

Annual Report (2016) of the Australian National Committee

As 2016 was the year of the Beijing Congress, the Australian National CIHA committee advertised the congress widely and there was a significant Australian participation.

The Australian contingent consisted of two sessions chairs (Jennifer Milam, and Sophie MacIntyre) and twelve speakers, from Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney. One postgraduate student John Keane, studying Australian Indigenous Art received a Getty Scholarship. We all met one evening for a celebratory dinner, hosted by Professor Yiyang Shao of CAFA. I attach a photograph. Our involvement was comparable in numbers to the French or British. All participants were impressed by the quality and distinction of the conference. When we returned Kate MacNeill, who spoke on Art and the Law, arranged a mini conference with the Australian speakers to talk to undergraduates in Melbourne, to share the research and to talk about CIHA.

Throughout the year there was also some Australian participation in other colloquia, arranged by CIHA, such as the one around the Renaissance court of Francis I, held in Bruxelles, though I can see no trace of this colloquium on the CIHA website.

The Australian National Committee has always been a part of a section of the Australian Academy of Humanities from the time Australia joined CIHA, a system arranged by Terence Smith and Margaret Manion. In line with what happens in other countries, and in the interests of democracy, we have tried to have a more proactive relationship with the national Australian organization for art history, AAANZ, which continues to grow throughout Australia. Andrew McNamara, the incoming head of the Australian committee, has already begun negotiations to develop a closer relationship.

The new Australian committee represents art history in Australia with the perspectives of different universities in different cities and across subjects. Andrew McNamara who chairs the committee is from Queensland and has a major research interest in modernism, Anne Dunlop is Herald Chair of Fine Arts at the University of Melbourne with an expertise in Italian Renaissance art history, Peter McNeil is from Sydney and is a renowned expert in fashion history with a distinguished record in publications and the curatorship of exhibitions, and Claire Roberts is the most eminent art historian of Chinese and Asian art history in Australia, who holds a Future Fellowship from the Australian Research Council.

We have asked for an Australian representative on the Bureau, given the role that Australia has played in the organization of national congresses, namely *Crossing Cultures. Conflict, Migration and Convergence*, 2008, and the distinction of art history in the Antipodes. I have never received a reply from the Secretariat, but understand from Jean-Marie that you are considering this now.

In a global organization we are all dependent on the web site for CIHA, which is not really functioning as a conduit for information. Could something be done to improve the site so that it provides a record of what has happened, and what will be happening in the future? If you look at the site there is nothing about the future, and the overview of colloques is out of date. Might the Bureau give some consideration to improving the site? In the twenty first century this is essential.

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