

Report on the Results of the 2021 Kyushu Sangyo University International Symposium

■ **Theme:** “Building Better Relationships between Museums and Healthcare/Welfare Services”

■ **Objectives of Event:**

With the COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) pandemic continuing to spread, according to results of two studies issued by UNESCO and the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in May of last year, of the roughly 95,000 museums worldwide, nearly 13% of these institutions may never reopen. Furthermore, according to a FY2018 survey on “Society and Education” conducted by Japan’s Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), during the year covered on the average Japanese only used museums 1.1 times.

What does the future hold for the more than 5,700 museums throughout Japan?

And what kind of roles should museums play in their local communities?

During the past two years our international symposium has considered the themes “The Roles of Museums in Their Local Communities” and “Building Better Relationships Between Museums and Healthcare/Welfare Institutions.”

This year’s symposium will consider the following themes: “Museum Activities During the COVID-19 Pandemic” and “Museums and the Health and Wellbeing of the Elderly.”

In Japan, with “baby boomers” born between 1947 and 1949 becoming “latter stage elderly” over 75 years of age by 2025, we urgently need to build a comprehensive care system at the local level that can provide integrated support regarding housing, medical care, home care, preventive care and daily life, so that even if older citizens need home care they can continue to live as they have been accustomed to until the end of their lives.

At the International Symposium we will bring together individuals with a connection to museums in Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States, so that they and other participants may consider how museums can collaborate with welfare/medical care institutions, and other related groups to solve various social problems in the periods “with corona” and “after corona.”

■ **Time**

Day 1: Feb. 13, 2021 (Sat.) 20:00–22:30* (live online)

Day 2: Feb. 20, 2021 (Sat.) 20:00–22:30* (live online)

*UK time (GMT): 11:00–13:30 both days / US time (EST): 6:00–8:30 both days

■ **Videoconference coordination venue**

Computing and Networking Center, Kyushu Sangyo University

3rd Floor, Central Building, 3-1 Matsukadai 2-chome, Higashi-ku, Fukuoka

■ **Conference format**

(1) Live videoconferencing via Zoom, with participants in Japan, UK and US

(2) Remote simultaneous interpretation (RSI) provided by Simul International, Inc. using the RSI platform “interprefy”

■ **Number of attendees:** 70 (first 70 to sign up online)

■ Day 1 program

Topic: Faced with COVID-19, what measures have museums taken to deal with the pandemic in order to continue to operate? (reports on current conditions)

Moderator: Kimiko Yoshida, Associate Professor, Museum of Kyushu Sangyo University

20:00 Opening remarks

20:05 Report 1: New Initiatives at Fukuoka Art Museum amidst COVID-19

Kayoko Onimoto, Fukuoka Art Museum

20:20 Report 2: Anti-infection Measures and Museum Activities at Kitakyushu Museum of Natural History & Human History amidst COVID-19

Akihiro Misaki, Kitakyushu Museum of Natural History & Human History

20:35 Report 3: Anti-coronavirus (COVID-19) Measures at Aquariums

Masatsugu Tsukada, Marine World Uminonakamichi

20:35 Report 4: Activities at Dulwich Picture Gallery in the UK amidst COVID-19

Jane Findlay, Dulwich Picture Gallery

21:05 Report 5: Activities at Arts & Minds in the US amidst COVID-19

Carolyn Halpin-Healy, Arts & Minds

21:20 Recess

21:40 Q&A session / Moderator: Izumi Ogata, Professor, Faculty of Collaborative Regional Development, Kyushu Sangyo University

22:30 Closing

■ Day 1 questionnaire responses

Q1 Please tell us your thoughts (e.g., insights, discoveries, and keywords that left an impression) on items (1) – (4) below.

(1) Report on current conditions by Kayoko Onimoto, Fukuoka Art Museum, Japan

- I was greatly impressed that the museum is trying out new programs such as back-office introductions as part of its Go Remote campaign, despite the need to cut back various activities. Hearing that their online activities have brought art to people who had not been able to visit the museum in person before the pandemic, I felt that the museum is studying daily to improve their online education programs. I hope they will continue such activities and be able to realize such programs as online gallery talks for children of all ages.
- With regard to the possibilities of utilizing online programs, hearing that online systems enable participation by people with disabilities and people living in inaccessible places, I realized anew that COVID-19 has taught us that there are things that are possible only by going online. My participation in this symposium from my home in Kumamoto is a case in point. This has given me a good opportunity to take a new look at the online option.

(2) Report on current conditions by Akihiro Misaki, Kitakyushu Museum of Natural History & Human

History, Japan

- I was greatly impressed with the fact that the Kitakyushu Museum of Natural History & Human History (KM) introduced anti-COVID-19 measures after first establishing specific standards and criteria. I could see that they are gradually easing restrictions based on the advice of physicians, and I received the impression that they are doing their best to expand their activities as much as possible. The report gave me an opportunity to think about how museums should function in the “with corona” era.
- When designing exhibition layouts, the museum includes steps to ensure that the social distancing requirement of two meters is built into the layout plan. I think that this kind of careful planning is what allows museum visitors to have a sense of security.

(3) Report on current conditions by Masatsugu Tsukada, Marine World Uminonakamichi, Japan

- In addition to talking about such measures as placing thermography devices at entrances and reducing the number of seating, there were explanations about some of the measures being taken by other aquariums, which were very helpful.
- I was impressed by the fact that strict anti-infection measures were introduced for both staff and visitors, as well as by the attractive COVID-19 signage with designs unique to an aquarium. On the other hand, I was saddened to hear that they had to stop taking volunteers and interns and had to close their lecture room, although it couldn't be helped due to the pandemic. I felt that it would be a good thing if the aquarium's activities, including what they are doing in response to COVID-19, could be communicated to as many people as possible.
- When I heard about individual museums' use of their mascot characters to promote reduction of the Three Cs (closed spaces, crowded places, close-contact settings), I thought I want to do the same as well. I would like to adopt this idea at our next school festival, when I'll be in charge of holding events in our biology room.

(4) Report on current conditions by Jane Findlay, Dulwich Picture Gallery, UK

- The presentation gave a strong picture of the seriousness of the situation amidst the pandemic. The resumption of volunteer work was emphasized, and I was impressed by the search for ways that museums and art can contribute to society. There was also mention of the importance of art to people's well-being and happiness, and it was interesting to hear about initiatives in this area because Japan is lagging behind in such programs.
- I was impressed with the numerous initiatives for continuing and improving museum activities, such as online art appreciation and the use of SNS. There was an example of people using Instagram to convey and share information. From this, I felt that museums have many ways to communicate. It was interesting and very impressive that they are continuously searching for new ideas, undaunted by the difficult times.
- When I listened to the presentation in the light of UK's situation and the fact that museum operation was expected to become increasingly precarious, I felt a sense of urgency, a sense that this could

happen to any of us. I also thought that it was a great idea to create and publish rainbow designs, in terms of the museum providing services to or showing appreciation to healthcare workers.

- I learned that museums in the UK play a larger role in society than Japanese museums. Hearing the word “community” used many times in the report and learning that museums can play a hub-like role in local communities, I felt that it would be wonderful if the same thing could happen in Japan, where the population is aging steadily.

(5) Report on current conditions by Carolyn Halpin-Healy, Arts & Minds, US

- The presentation touched on how education has been affected in the US while the whole world has been hit hard by the pandemic, and this left an impression on me. The volunteer activity I am involved in is starting to feel a need to steer in a new direction, because previous ways of doing things have become ineffective. The talk made me realize that we need to be flexible and comprehensive when going in a new direction. I also recognized anew the importance of communication, and I want to do whatever I can both online and offline.
- Words that made an especially strong impression on me were, think big and start small and inspiration can come from ordinary things.
- Mention was made many times that museums in the US serve as a hub for local communities, making me realize that the art community exists not only as a place of learning but also as a place of healing.
- What was impressive for me was the introduction of local museums. I could see that each museum recognizes their role as a community leader. I felt that the pandemic has spurred local museums to take a new look at what their communities want. The speaker expressed her conviction that art has the power to change lives. I think that there is now greater need than ever before to broadly convey the *raison d’être* of museums.
- Hearing the presentation, which described recent conditions in the US including the COVID-19 situation in great detail, I was encouraged by the fact that museums are collaborating and supporting each other rather than going it alone.

(6) Symposium Q&A

- I felt that this was a very valuable opportunity to be able to share information on new activities such as online programs and anti-infection measures that museums in Japan and abroad are pursuing. By taking into consideration measures taken at other museums when formulating our own future policies, it should be possible to continue to carry out our maximum possible activities while ensuring strict adherence to anti-infection measures. Today many museums and art galleries cannot readily welcome visitors face to face. But I think it is desirable to attach importance to maintaining activities that require physical encounters, even if on a limited basis. I feel that art galleries and museums should enhance visitor experience in this area while simultaneously offering online activities. The symposium has shown that art galleries and museums have the mission and role in local communities to enable people-to-people connection.
- Hearing about what they are doing at the museums and learning that the improvement of an online

environment has led to greater engagement both inside and outside the museum and a remarkable increase in SNS-based interaction, I felt that, for better or worse, the divide between those who are familiar with online activities and those who are not will widen. In addition, I thought that gender and minority issues have become more apparent due to increasing worries about the pandemic, resulting in more situations where social justice and unity must be ensured.

■ Day 2 program

Topic: “With Corona, after Corona” Programs for the Elderly Undertaken and Problems Encountered

Moderator: Kimiko Yoshida, Associate Professor, Museum of Kyushu Sangyo University

20:00 Opening remarks

20:05 Report 1: Do Museum Visits Produce Relaxing Effects? -- Development of methods for measurement of psychophysiological effects
Izumi Ogata, Kyushu Sangyo University

20:30 Report 2: Engaging older audiences during a global pandemic at Dulwich Picture Gallery
Jane Findlay, Dulwich Picture Gallery

20:55 Report 3: With Corona, after Corona: Programs for the Elderly Undertaken and Problems Encountered
Carolyn Halpin-Healy, Arts & Minds

21:20 Recess

21:40 Q&A session / Moderator: Izumi Ogata, Professor, Faculty of Collaborative Regional Development, Kyushu Sangyo University

22:30 Closing

■ Day 2 questionnaire responses

Q1 Please tell us your thoughts (e.g., insights, discoveries, and keywords that left an impression) on items (1)–(4) below.

(1) Report on current conditions by Izumi Ogata, Kyushu Sangyo University, Japan

- I was able to learn the importance of finding common ground and common language when addressing the issues of whether art and cultural activities offered by museums can help prevent frailty among seniors and how collaborations between different organizations should be conducted—questions relating to the recommendation, given in the report “1st Basic Plan on the Promotion of Culture and the Arts” issued by Japan’s Council for Cultural Affairs, that museums collaborate with social service and healthcare organizations.

It was very interesting to hear about evidence that exposure to culture and the arts can yield positive health effects and preceding studies abroad on this topic, as well as the results of a study that used psychological and physiological measurement methods to assess the effects of “museum bathing” on people, inspired by research on “forest bathing”-based nature therapy. It confirmed my

understanding that obtaining evidence is very important. I have seen with my own eyes how the pandemic has caused seniors to lose muscle strength and become less motivated, and I am strongly aware of the seriousness of the problem. I hope that Professor Ogata's research will one day help bring about initiatives in Japan that "prescribe" museum visits for better health. I myself, as a social service worker, would like to explore the diverse possibilities of applying it in the field. To do this, I hope to pursue activities, no matter how small, to promote people's interest in museums.

- I was glad to know that studies to collect evidence were being made amidst the pandemic. I think it is very difficult to make before and after comparisons in the case of people with dementia, who can be affected mentally by even the smallest changes in the environment, although it depends on the state of that person. But I thought the effects can be seen clearly in measurements taken for ordinary people like in the case reported here. It made me think more strongly how wonderful it would be if I could participate in collaborative projects with diverse organizations in line with the keywords "museum bathing" and "museum health station."
- It was very interesting to learn that the presenter has conducted experiments at diverse museums to gather evidence indicating that art and cultural activities are good for the health. If definite proof can be obtained, perhaps it will be a first-ever achievement in Japan. I also thought *hakubutsukan-yoku* (museum bathing) is a lovely expression.
- I could feel the presenter's determination to promote—with the participation of people involved in senior healthcare as well as families and caregivers—museum bathing as a way of improving the health and welfare of the elderly. I thought that museums in local communities will need to determine what they can do in the face of isolation caused by the pandemic as well as isolation caused by the lack of digital access.

(2) Report on current conditions by Jane Findlay, Dulwich Picture Gallery, UK

- I learned that the situation for the elderly in London is even more severe than in Japan. It was very interesting to hear about programs for the elderly that take the needs of the entire community into account and that stimulate the senses. Mention was made of the importance of not just the museum proper but green spaces outside it. This comment spurred me to think in conjunction with Professor Ogata's presentation. I recalled that there were workshops in Kansai two years ago that incorporated art gallery and museum gardens (green spaces) as well.
In view of COVID-19, online activities were one of the things I was most interested in hearing about. However, I thought the initiative that placed importance on connecting with others—where materials for home use were provided to those who had difficulty participating so that they could share creative works again—was particularly wonderful. I will definitely refer to the examples of online initiatives. Whether online or not, I felt that a flexible approach is essential. Also, I really liked the idea that art brings happiness. Even in the pandemic, I hope to maintain a positive outlook just like Jane-san and explore the need for developing new types of resources.
- I felt that there was a get-up-and-go attitude in the way the museum dealt with a situation where existing senior programs could not be carried out as before, using resources available in the

community, taking advantage of green space outside instead of just the museum proper and also reaching out to people in the community to carry out programs for interaction. I also understood that they are now more concerned about health inequalities that have become noticeable among the BAME and minority population.

- It is wonderful that—despite the harsh conditions under lockdown and true to their desire to be connected with all kinds of people through art—they are making use of Zoom, ordinary mail, and the telephone to maintain connection with the creative society they have built. I felt that the conditions that were revealed by the pursuit of senior (age-friendly) programs under collaboration with government agencies and various facilities are the same as in Japan. I was surprised to learn that there are health inequalities among the minority, particularly those due to racism.

I was interested in the programs focused on green space (very UK) that stimulate the senses, as well as the health center due to open in May. I was especially interested in Art by Post for people without internet access and the book mate system. I want to know more about how they are operated. For example, is the grant money sufficient for covering the costs? I think there was mention of receiving money for mailings, but is that received from the general public? How much? I look forward to seeing new possibilities arise as the museum continues to pursue new online initiatives. The presenter's powerful statement that art is important for happiness and that artists are working for the community in the respect that they are the key to enabling this left a strong impression on me.

(3) Report on current conditions by Carolyn Halpin-Healy, Arts & Minds, US

- The first thing that moved me was the strong statement that “love” at the center of Tom Kitwood's five-petaled flower of psychological needs, a model for person-centered care of people with dementia, is art. For myself and others who are involved in the care of people with dementia, person-centered care is a basic principle. I believe this principle applies as well to the support of all other people requiring assistance. I was very happy to hear that Arts & Minds is carrying out programs for the elderly based on this principle. I think that places where people with dementia can live comfortably are places where all people can live comfortably. From this perspective, there are many aspects in the initiatives being pursued by Caroline-san and her colleagues that I can relate to.

I wanted to hear in more detail how Arts & Minds was able to move so quickly amidst the pandemic to change their focus to individual homes and switch to an online format and how they could operate as many as 200 programs. Also, the fact that professional involvement is necessary, a point emphasized by Caroline-san. That the people involved must be highly skilled if we want to link museum resources with dementia and seek to ensure high quality of life. I could agree with that, as I have long thought that training of facilitators and trainers is a must and that it's important to learn. I found the report to be of considerable interest to me.

- Hearing the activities of Arts & Minds, I was astonished that they were able to do so much on an online basis amidst the highly restrictive COVID-19 environment. It is evidence of collaboration among numerous organizations. In Japan, organizations are aware of the need for collaboration but have a hard time actually realizing it. I think it is wonderful that by creating the online programs

they have enabled many people to have easier access to museums in all kinds of situations. In relation to the digital divide, it was very helpful to know about the use of telephone and mail to maintain contact. I recognized anew that you cannot make light of the fact that there are people who simply prefer not to go online.

It gave me a very warm feeling despite being online to hear that Arts & Minds also places importance on engaging families and caregivers as not only people with dementia but their families and caregivers are also worn out. It was pointed out that programs for the elderly are still much too few even in the US. I hope that initiatives focused on people in diverse situations can be provided through museums. Training of participants from diverse fields is essential when carrying out online programs, and I was impressed by the fact that the principle of person-centered care was being applied to training programs and museum programs as well. It made me reflect on myself to realize anew that I still have areas where I act only in line with my own values, and I thought that person-centered care is the very thing that leads to acceptance of diversity.

- I thought gender and minority problems came to the surface due to a growing sense of insecurity caused by COVID-19, increasing instances requiring greater efforts toward social justice and solidarity.
- The thing that stood out for me in Caroline-san's report was museums' collaboration with other organizations. I felt that museums, serving as a hub, enables people-to-people connections and creates diverse forms of interaction. I thought again that such a role is something museums, especially those serving local communities, should undertake. I was also impressed by the fact that activities are being carried out with the specific objective of improving the conditions of people with dementia. I learned that there is a growing need for technical training of program operators for offering online programs. I imagine it must be very difficult, as there are no clearly established methods for this as yet and everyone must be groping for answers. Collaboration and information sharing among museums are more necessary than ever before, I think. At the same time, I felt new possibilities for museums in that they can seek to bring more fun and joy to people while helping to solve social issues. I think museums will more and more become an essential part of people's lives. To enable museums to help solve issues and bring joy to people's lives, I think it is critical to secure human resources such as experts as well as funding from the government and other entities. I hope museums obtain the necessary support.

(4) Symposium Q&A

- I have been making use of a museum in my work at a healthcare institution and have felt that this approach will not be adopted widely unless we have more people with a common language and the same objective. Although it may be still difficult for me to make proposals on this, hearing the presentations today I felt that it would be wonderful if this could be used to help the elderly to lead a better, more culturally rich and comfortable life.
- Hearing about what they are doing at the museums and learning that the improvement of an online environment has led to greater engagement both inside and outside the museum and a remarkable

increase in SNS interaction, I felt that, for better or worse, the gap between those who are used to the online format and those who are not will widen. However, I felt that it is important for museums, in view of their role as a center for education and care giving, to tackle the issue in a comprehensive manner to encompass all people, including the elderly, the socially disadvantaged, and the minority. Although it may be difficult to quantify specific short-term measures and target figures, I believe this may be possible with the cooperation of people outside the museum world.

- The need for the elderly to stay at home during the pandemic must be hard not only on the seniors themselves but also for people around them. I think providing art programs online and by mail can bring about a positive mindset on the part of the recipient, allowing them to feel valued and giving them a reason for living. As with Caroline-san's situation, there are many people who have a difficult time setting up an online environment despite all the talk about the need to go online amidst the pandemic. Against this backdrop, it is a wonderful idea to send art supply kits to such people by mail. I think receiving such mail can lead to greater self-esteem on the part of seniors who are forced to stay at home. It is easy to forget, in going about our work every day, that all our efforts are for the purpose of bringing joy to museum users, of making them smile and feel relaxed.

The dream and challenge story by Jane-san made me remember that that was my original desire for taking up this work. I was honestly glad to find someone from a museum who expresses such ideas. People think that you must be expert in researching scholarly literature to be a curator. While such knowledge and expertise are necessary, it would be nice if museum staff who can pay attention to museum visitors and who can care for people as well as documents, as in the UK and US, be recognized as experts in their own right.

- Caroline-san's statement that online communication was easier than expected and communication via the computer screen is possible left a strong impression on me. Naturally, there are some aspects that are not the same as face-to-face communication. But I thought that once online engagement takes hold there may come a time when a style of communication that takes full advantage of the unique aspects of the online format will be created. I felt that the important thing is how we will create time for communicating with people. Another thing that left an impression on me was the talk about the importance of reviewing things afterwards. COVID-19 is creating many novel situations, and this offers many opportunities to realize things we hadn't before. I felt the importance of not overlooking anything and carefully reviewing everything one at a time.

I also learned the importance of providing care to those caregivers who accompany program participants. From this, I felt that museums need to provide the most appropriate services to all kinds of people. Another memorable statement was that the museum experience is less an education than a chance to get to know oneself. From this, I felt anew that a museum offers a third alternative to the home and school/workplace, one where people can go to make their lives more pleasurable and happier. For museums to be able to offer this, I think there is need for more research on the effects of the diverse experiences available at museums. The symposium has allowed me to gain new insights and learn many things concerning the functions and services of museums as in the previous symposium. I hope to be able to apply what I learned today to future activities. Thank you for these

two days of opportunities to hear valuable stories.

1: Testing of videoconferencing system (Jan. 29)



2: Presentation by Kayoko Onimoto (Feb. 13)



3: Presentation by Akihiro Misaki (Feb. 13)



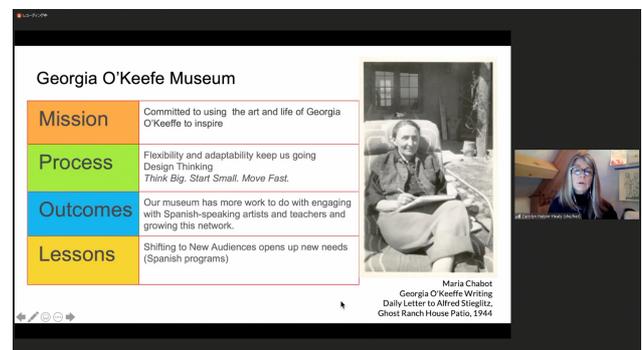
4: Presentation by Masatsugu Tsukada (Feb. 13)



5: Presentation by Jane Findlay (Feb. 13)



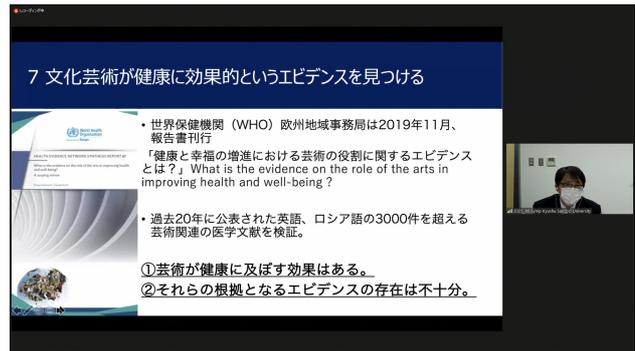
6: Presentation by Carolyn Halpin-Healy (Feb. 13)



7: The international symposium in progress (Feb. 13)



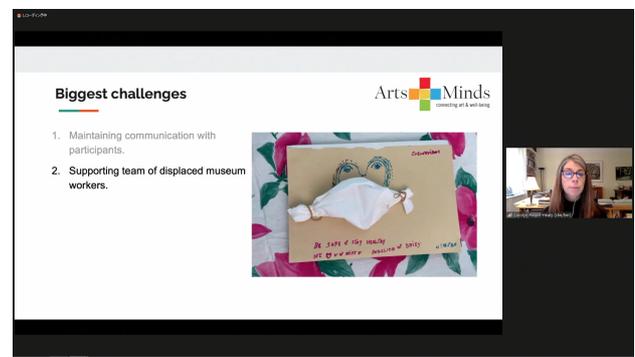
8: Presentation by Izumi Ogata (Feb. 20)



9: Presentation by Jane Findlay (Feb. 20)



10: Presentation by Carolyn Halpin-Healy (Feb. 20)



11: The international symposium in progress (Feb. 20)

