

## **Decolonising collections**

### **Joint webinar series with ICOM COMCOL and ICOM-SA**

**25–26 November 2020**

SAMA is hosting a webinar series on Decolonising Collections on 25 and 26 November 2020. It is a joint project with ICOM COMCOL and ICOM-SA with additional funding from ICOM SAREC.

Initially planned as workshop in Cape Town, this webinar will now have a much stronger international perspective than initially planned. We aim to explore current trends and to exchange ideas around collecting and collections within the context of the decolonisation of collections and to promote south-south and north-south networks around the re-interpretation of collections as well as collection sharing. Through this collaboration we hope to engage on the theme from the perspective of both previously colonised and colonising societies and to propose guidelines based on the reaching of common ground for future museum practice.

In the past few years museums across the world have been trying to tackle the challenge of decolonisation in their institutions. However, the meaning of the term is fluid and there are different understandings of the practical implications. Colonisation has been defined as 'a process that institutions undergo to expand the perspectives they portray beyond those of the dominant cultural group, particularly white colonisers'. Others take a stronger approach by incorporating it into the strategic plan and defining it as 'at a minimum, sharing authority for the documentation and interpretation of indigenous culture'. In South Africa the emphasis is on finding 'our own voice' by critiquing how knowledge is produced and for who it is produced. Decolonising concerns the language used, the categorisation, the representation of what is in the collection and the way topics and objects are researched.

The programme will consist of several sessions in the late afternoon and early evening of each day and include papers and performance art from museologists, academics and artists from around the world.

The programme will be published as soon as all the speakers have been confirmed.