

# Call for Papers

## **INCARCERATION: Museum Research and Practice**

**Curator: The Museum Journal is soliciting manuscripts for a themed issue**

Museums have been part of and have spurred transformative action to address a number of social and environmental issues, or to redress injustices and human rights violations. In some cases, they reacted to societal change, while in other cases they took a leadership role by being advocates for change and anticipating needs. For example, museums have played a role in reconciliation and Indigenous and human rights violations and have worked with their communities to highlight the different worldviews and voices collections represent, often in contrast to their colonialist origins. All these actions are set within a transitional justice context and aim to acknowledge, recognize, remember and interpret acts, or periods, of human rights abuses, including genocide, conflict, political as well as other types of violence and repression.

Despite the fact that a number of museum collections include objects made by incarcerated individuals this information is often not included in the collections documentation, nor is it part of how the collection is interpreted. There are hardly any records of the association of museums with histories of incarceration. The lack of representation of incarcerated individuals – both within and beyond the traditional prison context – can be seen as an example of epistemic violence as many museums have, intentionally or unintentionally, marginalized or erased the material culture of incarcerated individuals. Yet, the material culture of incarceration bear witness to tools of physical as well as mental incarceration, systems of dominance, surveillance and punishments, asymmetrical power relationships, and unethical acquisition policies that contributed to stifling the voices of incarcerated people and their heritage. Addressing issues related to the provenance, distribution and history of these objects are not only a responsibility for museums as collecting institutions. They can also help create positive change to the life of incarcerated individuals by listening and including their voices in the stories museums tell.

This special issue addresses a number of questions included but not limited to:

- How can we re-conceptualize incarceration and how carcerality has manifested itself across time and space (including historical slavery, political incarceration, wartime camps, modern day trafficking, the enforced education of Indigenous children, the over-incarceration of black people, mental health and incarceration, and even pandemic lockdowns)?
- What insights into slavery and colonialism and its legacy can we gain by using the concept of carcerality?

**Editorial Office:**

New Knowledge Organization Ltd.  
13 East 37<sup>th</sup> St., 7<sup>th</sup> FL  
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- How can museums consider together artifacts and institutions of enslavement, concentration camps, mental health institutions, and other broader examples of "incarceration" beyond state prison systems built to contain criminals?
- How were these institutions and artifacts used to incarcerate bodies and minds across a series of spaces (prison, mental health institutions, residential schools, orphanages, reserves) as a way of eliminating or incarcerating social differences?
- What is the legacy of the trauma of incarceration on the communities that have been particularly targeted?
- How can museums address and raise awareness of histories of incarceration?
- How can they provide opportunities for incarcerated individuals to exhibit their own artwork or artefact?
- What role have museums had in justifying and legitimating political violence, state violence and oppression?
- What role collectors, institutions and disciplines have played in enabling this?
- How can museums facilitate critical engagement with their own role in legitimizing violence and oppression through their collection acquisition and interpretation policies?
- What roles can museums as educational institutions play in breaking the school-to-prison-pipeline?

**Guest Editorial Team:**      **Theano Moussouri**, University College London  
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**Submission Guidelines:** Submission of research papers, synthesis, and perspective essays are welcomed. The journal is published in English and contributors are welcome to also translate accepted papers into the language of their choice after acceptance. Learn more about the types of papers and translations: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/page/journal/21516952/homepage/forauthors.html>

The deadline for submission of **ABSTRACTS FOR PROPOSED PAPERS DEADLINE is AUGUST 8th, 2022**. All contributions are subject to peer-review, with ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSED PAPERS IN OCTOBER 2022, AND anticipated publication in OCTOBER 2023. Authors seeking to contribute to this issue should SUBMIT ABSTRACTS THROUGH THE JOURNAL SUBMISSION PORTAL. UNDER THE PAPER TYPE: **Special Issue Proposed Paper (Abstract)**. Please use the word **INCARCERATION** as the first word in the proposal.

*Curator: The Museum Journal publishes quarterly in print and online with a current circulation reaching around the world with access extended low-cost or free access to libraries and museums in developing world institutions.*

**Editor-in-Chief: John Fraser, Ph.D. AIA**