defence. She pioneered artefact storage and RFID systems at the National Gallery Singapore, with earlier roles at the Art Galleries of Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, and volunteering at the Australian Sports Museum.

Lydia Chan is Executive (Collections) at Defence Collective Singapore with a master's in museum studies and curatorial practices. She interned at Nanyang Technological University Museum and Archives and has curated exhibitions with Singapore's National Library Board and Art Outreach Singapore. Her interests include collections care, documentation, and research.

Presentation summary:

This presentation explores how Defence Collective Singapore (DCS), a Military-Related Organisation established by Singapore's Ministry of Defence and staffed by civilian museum professionals, bridges military heritage and museological practice. Overseeing the Military Service Museums, DCS collaborates with military personnel and veterans to implement museological standards in documentation and custodianship – transitioning from Excel to a collections management system. Case studies, including Singapore Infantry Regiment uniform project and artefact store reorganisation, illustrate efforts to enhance artefact care, support sustainability, and address the complexities of managing inherited collections. These initiatives reflect DCS's aspiration to build a shared museological approach to safeguarding Singapore's defence heritage.

Miriam Troon

AI Transcription and Volunteer Collaboration: Enhancing Access to the Australian Performing Arts Collection

Miriam Troon, Collections Manager at Arts Centre Melbourne, has over 20 years of GLAM sector experience. She's worked as Senior Curator at Museums Victoria and the Koorie Heritage Trust, as well as an archivist and collections management consultant, beginning her career as an archaeologist in the UK.

Presentation summary:

The Australian Performing Arts Collection (APAC) at Arts Centre Melbourne, with funding from Creative Victoria, has digitised thousands of vulnerable audio recordings for preservation. However, making these recordings discoverable remained a challenge due to limited human resources. To address this, the team tested AI transcription tools alongside volunteer data correction, starting with student and volunteer projects. This hybrid approach, combining AI's efficiency with human accuracy, aims to balance resource constraints while improving accessibility. The project demonstrates the potential of AI tools as a sustainable solution for enhancing discoverability in museum collections, particularly during challenging economic times.

Belinda Hunt

Shining A Light on Backlogs

Belinda Hunt is the Collections Registrar at the National Film and Sound Archive, leading a team that manage collection storage, preservation, and deselection. Belinda has also held roles in Curatorial, Access and Governance in a 28-year career at the NFSA. In 2024 she undertook a research scholarship that examined the collection management practices of European and UK audiovisual archives.

Presentation summary:

The National Film and Sound Archive has a significant backlog ranging from unlisted acquisitions requiring selection decisions to hazardous material requiring careful examination. Juggling competing priorities makes allocating resources to address this backlog a considerable challenge. This presentation shows how the NFSA's backlog was created and how we are attempting to navigate, prioritise and process fifty years of accumulation! What undiscovered treasures have been found within, and what methods may help other cultural institutions with their backlogs?

Hannah Litherland

From Ship to Shore: Navigating Registration of the New Zealand Navy's Fleet Trophy Collection

Hannah Litherland is the Registrar at the National Museum of the Royal New Zealand Navy. She has a MA in History and a PGDip in Museum Studies. Through her work in museums in both New Zealand and the United Kingdom, Hannah has developed a deep appreciation for the important personal stories held in military collections.

Presentation summary:

This presentation will discuss the complexities and challenges of administering the Navy's Fleet Trophy Collection. These are objects which are owned by the Navy themselves, and governed under naval policy, but cared for and administered by the Registrar of the Navy Museum. Fleet Trophies can be issued to ships and units and therefore go to sea, others are presented or awarded, and some are displayed around Defence Buildings throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. This widespread and diverse collection is regularly on the move, and the care of, access to and documentation of Fleet Trophies is paramount to preserving the Navy's heritage.

Anita Robertson

Ambition verses Reality. Working through a building redevelopment

Anita Robertson is the Collections and Curatorial Manager of a great team at Te Whare Taonga o Waikato Museum and Gallery, Hamilton NZ, moving to the role in 2021 after being the Senior Registrar since 2017. She has previously worked at NZPG, Museums Wellington and Aigantighe Art Gallery.

Presentation summary:

In 2024 Waikato Museum closed for a period of 6 months for a building project which was the culmination of a year long renewal plan. Through all the work the collection and staff remained on site.

This presentation journeys through that period, from the preplanning and the closure. Looking at the reality of remaining on site and working in a construction zone including the challenges of dust, water, contractors and their grubby boots and time constraints alongside the ambitions plans we had while we were closed. Did we get it all done? Would we do it again?

Shannon Hutchinson

Nitrate, so hot right now!

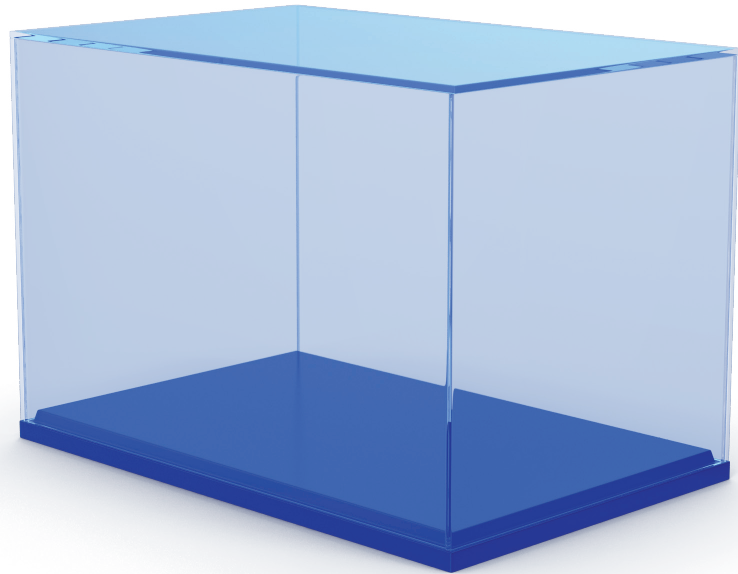
Shannon Hutchinson is Manager, Storage Transformation at the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia. He is currently leading the Nitrate Film Vaults Redevelopment Project and overseeing collection hazardous materials compliance. Shannon has over 15 years' experience in collections management, with a background in loans, exhibitions, acquisitions, and storage projects in Brisbane and Canberra.

Presentation summary:

The National Film and Sound Archive of Australia is undertaking a major project to expand and modernise its Nitrate Film Vaults in Canberra, the country's only facility dedicated to preserving highly flammable cellulose nitrate film. With the original vaults built in the 1970s, significant upgrades are required to meet contemporary safety and preservation standards. This presentation will explore the project's key elements, including research into global best practice, advancements in engineering and sustainability, and the redesign of collection management and compliance processes. It will also address the challenges of managing a shared facility for six federal institutions with varied collection needs.



Friday 20 June 2025



→ 8:00 – 8:50 Refreshments

9:00 – 9:10 Welcome

9:10 – 10:10 **Dr Rose Barrowcliffe** ^{Keynote}

10:10 – 10:35 **Rebecca Fifield**

The New York Public Library

10:35 – 11:15 Morning tea

11:15 – 11:40 **Shelly McGuire & Nicole**

Schwirtlich National Library of Australia

11:40 – 12:05 **Liam Bryan-Brown**

Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art

12:05 – 12:30 **Meg Taylor** University of

Melbourne | Museums and Collections

12:30 – 1:30 Lunch

1:30 – 1:55 **Leanne Tse** M+

1:55 – 2:20 **Paula Nason & Anna**

Evenhouse National Gallery of Victoria & Art
Gallery of New South Wales

2:20 – 2:45 **Alessandra Schultz**

Queensland Museum

2:45 – 3:15 Afternoon tea

3:15 – 3:40 **Joanna Wehrly & Casimar**

Larkin The Dowse Art Museum

3:40 – 4:05 **Emma Muzzatti** Australian

Museum

4:05 – 4:30 **Lucy Clark & Charm Watts**

Powerhouse Museum

4:30 – 4:40 Closing remarks••

- *Supporting Indigenous data
governance with TK Labels and
Notices*

- *Building Better Together:
Planning Collections Spaces
Collaboratively at The New York
Public Library Research Libraries*

- *ICIP in action at the National
Library of Australia*

- *Unpacking Time Based Media
Acquisitions at QAGOMA*

- *Collecting performance: the
acquisition of Angela Goh's 'Body
Loss'*

- *Navigating loans to Hong Kong
and Mainland China: embracing
unique approaches towards loan
agreements, licences, couriering
and shipping*

- *Evolving Roles: Rethinking the
Exhibition Registrar*

- *Navigating the Management of
the Queensland State Maritime
Archaeology Collection: A Case
Study in Legacy & Innovation*

- *Unhinged: solving the puzzle of
our collection store upgrade*

- *Scanning for Solutions:
Considerations for Barcoding
Australia's Oldest Collection*

- *Creating Synergy: Insights from
the Powerhouse Collection
Relocation and Digitisation
Project*

Dr Rose Barrowcliffe

KEYNOTE

Supporting Indigenous data governance with TK Labels and Notices

Dr. Rose Barrowcliffe is a Butchulla postdoctoral research fellow in the Centre of Critical Indigenous Studies at Macquarie University, a member of the Global Centre for Indigenous Futures, the Indigenous Archives Collective, and an executive member of the Maïam nayri Wingara Indigenous Data Sovereignty Collective. Rose was the inaugural First Nations Archives Advisor to the Queensland State Archives. Rose's work and research examines the representation of Indigenous peoples and the enactment of Indigenous rights in collecting institutions. In 2024, Rose became a member of the Local Contexts Council. As a council member and a researcher, Rose works with collecting institutions and communities interested in using the Labels and the Notices to embed Indigenous knowledge attribution, protocols and permissions in records.

Presentation summary:

The imperative for Indigenous people to enact authority over their materials is often at odds with the structures and systems of collecting institutions that hold them. Local Contexts Traditional Knowledge (TK) Labels and Notices were developed to provide a solution that allows Indigenous knowledge authority to be attached to cultural heritage items in collecting institutions and ensure that authority remains with the object wherever it moves. Since their development, the TK Labels and Notices have been applied in an increasingly wide range of fields. In this keynote, Dr. Rose Barrowcliffe, a member of the Local Contexts Council will speak about the Local Contexts journey and how the tools are being used to support Indigenous data governance.

Rebecca Fifield

Building Better Together: Planning Collections Spaces Collaboratively at The New York Public Library Research Libraries

Rebecca Fifield is the Associate Director, Collection Management at the Research Libraries of The New York Public Library. Beginning her career in 1988, she holds an M.A. in Museum Studies from The George Washington University, Washington, D.C., and is a Fellow of the American Institute of Conservation.

Presentation summary:

The Research Libraries of the New York Public Library (NYPL) is building a foundation for collaborative collections spaces planning for a changing world. Large institutions need to focus on global, values-based thinking to equitably incorporate sustainability and preservation concepts across their organizations. This talk will discuss building unified momentum around the planning process by fostering internal partnerships and strategically infusing those conversations with outside expertise. Discussion will highlight conditions NYPL is attempting to address, inquiry structure, and logistical practicalities of planning these types of projects.

Shelly McGuire & Nicole Schwirtlich

ICIP in action at the National Library of Australia

Shelly McGuire has occupational experience founded in information literacy, beginning in State and University Libraries as a researcher, historical custodian and technician. Her career is now focused on GLAM sector Government institutions delivering successful exhibition and loans programs at the National Library of Australia.

Nicole Schwirtlich holds a BA (Honours) from UNSW, focusing on migration histories, and has a background in community engagement through the Kytherian Association in Sydney and Canberra. Now employed at the National Library of Australia, she contributes to both curatorial and loans programs within the Exhibitions team.

Presentation summary:

In 2023, the National Library of Australia introduced a Protocol to recognise and uphold the Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In our capacity as loans coordinators, we worked with the Library's Indigenous Engagement team to introduce an ICIP Clause into our Outward Loan Agreement. Each loan request is approached with the goal of making the collection accessible, while also meeting the principles of the Protocol. Drawing on examples of recent loan requests the Library has received, this presentation explores insights gained since implementing the Protocol into loans management procedures.

Liam Bryan-Brown

Unpacking Time Based Media Acquisitions at QAGOMA

Liam Bryan-Brown is the Associate Registrar, Loans and Acquisitions at the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, where he manages a broad program of shipping for Acquisitions and Collection loans, and has implemented an improved procedure for documenting Digital Assets acquired by QAGOMA.

Presentation summary:

This presentation provides a detailed procedural overview of QAGOMA's current registration practices for documenting digital file components of Time Based Media artworks. It details the hardware and software utilised, and outlines the standard registration procedure observed for capturing file metadata and documenting physical carriers. Furthermore, it describes how this documentation informs organisational workflows for the ingest of files once the artwork is formally acquired, as well as the registration principles for the long term management of original files, future duplicates, and associated physical carriers.

Meg Taylor

Collecting performance: the acquisition of Angela Goh's 'Body Loss'

Meg Taylor works as the Collection Manager, Exhibitions at the University of Melbourne's Museums and Collections department. Meg is interested in time-based media artworks and the documentation of complex installations. Her current focus is a recently acquired site-responsive performance artwork which forms the basis of her presentation.

Presentation summary:

Acquired by the University of Melbourne's Art Collection in 2024; Angela Goh's Body Loss is the first acquisition of a choreographic work by an institutional art collection in Australia. Body Loss is a unique work to document, it is site-responsive, iterative, and only performed in galleries. During the acquisition process, we worked with Goh on the transmission and transfer of bodily knowledge of Body Loss to two performers Molly McKenzie and Gemma Sattler. With human knowledge and transmission playing a key role in the acquisition of Body Loss, the University's methods to document this complex Work have adapted to a collaborative and responsive practice.

Leanne Tse

Navigating loans to Hong Kong and Mainland China: embracing unique approaches towards loan agreements, licences, couriering and shipping

Leanne Tse is a loans and exhibitions registrar at M+. Once a private practice lawyer, she joined M+ in 2017. She has handled hundreds of acquisitions and loans - including works by Picasso, Yayoi Kusama, and Zao Wou-Ki. Leanne holds degrees from the University of Oxford and Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Presentation summary:

Couriering a loan through the world's busiest cargo airport? This practical presentation shares the experience of M+ – Asia's global museum of contemporary visual culture – managing incoming loans to Hong Kong and Mainland China. More contemporary art is touring China. Lenders realise that practices at Asian museums differ - but don't know how critical processes also differ between Hong Kong and Mainland China.

This will be a hands-on discussion. In Hong Kong, we'll discuss couriering via the airport, palletisation, and customs inspections. In Mainland China, we'll discuss institutions, drafting agreements, and fees, as well as import permits and exhibition licenses.

Paula Nason & Anna Evenhouse

Evolving Roles: Rethinking the Exhibition Registrar

Paula Nason is Head of Registration at the National Gallery of Victoria where she manages a team of fifteen registrars. Paula has held roles at Museum Victoria, State Library Victoria and the NGV, contributing to a diverse range of exhibition and collection projects. Anna Evenhouse is Manager, Exhibitions Registration at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. Anna has worked in Australia and the US, leading multi-disciplinary teams to deliver over 30 museum exhibitions to more than 90 venues.

Presentation summary:

Amidst shifting museum priorities, tighter programming and rising stakeholder demands, the role of the Exhibition Registrar is being redefined. In this session we will reveal how registrars are adapting and ask if these changes come at the cost of core responsibilities. Drawing on sector-wide survey results and lively discussion, we'll spotlight structural shifts and chart a path forward to keep the profession vital in an ever-changing museum landscape.

Alessandra Schultz

Navigating the Management of the Queensland State Maritime Archaeology Collection: A Case Study in Legacy & Innovation

Alessandra Schultz is the Assistant Collection Manager, Cultures & Histories, at Queensland Museum Tropics (QMT), Townsville. Alessandra started her registration career in 2022, after working in curation, research, and visitor experience. Alessandra now caretakes Queensland's State Maritime Archaeology Collection, and the Social History and First Nations collections housed at QMT.

Presentation summary:

The HMS Pandora Collection, excavated from Queensland's oldest identifiable shipwreck, is the mainstay of the State's Maritime Archaeology holdings. With its international significance intersecting archaeology, natural history, and First Nations histories, comes the imperative to manage its intricacies. Aspiring for best practice in documentation, preservation, and accessibility, the HMS Pandora Collection & Legacy Archive Management Plan (2024) presents a case study in systematically addressing problematic legacies meanwhile realising its full potential. This presentation explores the Plan's aims, methodology, outcomes, and implementation, including in-house advancements in ethical approaches. It highlights the essential role of registration expertise in museum archaeology practice.

Joanna Wehrly & Casimar Larkin

Unhinged: solving the puzzle of our collection store upgrade

Joanna Wehrly, Collections Manager at The Dowse has worked in GLAM collections for over 20 years. Previously working at Te Papa Tongarewa and Trinity College Library Dublin, the last 16 years have been at The Dowse.

Casimar Larkin, Registrar at The Dowse has worked in the GLAM sector for 15 years, 7 years as a Registrar, and 2.5 years of those at The Dowse.

Presentation summary:

In 2023 The Dowse Art Museum undertook a collection store upgrade that was well overdue, we had outgrown our space and accessing works was difficult. The project team delivered above expectations, realising unique solutions while rehousing artworks, improving seismic protections and giving our collection room to grow. All of this and keeping within a very modest budget and compressed timeline.

Hear from Jo and Cas about the collection project and the associated exhibition Unhinged: Opening the Door to the Dowse Collection and how we did all become unhinged at some point during the project!

Emma Muzzatti

Scanning for Solutions: Considerations for Barcoding Australia's Oldest Collection

As the Cultural Collections Enhancement Senior Project Coordinator, Emma and her team are supporting the documentation, digitisation and barcoding work at the Australian Museum. Before joining the Australian Museum, Emma was the Project Coordinator at the Powerhouse Museum, where she and her team digitised over 380,000 objects, before their relocation to permanent storage at Castle Hill.

Presentation summary:

The Australian Museum's Cultural Collections Enhancement Barcoding Project had to provide solutions to the cultural and historical legacies of the Australian Museum and its sites. Location barcodes had to be low cost, easily made and easily removable. Object barcodes had to be resilient, flexible, and culturally appropriate. Navigating these issues, while working with our First Nations colleagues, Collection Systems team and consulting with other institutions, has allowed us to develop a successful approach to both barcoding systems.

Lucy Clark & Charm Watts

Creating Synergy: Insights from the Powerhouse Collection Relocation and Digitisation Project

Currently Registration Manager at Powerhouse, Sydney, Lucy Clark has worked in collection management roles in cultural institutions in New Zealand, Scotland and Australia. Key projects and research interests focus on museum policy, process review and development, collection documentation and digital initiatives, motivated by a commitment to supporting access to collections.

Charm Watts is an innovative strategic collaborator and manager of teams engaged in complex large-scale projects, relocations, installations, exhibitions and commissions including Powerhouse Collection Relocation and Digitisation Project, AGNSW Sydney Modern project, Museums Victoria Interim Collection Storage Project, The National, Biennale of Sydney, Sydney International Art Series, NGV Melbourne Winter Masterpiece series and Melbourne Now.

Presentation summary:

The Powerhouse Collection Relocation and Digitisation Project was completed in 2025, with over 338,000 diverse collection objects digitised and relocated from the museum's Ultimo site to new storage facilities at Castle Hill. This presentation reflects on the project and key takeaways, with a focus on the internal and external collaborations required to deliver a project of this scale. We'll share how this work has enabled the Powerhouse to develop new ways of working, standards, reporting tools and teams that continue to have a significant impact on the care and management of the collection.

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