

# sainsbury institute for art

## Museums, Coastlines and the Sea

20 - 22 May 2015

Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts



# Conference Programme



**UEA** University of  
East Anglia

# MUSEUMS, COASTLINES AND THE SEA

20-22 May 2015

Sainsbury Institute for Art, University of East Anglia

Supported by

Gatsby Foundation, University of East Anglia

Conveners

Professor John Mack, Chairman of the Sainsbury Institute for Art

[John.Mack@uea.ac.uk](mailto:John.Mack@uea.ac.uk)

Dr Veronica Sekules, Deputy Director: Education and Research, Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts

[V.Sekules@uea.ac.uk](mailto:V.Sekules@uea.ac.uk)

Rosalie Hans, PhD Candidate, Sainsbury Research Unit

[R.Hans@uea.ac.uk](mailto:R.Hans@uea.ac.uk)

Front cover: Toggling harpoon head, Alaska, 19<sup>th</sup> century (photo: Andy Crouch)

## Introduction

This conference will explore the role and potential of the museum in relation to human engagements with the sea and major water courses such as lakes, lagoons and large river systems. It primarily intends to address questions in the cultural rather than the scientific or ecological spheres, though it will include responses to environmental factors and climate change.

The themes to be addressed are coastal communities, fragile coastlines, water (its meanings and histories) and representing coastlines and the sea. Each plenary and workshop session will develop questions and discussions in the area of each theme. The background to these questions is thinking about the ways in which museums reflect or provide evidence for such discussions, and how they engage their audiences with their implications. Finally, in view of issues of environmental change, what role can museums play in addressing the contemporary problems of a perceived fragility of the coastline itself?

The conference is the third in a series looking at museum leadership in various fields and is organised by the Sainsbury Institute for Art at the University of East Anglia in association with the Gatsby Trust.

# Programme

WEDNESDAY EVENING 20 MAY

16.30-18.00 SCVA School Area

Registration with tea/coffee

18.00-19.00 SCVA School Area

Drinks Reception

19.00-20.00 SCVA Restaurant

Conference Address: Dame Fiona Reynolds, Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge  
(and former DG of the National Trust)

Responses: Mike Cowling, Professor and Chief Scientist of the Crown Estate

Steve Miller, Head of Norfolk Museums Services

Patrick Barkham, natural history writer on The Guardian and author of 'Coastlines:  
The Story of Our Shore'

Discussant: Tim O'Riordan, Emeritus Professor of Environmental Sciences, University of  
East Anglia

20.00-22.00 Conference Dinner

-----

THURSDAY 21 MAY

08.30-09.00 SCVA School Area

Registration continues

09.00-09.30 Elizabeth Fry lecture theatre

Welcome and Introduction by Professor John Mack

09.30-12.00

Coastal Communities

Chair: Veronica Sekules, Deputy Director: Education and Research, Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts

This session will explore issues of importance to coastal communities in different global contexts: on the Irish Sea, in East Anglia, Japan and the Marshall Islands. Indicative questions to be addressed include: 'What are the characteristics of coastal communities in different parts of the world? Do they have common features because of their proximity to the sea and are they, thereby, distinguished from communities further inland? What are the consequences of an economic, social and military engagement with the sea? What are the challenges facing museums in coastal locations in engaging with local communities?'

09.30-09.50

*Coastal Communities of the Irish Sea: Literature, Nation and Heritage*

John Brannigan, University College Dublin

09.55-10.15

*The Militarised Coastline of East Anglia*

Rob Liddiard, University of East Anglia

10.20-10.40

*Littoral Thinking: Marshallese Views on Rising Seas*

Jenny Newell, American Museum of Natural History

10.45-11.10

Coffee/Tea Break

11.15-11.35

*Remembering and Forgetting Tsunami in Coastal Communities in Northeastern Japan*

Akira Matsuda, University of East Anglia

11.40-12.00

Questions and discussion

12.00.-13.15 SCVA School Area

Discussion Workshops

1 *Islands*

Chair: Mark Horton (University of Bristol)

The topic here is the extent to which islands are identifiable as special kinds of coastal communities. Amongst questions arising – and in anticipation of the discussion this afternoon- do the issues of coastlines affect them in particular?

Discussants: Tom Fitton (University of York), Akira Matsuda (University of East Anglia), Jenny Newell (American Museum of Natural History), Shiura Jaufar (Maldives Ministry of Heritage and University of East Anglia), Paul Lane (University of Uppsala)

## *2 Museums and the engagement with the sea*

Chair and presenter: Richard McCormick (President Maritime Institute of Ireland)

Discussants: Cesare Poppi, (Venice H2O Museum & Museo della Navigazione Fluviale, Battaglia Terme), James Davies (University of Birmingham and Nefyn Museum), Alice Christophe (University of East Anglia), Alvaro Garrido (University of Coimbra and The Maritime Museum at Ilhavo, Portugal).

This workshop considers the histories of a number of museums which engage with maritime issues around the world. How do they represent the maritime world, the lives of mariners and how do they engage with their local communities?

13.15-14.00 SCVA School Area

Lunch

14.00-15.30 Elizabeth Fry lecture theatre

## Fragile Coastlines: The Case of East Anglia

Chair: Tim O’Riordan, Emeritus Professor of Environmental Sciences, University of East Anglia

Given the issues of coastal erosion and the loss of beach fronts around the East Anglian coast, case studies from the region will be a significant part of this session. The panel discussion will focus on questions including: ‘What are the changes that are occurring and how are they affecting people’s lives? How is the loss of beach fronts represented and understood? What measures are appropriate to preserve coastlines or accommodate the dynamics of change? What innovative means are available to museums to enhance responses to environmental change on coastlines?’

14.00-15.30

Panel Discussion with:

Robert Young, North Norfolk District Council, Head of Economic & Community Development

Simon Read, Middlesex University, Associate Professor in Fine Art and Visual Artist

Steve Hayman, Environmental Agency, Senior Coastal Advisor

Marcus Vergette, Sculptor, Film-maker, Composer, Musician, Time and Tide Bell Project

15.30-16.00

Coffee/Tea Break

16.00-17.15 SCVA School Area

Panel Discussion

17.30-19.00

Drinks Reception

Opening of MA Museum Studies exhibition 'Global East Anglia'

19.30-21.30 Vista Restaurant, UEA campus

Buffet Dinner

-----

FRIDAY 22 MAY

09.00-10.55 Elizabeth Fry lecture theatre

Water, its Meanings and Histories

Chair: Paul Lane, Professor of Global Archaeology, Uppsala University, Sweden

'Water, its meanings and histories' will look at the role of water and the sea in different cultures. 'How are different kinds of water mass conceptualised? Are there, for instance, differences between the ways in which salt and fresh water are configured culturally and symbolically in various parts of the world? Is the difference between the surface of water and the area beneath significant? If so, what cultural practices flow from these distinctions? How do they emerge in different mythologies?'

09.00-09.20

*The Swahili and the Sea*

Tom Fitton and Stephanie Wynne Jones, University of York

09.25-09.45

*West African Understandings of the Sea*

John Mack, University of East Anglia

09.50-10.10

*Lagoon and Oceanic culture in the Republic of Benin*

Joseph Adande, University of Abomey-Calavi

10.15-10.35

*Curating Oceanic Histories*

Sarah Longair, The British Museum

10.40-11.00

Questions and discussion

11.00-11.30

Coffee/Tea Break

11.30-12.45 SCVA School Area

## Discussion Workshop

### *3 Artists and the Sea*

Chair: Veronica Sekules (University of East Anglia)

Discussants: Jennifer Hall (Orford Museum), Hakan Topal (State University of New York), Simon Read (Middlesex University)

This workshop considers the role of artists in interpreting the sea and reflecting maritime issues.

### *4 Interpreting the sea*

Chair: John Mack (University of East Anglia)

Discussants: Sarah Longair (British Museum), Bee Farrell (SOAS, University of London), Jose Picas do Vale (New University of Lisbon).

The topic of this workshop will be the different interpretive strategies that museums (and indeed other institutions and media) adopt to interpret maritime themes.

12.45-13.45

Lunch at SCVA

13.45-16.45 Elizabeth Fry lecture theatre

## Representing Coastlines and the Sea

Chair: David Peters Corbett, Professor of Art History & American Studies, University of East Anglia

Many of the issues addressed in the previous sessions play directly into questions of representations, whether in art, film or exhibitions. Speakers from different European coastlines will engage with questions including: 'How have artists and writers engaged with the sea and coast as an artistic concept? How is the power of the sea, as sustaining yet destructive, represented? How are sea and coastlines visualised in different media? What are the opportunities for museums to participate in strategies of representation?'

13.45-14.05

*The Portuguese Cod-Fisheries Heritage and How to Build it Inside the Museum*

Álvaro Garrido, Museu Marítimo de Ílhavo/University of Coimbra

14.10-14.30

*Horizon, Seascapes and Fault Lines*

Hakan Topal, State University of New York

14.35-14.55

*The Dutch and the Sea: Coastlines on Canvas*

Jeroen van der Vliet, Rijksmuseum, The Netherlands

15.00-15.20

*A Place for Art: Coastlines and Creativity in British Art, c.1790*

Sarah Monks, University of East Anglia

15.25-15.45

*The Sea Shall Have Them? The British Fishing and Coastal Communities on Screen*

Mark Fryers, University of East Anglia

15.50-16.10

*A Decade of BBC Coast and its Impact*

Mark Horton, University of Bristol

16.15-16.45

Closing Discussion

16.45-17.15

Coffee/Tea, SCVA

## Abstracts

### Coastal Communities

#### *Coastal Communities of the Irish Sea: Literature, Nation and Heritage*

John Brannigan, Professor, School Of English, Drama & Film at University College, Dublin & Acting Director, UCD Humanities Institute

This paper will examine how writers have interpreted and represented the Irish Sea and its coastal communities in the twentieth century. The Irish Sea has been variously understood by geographers, archaeologists and historians as an 'inland waterway', a 'British Mediterranean', and a natural centre which defines and distinguishes the islands of the Irish and British Isles. In contrast to the 'wild' Atlantic, writers have often seen the Irish Sea as a domestic, unromantic sea space, associated with industry, ferries, and pollution. The paper will explore whether there is a distinctive literature of the Irish Sea, and how it might be understood as part of a maritime archive.

#### *The Militarised Coastline of East Anglia*

Rob Liddiard, Professor of History, University of East Anglia

This paper examines the militarisation of the East Anglian coast during the twentieth century from the perspective of the coastal communities on the contested shorelines. In both world wars, considerable areas of coastline were given over both to defences and training landscapes, which have given the region an unusually rich military archaeological legacy. The construction of fortifications resulted in significant dislocation for civilian populations, including the forcible closure of beaches, evacuation and desertion of settlements, all of which found expression in autobiography, poetry and art. In this way, East Anglia's defence landscapes share some of the characteristics of occupied Europe's 'Atlantic Wall'. In other respects, however, East Anglia was very different. Although in origin 'top down' initiatives, coastal defence landscapes were also configured from the 'bottom up' as commanders on the ground responded to the social and economic needs of communities and especially the demands of agriculture. These considerations had profound effects on the perception of the military landscape. For the communities that experienced it, aspects of militarisation merged with ingrained perceptions of the East Anglian coastline and in the post-war period the military archaeology of the twentieth century was woven into more deep-seated narratives of folklore, myth and memory.

#### *Remembering and Forgetting Tsunami in Coastal Communities in Northeastern Japan*

Dr Akira Matsuda, Honorary Lecturer, School of Art, Media and American Studies, University of East Anglia

Societies across the world commemorate tragic events that caused massive loss of human lives. When such loss was caused by the human forces, its commemoration inevitably reminds people of the causer, against or in relation to whom the commemorators form and reform their group identity. By contrast, when the loss was caused by the forces of nature, its commemoration tends to remind people of the devastation itself, which does not easily relate to their identity formation and reformation. This might explain why most efforts to remember a natural disaster in the long term turn out unsuccessful, despite the often stressed need to prevent similar loss in the future.

The tsunami triggered by the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011 claimed the lives of over 14,000 people, the great majority of whom were residents of coastal communities in Northeastern Japan. While this tragedy was reported as 'unprecedented', those communities had in fact suffered a number of devastating tsunami in the previous centuries. What was perceived to be unprecedented had actually precedents, which had simply been forgotten.

This however does not mean that those communities had not tried to remember earlier tsunami. Residents had indeed attempted to pass on lessons learned from them to future generations, in particular by erecting monuments with messages. The necessity to remember such lessons, however, did not generate a shared desire strong enough to keep the painful memory alive, and each time oblivion outdid remembrance.

Yet, a new situation is emerging today. Coastal communities hit by the tsunami in March 2011 are discussing the possibility of preserving damaged buildings and objects, in order to turn them into monuments and thus not to forget the tragedy. Will this work?

*Littoral Thinking: Marshallese Views on Rising Seas*

Dr Jenny Newell, Assistant Curator, Division of Anthropology, American Museum of Natural History, in collaboration with Kristina Stege, Marshallese Educational Initiative

*...some men say that one day  
that lagoon will devour you...  
mommy promises you...  
...no blindfolded bureaucracies gonna push  
this mother ocean over  
the edge  
no one's drowning, baby  
no one's moving*

Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, Marshall Islands, extract from *Dear Matafele Peinam*, poem delivered at the UN Climate Change Summit, New York, Sept. 2014

The Republic of the Marshall Islands can be seen as constituted by coastlines. On most of these narrow, low-lying coral atolls, one is rarely out of view of the sea. Marshallese have highly layered interrelationships between self, land and sea. While the open ocean is regarded with ample respect for its dangers, it is seen as a bridge and source of sustenance. Living very much in the littoral zone, the sea is ever-present, and a Marshallese sense of self is always touched by it in some way. Is this sense of close connection changing as experiences and the rhetoric of rising, consuming seas takes hold? This paper investigates how Marshallese are thinking about their relationships to the sea in a rapidly changing ecological, cultural and political environment.

This kind of exploration is important within an effort to understand the present predicament of this island group. And this understanding helps us to see the range of ways that any coastline and sea might soon be approached, and reimagined, as we start to face our increasingly watery world.

How to engage a broader public in thinking through these important changes is the aim of a collaborative exhibition project in development with Kristina Stege and several museums in RMI and the US. This travelling exhibition will showcase the Marshall Islands – their places, people and current challenges. With stunning photographs and contemporary artforms, it will center on the ways Marshallese are navigating their future in the islands and in the growing, often land-locked, diaspora.

-----

## Fragile Coastlines: The Case of East Anglia

Chair: Tim O’Riordan, Emeritus Professor of Environmental Sciences, University of East Anglia

Panel discussion with:

Rob Young, Head of Economic & Community Development, North Norfolk District Council

Simon Read, Artist and Associate Professor in Fine Art at Middlesex University

Steve Hayman, Senior Coastal Advisor, Environment Agency

Marcus Vergette, Sculptor, Film-maker, Composer, Musician, Time and Tide Bell Project

-----

## Water, its Meanings and Histories

*The Swahili and the Sea*

Dr Stephanie Wynne Jones, Lecturer in Archaeology, University of York & Tom Fitton, PhD Candidate in Archaeology, University of York

The Swahili coast of East Africa has long been home to a culture defined and united by its location on the shores of the Indian Ocean. From Somalia to Mozambique the coast is dotted

with sites of the last 1500 years that share common cultural, religious and artistic traditions; no doubt these were maintained by frequent and substantial coastal voyaging. Swahili towns are often described as ports, yet they were more than simply destinations for coastal and international voyagers. The sites of the coast were also home to a diverse group of inhabitants, with a range of relationships with their terrestrial hinterland. This paper explores the role of the sea in this society, not just as a medium for commercial voyaging, but as an ever-present aspect of coastal life. The role of the sea in local economies, diets, and ritual practices will be explored, as well as the ways that coastal sites colonised and domesticated coastal environments.

### *West African Understandings of the Sea*

John Mack, Professor of World Art Studies, University of East Anglia

A strong influence on ideas of the sea in many parts of coastal West Africa down as far down as the Congo estuary is that the sea, rather than the sky, is a domain of the dead and of spirits associated with them. In some places there are explicit ideas of villages of the dead located beneath water. People are not buried at sea; but the identification of ancestral spirits with crossing water leads to references to water surfaces or to things retrieved from under the sea in art, material culture and shrines where ancestral authority or insight is invoked. Sometimes this is evident in the use of reflective surfaces or even deploying of the colour white, a double reference to the draining of the skin's colour at death and to the sea whose surface can be construed as white rather than blue. Ports and coastlines, as the points of transition between the land of the living and of the dead, can also have a liminal significance, not least in contemporary times as part of the slave routes project.

### *Lagoons and Oceanic Culture in the Republic of Benin*

Joseph Adande, Professor of Art History, University of Abomey-Calavi

In southern Republic of Benin (the former Dahomey in West Africa), there are two separate communities of fishermen: the Toffinou live by fishing on the lagoon while the "Pla" (or Xwla) are ocean-going fishermen. This presentation explores the cultural differences between the two who, though they live in close proximity, remain distinct from each other and are oriented towards different bodies of water.

Both communities identify themselves as historically "migrants" but each has a clear sense of their own separate identity and tradition. The Toffinou live in lacustrine or semi-lacustrine villages where they fled three centuries ago to escape slave raiders and warriors known as Danxomè. Living in stilted huts above the water they were protected from Danxomè who, though feared warriors, abhorred rivers and the sea: they could not swim. The Toffinou turned to fishing after their arrival in the villages around the lagoon. The Pla, by contrast, were already sea-fishermen when they arrived from the "West", in what today they identify as Ghana escaping 19th century to occupy beaches in Benin where they build temporary houses used

during the fishing season. They have retained strong links with Ghana from where they still buy boats and equipment.

The Pla continue to live by exploiting the resources of the Atlantic. Today, however, the Toffinou supplement their income from fishing by transporting black market goods from neighbouring Nigeria, notably petrol. The well-known contemporary Beninois artist Romuald Hazoume uses the image of “La Bouche du roi” to describe mask images made from plastic jerry cans. This can be considered as a quadruple metaphor: it references the mask like construction where the pout of the plastic container becomes a mouth; it reminds us of the name of a physical place - the confluence of the sea and the lagoon at Grand Popo; it points to migration and metissage as our future; and finally it suggests the resilience of long established communities which have retained their proud traditions.

### *Curating Oceanic Histories*

Dr Sarah Longair, The British Museum

In this paper, I will reflect upon the recent experience of curating a small exhibition at the British Museum entitled *Connecting continents: Indian Ocean trade and exchange*. The intention of this display was to bring scholarly ideas about oceans as connected spaces, the long history of trade and exchange in the Indian Ocean and the character of coastal communities to a wider audience. It included objects from all departments of the British Museum. As such, it demanded a fresh perspective on the British Museum collection, with a careful selection of objects which represented clearly and materially ideas about movement and connection. This paper will discuss a variety of the issues, such as the intellectual rationale over what we mean by ‘an Indian Ocean object’, how best to represent oceanic space with objects, graphics and text, as well as the practical and institutional challenges encountered in creating this exhibition.

-----

### Representing Coastlines and the Sea

*A Place for Art: Coastlines and Creativity in British Art, c.1790*

Dr Sarah Monks, Lecturer in European Art History, University of East Anglia

In 1795, the painter John Hoppner succeeded in his bid to become a member of London’s Royal Academy – and submitted in return as his Diploma Piece, as the work intended to define his artistic talents for subsequent generations, a large view of fishermen battling against the elements to pull their boat to shore. Otherwise and almost entirely known as a portraitist (especially of women and children), Hoppner was just the latest artist to depart from his specialism in order to experiment with the painting of coastal views, in a clear trend for British artists working in the 1780s and 1790s. This paper will explore this trend and its meanings during these decades, considering in particular how and why ‘the coastline’ first emerges as a significant site for the production of a particularly modern artistic identity in which free

creativity, imagination and responsiveness to the world could find early form within British art in particular.

### *The Dutch and the Sea: Coastlines on Canvas*

Jeroen van der Vliet, Curator of Maritime Collections, Rijksmuseum, the Netherlands

More than half of The Netherlands are below sea-level, so it is somewhat of an understatement to say the Dutch have a very close relationship with the sea. Right from its earliest descriptions, observers like the Roman Tacitus considered it nearly impossible to say where the sea ended and the land began. Through its large estuaries and great inland lakes the sea enters the land in many places, and even early medieval sea-ports like Dorestad were located far inland. Literally surrounded by water, the Dutch were very suspicious of water as a voracious monster that could swallow lands, livestock and people at will and at any given moment, devouring both those on land and everyone who ventured out on the perilous sea in their little boats. Shipwrecks and floods of sometimes biblical proportions were considered an act of God by the pious Dutch. But as sea-going commerce started to flourish by the end of the 15th century and more land was reclaimed from the sea by dykes, windmills and other feats of engineering, true piety gave way to a more relaxed attitude towards the sea; while still a major natural force to be reckoned with, the sea could also be made productive just like the land and its maritime riches harvested like crops. Great wealth could be made from shipping, fishing and whaling, and people could even find pleasure in walking on the beach, in yachting or sail-crafting. Meanwhile, a number of well-known Dutch artists like Vroom, Bakhuysen and the Van de Veldes specialised in depicting the sea both on canvas and paper, thereby not only visualising the new way the Dutch regarded 'their' sea, but also shaping an entirely new and influential genre in European art – the seascape – at the same time.

### *Horizon, Seascapes and Fault Lines*

Dr Hakan Topal, Assistant Professor of New Media, Art+Design at Purchase College, State University of New York & Artist

The land and the sea touch each other and form a complex, oscillating line of endless length. In any landscape one can identify countless physical traces of both natural and cultural events. Endemic vegetation, landforms, as well as the remnants of civilizations are infused on top of each other and characterize a specific geography. The sea, however, as an ever-changing, relatively smooth space conceals all the traces of time and history and transforms them into myths. In order to make sense of it, one has to develop new visual and narrative strategies to tackle with the particularities and potentialities that the sea presents.

The Sea of Marmara, located in between the Black Sea and the Aegean, literally means 'the sea of marble' AND hosts one of the major fault lines expected to bring a catastrophic tremor to Istanbul. In addition to several earthquakes, prison islands in Marmara mark Turkey's recent grim political history of coup d'états and most recently hosted the country's most wanted

Kurdish guerilla leader. The sea is highly polluted by manufacturing and oil industries. On any given day, hundreds of ships stay anchored, waiting for the next big global excitement. The seas are the battlegrounds of neoliberal economies, but also counters histories, and culture as well as a source of biological richness and are also the bearers of scourge, oil spills and chemicals, and the invading jellyfish and the disappearing reef.

*The Sea Shall Have Them? The British Fishing and Coastal Communities on Screen*

Mark Fryers, PhD Candidate at the School of Art, Media and American Studies, University of East Anglia

Film is increasingly being used in museums to provide an audio-visual evocation of past times and experiences, and this looks poised to increase further as museums seek to provide more interactive learning spaces. Institutions like the Imperial War Museum and the National Maritime Museum traditionally archive and make extensive use of newsreels and other footage to illuminate the past. This paper will consider the changing evocations of coastal communities within fictional film and television and how a consideration of this might be usefully applied to considerations of their changing national status and utility in understanding maritime history.

This paper will provide a historiographic overview of representations of coastal communities on British screens, from the early days of cinema to the digital age, punctuated by more specific examples which speak to the age and the culture which produced them. Pressed against the liminal boundary between the sea and the land, the coastal community has acquired a special status in depictions of the maritime sphere in British film and television. Similarly caught halfway between the metaphorical liminal boundary of the proud, traditional and stoic and elegiac lamentations for a way of life perpetually in decline, depictions of such communities on screen are instructive of attitudes towards fringe communities.

In tracing the changes and developments of such depictions, the role of these identities in the national story reveals the changing relationship between both Britain and the coast and the people who live there. Early films such as *Heart of a Fisher-girl* (1910) and *Fisherman's Luck* (1913) speak to an era in which the maritime sphere was a constant indigent of national identity, and the endeavours of coastal communities vital to the importance of the national culture. These gradually gave way to such films as *The Edge of the World* (1937) or *The Silver Darlings* (1947) which lament the death of these industries as time advances. Historical depictions such as in *Fury at Smuggler's Bay* (1960), similarly romanticise coastal communities as being on the fringes of society, civilisation and the protocols of the land. Later film and televisual texts such as *Land of Green Ginger* (1973), *Spyship* (1983) and *True North* (2007) also suggested that this is a forgotten community whilst films such as *Doomwatch* (1972), *Ghosts* (2006) and *Flood* (2007) placed coastal communities at the apex of environmental catastrophes, indicating the fragility of British coastlines which had once served as the secure boundary between the nation and the rest of the world.

Concomitant with this is the role of the 'island nation' mentality and metaphor, fluctuating from triumphant discourses of national difference, to symbolising the fragility of a country

whose coastline is literally under threat from the power of the sea. The liminal presence of the coastline as boundary and protector, and its role in community life is foregrounded in these texts, providing a vital environment in which to analyse the importance of fringe communities in the national consciousness.

*The Portuguese Cod-Fisheries Heritage and How to Build it Inside the Museum*

Álvaro Garrido, Professor of History, University of Coimbra & Museu Marítimo de Ílhavo, Portugal

This presentation aims to discuss a particular experience on building heritage discourses and memory strategies inside a Museum.

The Maritime Museum of Ílhavo, placed in the Atlantic west coast of Portugal, was founded in 1937 as a local project. Until the last decades of the 20th century, the Museum assumed an ethnographic vocation; its own definition was addressed to the “regional” and “maritime” references.

Recently, the Museum changed its mission and heritage focus. A local and small-scale museum became a large maritime museum which project was rebuilt under new institutional goals. This renewed museological project deals with two challenges: i) the social ask for a memory programme dedicated to the local and national cod fisheries whose heritage became legendary and based on emotive perceptions; ii) the fall of the Portuguese fisheries industry, in the 80's and the 90's, due to deep changes on Maritime Law and due to biological restrictions for the resources concerning overseas fishing in the Northwest Atlantic conventional area (NAFO – Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization).

As a cold war result and being a multilateral institution, built in 1948 under a US initiative, NAFO's precedent, the ICNAF - International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries, broke the self-sufficiency policy for fisheries. Above this, ICNAF rules challenged the Portuguese dictatorship regime (1933-1974) to a realistic cooperation through international bodies on global fisheries governance. This international reality framed more and more the Portuguese vision of the rise and fall of a superlative “national tradition” on the overseas navigations and especially for the heroic cod fleet and its crews.

For a local Museum inserted in a community in which most of the families were strictly linked with the “cod campaigns” in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Labrador and Greenland, the decline of the cod fishing industry became an identity question. In the 90's, it became a priority to evoke the men and provide memories on the fleets by recovering a large and inorganic heritage still hidden inside the ship owners companies and also in domestic spaces.

When this emotive stage and way of making heritage – more reproductive than plural in a social sense – was overcome, a new one starts, based on scientific knowledge and under a “memory building” utopia. Crossing the concrete and imaginary scales of the cod fisheries activity, the community asks for an inclusive heritage project which first concept was (and still is) the Social Memory embedded in the own fisheries communities of the Portuguese coast.

In order to debate this experience, we will share some examples of subprojects built inside the Ílhavo Maritime Museum.

*A Decade of BBC Coast and its Impact*

Mark Horton, Professor of Archaeology, University of Bristol

The BBC2 Series COAST has been running since 2005, and is now about to show the tenth series. With over 80 one hour programmes, often repeated on multiple channels, the series has had a major impact on the public's perception of the coastal landscapes in the UK, Ireland and the near continent - with over 500 individual items. The paper will examine how stories from history and geography has led to coastal regeneration, the creation of coastal paths, and rights of way, as well as brands, magazines, videos, books and merchandise. The remit of the programme arose out the BBC's need to demonstrate public value, during a period of Charter review, and I will examine the extent that this has been achieved. The paper will address the extent that public engagement can be classed as impact, as has been defined by academics and civil servants.

## 'Global East Anglia' Exhibition

Opening on 20th May 2015 to coincide with the Sainsbury Institute for Art (SIfA) conference Museums, Coastlines and the Sea, the two-part exhibition 'Global East Anglia' will display documentary photographs of East Anglia's public sculptures and monuments alongside a personal collection donated to the University of East Anglia by Rhoda Gray, a resident of Great Yarmouth. The exhibition will be held from 20th May to 19th July 2015, in the School Court area in the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts.

Curated by current MA Museum Studies students at the University of East Anglia, 'Global East Anglia' is a response to the students' exploration of coastal communities and the connections facilitated by the sea, both past and present.

Director of SIfA, Professor John Mack, said: "East Anglia is popularly thought off as a quiet, isolated place, cut off on one side by the sea and on the other by the transport system. But as the photographs and objects in this two-part exhibition show, the sea also connects and the region's coastline is full of evidence of these global links whether in public sculpture or in the knick-knacks kept in private homes."

The two parts of the exhibition: 'Sculpting Identity' and 'Who was Rhoda Gray?' show the diversity of human engagements with the sea.

More information on the exhibition can be found at the following sites:

'Who was Rhoda Gray?'

[www.rhodagrays.com](http://www.rhodagrays.com)

'Sculpting Identity'

<http://sculptingidentity.wix.com/exhibition>

<https://www.pinterest.com/sculptidentity/>

<https://twitter.com/sculptidentity>

<https://www.facebook.com/sculptidentity>