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# exploring **museum expertise**

International Conference 20 - 22. 11. 2013, Tromsø University Museum, UiT The Arctic University of Norway



UiT / THE ARCTIC UNIVERSITY OF NORWAY



# exploring **museum** expertise

Research cluster MusVit: Museological Research Network, Norway  
Conveners: Anita Maurstad and Rossella Ragazzi  
Manager, Tromsø University Museum: Inger Kaisa Bækø

## Conference theme

A steadily increasing number of sciences are concerned with the processual and relational character of knowledge. Knowledge is produced. It emerges through the links between researchers, their research tools and what is being investigated as well as a series of environmental elements, in ways that challenge the concept of expertise. The metaphor of an authoritative researcher in a white lab coat has entrenched itself in many disciplines, but has also been replaced by researchers who are more reflexive towards the processes of discovery, actually to such an extent that the researchers themselves can be seen as part of the phenomena under investigation. These are challenges of considerable museological relevance. Museum institutions were first established in the 1700s, in advance of the universities in Norway, and were for a long time the institutions where scientific investigation was the goal and the role of researcher was straightforward and simple. The researchers spoke with authority, regarding both their field of research and often other fields as well. The role of expert gave them this status. But the museums are, and have long been, research institutions where researchers have had both greater and closer contact with the public than was commonly the case in other research institutions.

The goal of the conference, workshop and PhD course, is to investigate expertise. How is the role of expert created and maintained in the processes of knowledge production at the museums? With the increasing demand for knowledge production that is problem focused, interdisciplinary and contextual, the question arises as to whether museum-experts alone must produce knowledge with academic staff, or if and how the environment itself must contribute with both knowledge and experience. What are the boundaries between experts among researchers, and experts among the public? The questions which the conference addresses are professionally challenging for museum researchers and can encourage the advance of research on the role of museum in society.



## Keynote speakers

**Jennifer Barrett** has published on museums, art, culture and the public sphere. Her current research examines the concept of universalism as it relates to museums, cultural practice and human rights. Her monograph, *Museums and the Public Sphere*, was published in 2011 (Wiley-Blackwell) and her co-authored monograph with Jacqueline Millner, *Australian Artists in the Museum*, will be published in 2013 (Ashgate Publishing). Between 2000 and 2011 she was Director of Museum Studies at the University of Sydney and is currently Pro Dean Academic in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

**Robert Evans (confirmed)**, Reader at Cardiff School of Social Sciences. Research Cluster: "SEE"/ Studies on Expertise & Experience. He is authors, in association with Harry Collins, of the seminal "Rethinking Expertise" (University of Chicago press 2007). The research addresses questions of expertise by examining the ways in which knowledge –scientific and lay- is developed, used, combined and contested. Emphasis is put on both, dynamics of specific controversies and the nature of expertise in general.

Key-note speakers will deliver plenary lectures.

**Contact information about registration:** Inger Kaisa Bækø, [inger.kaisa.bako@uit.no](mailto:inger.kaisa.bako@uit.no)

**Contact information about conference programme:** Rossella Ragazzi, [rossella.ragazzi@uit.no](mailto:rossella.ragazzi@uit.no) and Anita Maurstad, [anita.maurstad@uit.no](mailto:anita.maurstad@uit.no)

**Contact information about the PhD course:** Terje Brattli and Arnfinn Stendahl Rokne, NTNU, Trondheim. [terje.brattli@ntnu.no](mailto:terje.brattli@ntnu.no)



## What is MusVit?

**T**he Museum's Knowledge – Museum Knowledge (MusVit), is a museology research network for the Norwegian university museums.

In order for the Norwegian university museums to utilize and develop their role as unique, independent and powerful institutions of knowledge and dissemination, it is essential that the museums develop a deeper understanding of their own shifting role as scholarly institutions, the mechanisms that channel the development of the scientific collections, and the communicative interaction between the public and research communities.

MusVit is a national initiative with the objective of creating arenas and networks for gathering current museological research competence at all of the university museums and other relevant environments, particularly the university environments with responsibility for museology instruction. The project is a collaboration between Tromsø University Museum and the Museum of Natural History and Archaeology, NTNU and is supported by the Research Council of Norway. The network has received grants for two periods, first from 2010-2012, and followed by the period 2012-2014. In addition to Tromsø University Museum and the Museum of Natural History and Archaeology, the University Museum of Bergen (University of Bergen), Museum of Archaeology (University of Stavanger), and Museum of Cultural History (University of Oslo) are also members of the network.



**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November Location: Tromsø Museum, Auditorium**

9.15-10.00 - Registration (coffee and snacks available, organizers and conveners welcome).

10.00-10.15 - Opening Address: Marit Hauan, Director Tromsø University Museum

10.15-11.15 Keynote: Jennifer Barrett: Museum publics and relational space.

11.15-12.00 Marzia Varutti: Indigenous museum expertise: reflections on the role of indigenous curators in Taiwan. Discussant: Jennifer Barrett

12.00-13.00 Lunch in the Museum café

13.00-13.45 Arja Jomppanen: The strategies and practices of Sámi Museums.  
Discussant: Jennifer Barrett

13.45-14.30 Grete Swensen: Local museums and user-participation. Exemplified by a study of two exhibitions in the South Sámi region. Discussant: Hans-Jakob Ågotnes

14.30-15.00 Coffee

15.00-15.45 Terje Brattli and Morten Steffensen: Expertise and the Formation of the Museum Collections. Discussant: Brita Brenna

19.30-22.30: Dinner downtown

**Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November Location: Breivika, Main University Campus.  
"Farmasitablen" Auditorium**

09.00-10.00 Keynote: Robert Evans: Expertise as Social Fluency: Socialization, Tacit Knowledge and the Nature of Expertise.

10.00-10.45 Line Breian: Understanding Expertise in the Socially Purposeful Museum.  
Discussant: Robert Evans

10.45-11.15 coffee

11.15 -12.00 Peter Forràs: Techniques of the (expert) observer – and the construction of museum objects. Discussant: Brita Brenna

12.00-12.45 Line Vestergaard Knudsen: Expertise and user-generated-content in the museum. Discussant: Robert Evans

12.45-14.15 Lunch at Árdna, Saami Arts Building, University of Tromsø

14.15-15.00 Anne Sophie Hjemdahl: "Enacting dress expertise at the Museum of decorative arts and design in the 1930s". Discussant: Hans-Jakob Ågotnes

15.00-15.45 Brita Brenna: Museum Furniture and Expertise. Discussant: Jennifer Barrett

18.00-23.00 : Concert (classic, jazz and folk music) at Tromsø Museum at 19.00.

Only for those who have registered and chosen this option: Auroras Borealis Safari, departure 18.00 from hotel.

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November Location: Polstjerna (morning), Tromsø University Museum (lunch and afternoon)**

10.00-11.30 Mariann Mathisen and Lena Aarekol: How do boats matter? Exploring Museum and Expertise at MS Polstjerna. Discussants: Robert Evans

11.45-12.45 Lunch at Tromsø University Museum

12.45-13.30 Marit Hauan, Chair Conference summing up: What are the new perspectives, methodologies and epistemologies stemming from the exchanges that have taken place at the conference?

**Bonus, bonus:**

13.30-13.50 Jennifer Barrett: Australian Artists in the Contemporary Museum

13.50-14.10 Robert Evans: Imitation Game Project

14.10-14.30 Closure (coffee, farewell)

## Participants and affiliations:

### Keynotes and Discussants:

**Jennifer Barrett**, Associate Professor, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Sydney, Australia.

**Robert Evans**, Reader, Cardiff School of Social Sciences, U.K.

**Brita Brenna**, Professor, Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages, University of Oslo.

**Hans-Jakob Ågotnes**, Associate Professor, Department of Archaeology, History, Cultural Studies and Religion, University of Bergen

**Marit Hauan**, Associate Professor, Director Tromsø University Museum

## Speakers:

**Lena Aarekol**, Associate professor, Department of Cultural Science, Tromsø University Museum.

**Terje Brattli**, Post Doc Fellow in Archeology, NTNU University Museum of Natural History and Archaeology, Trondheim

**Line Breian**, PhD Fellow in Philosophy and Cultural Sciences, Tromsø University Museum.

**Brita Brenna**, Prof. of Museology, IKOS, University of Oslo.

**Peter Forrås**, PhD Fellow, University of Bergen.

**Anne Sophie Hjemdahl**, IKOS research fellow, University of Oslo.

**Arja Jomppanen, Curator**, Sámi Museum Siida / PhD Student, University of Jyväskylä.

**Mariann Mathisen**, PhD Fellow in Cultural History, Tromsø University Museum.

**Morten Steffensen**, Director, Nordland Museum.

**Grete Swensen**, Senior Researcher in Ethnology, Norwegian Institute for Cultural Heritage Research, NIKU.

**Marzia Varutti**, Post Doc in Museum Studies, IKOS, University of Oslo, Honorary Fellow School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester.

**Line Vestergaard Knudsen**, PhD fellow, Department of Communication, Business and Information Technologies, Roskilde University /DREAM.

### Conference Team:

**Conveners:** Anita Maurstad and Rossella Ragazzi, Department of Cultural Science, Tromsø University Museum

**Manager:** Inger Kaisa Bækø, Tromsø University Museum

**Graphic Designer:** Ernst Høgtun, Tromsø University Museum,

**Technicians:** Nina Kronstad Tromsø University Museum, Rune Yttervik, The Arctic University of Norway

**PhD course Organisers:** Arnfinn Stendahl Rokne and Terje Brattli, NTNU Trondheim

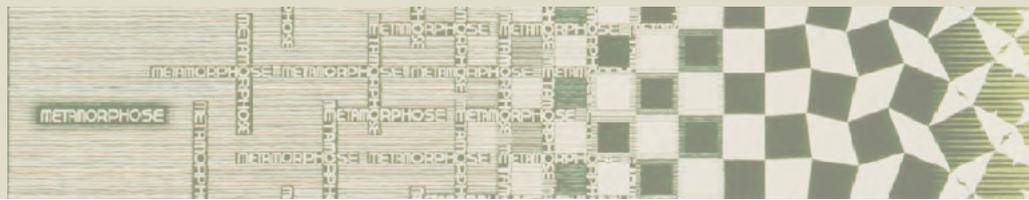
## Network objectives and organization

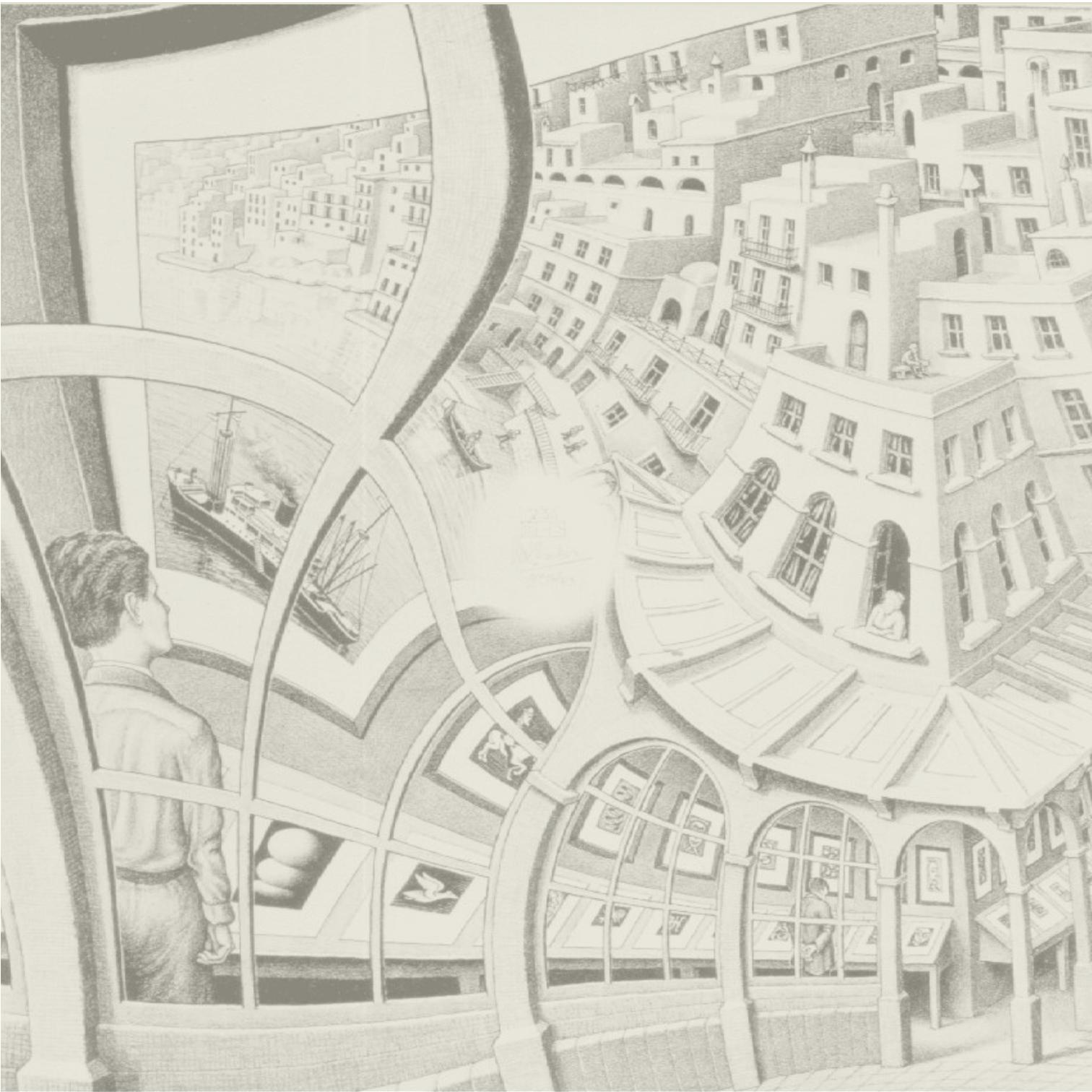
The purpose of the network is to explore and develop the museum discipline, both theoretically and in practical terms. The network meetings are organized as workshops with different themes, and the university museums take turns hosting the workshops. Themes that have been treated to date include research communication, dissemination of the scientific collections, museum expertise, materiality and materialization, and dialog-based dissemination. The workshops function as inter institutional arenas for generating research networks where reflection and academic development are the short-term goals.

More long-term goals for the network are to generate doctoral courses and research projects in the form of applications to the Research Council of Norway that include doctoral stipends, post-doctoral appointments and other research projects. Publishing in the field of museology is also a long range goal. Results of the network's first phase (2010-2012) include publication of the volume "Museologi på norsk: universitetsmuseenes gjøren", edited by Anita Maurstad and Marit Anne Hauan and published by Akademika Forlag in autumn 2012.

Participants in the network as of spring 2012 are: Anita Maurstad (research project leader), Marit Anne Hauan, Rossella Ragazzi, Mariann Mathisen, Hanne Hammer Stien (Tromsø University Museum), Axel Christophersen, Morten Steffensen, Guro Jørgensen, Lars Stenvik, Torkild Bakken, Arnfinn Stendahl Rokne, Terje Brattli (Museum of Natural History and Archaeology, NTNU), Frode Storås, Kari K. Kristoffersen, Eli Kristine Hausken, Terje Lislevand (University Museum of Bergen, University of Bergen), Grete Lillehammer, Marianne Nitter, Kristine Orestad Sørgaard, Anne Kari Skår (Museum of Archaeology University of Stavanger), Ingvild Solberg Andreassen, Martin Hager-Saltnes, Petter Bjerregård (Museum of Cultural History, University of Oslo).

Academic resource scholars associated with the network: Brita Brenna (University of Oslo), Hans Dam Christensen (Royal School of Library and Information Science, Copenhagen) and Hans-Jakob Ågotnes (University of Bergen).







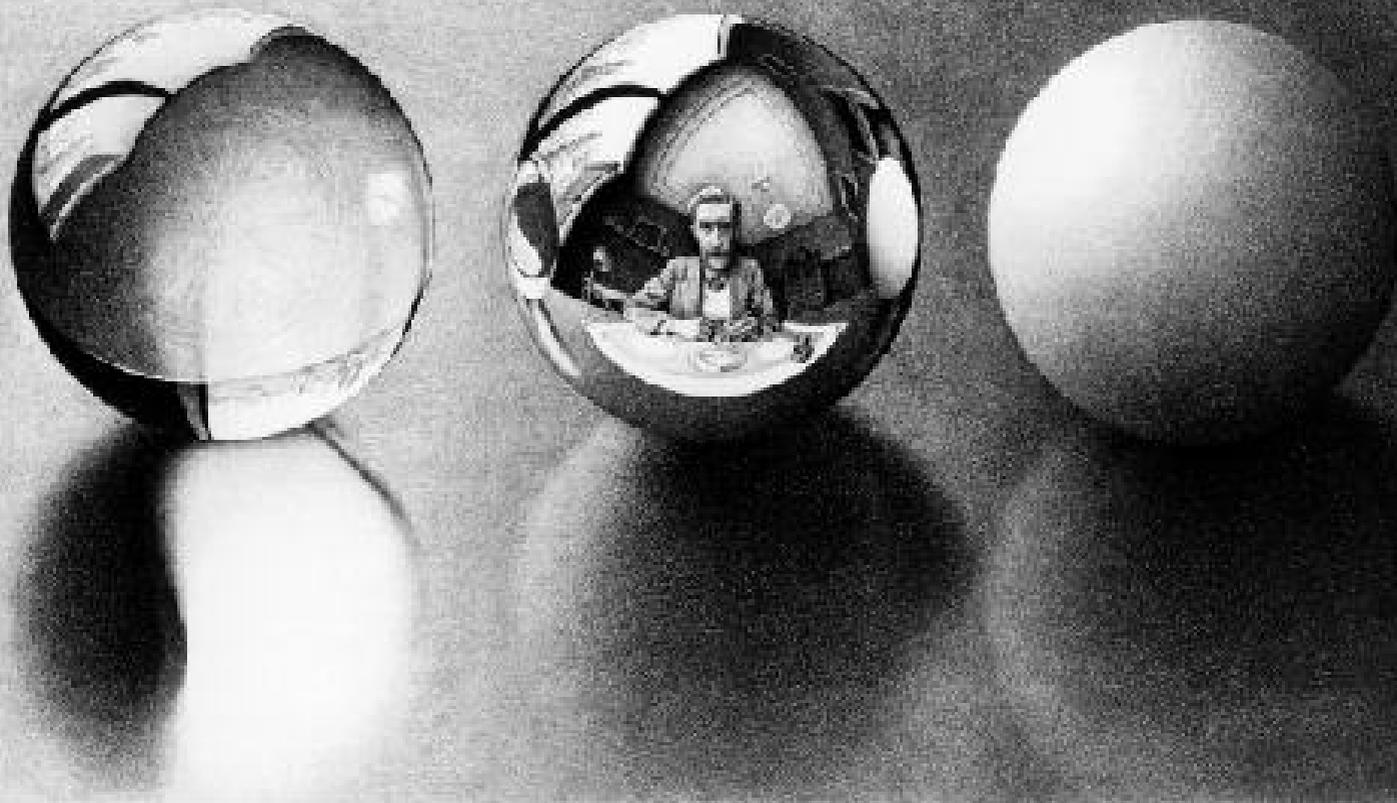
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