

## Co-Ma 2013: Safeguarding Image Collections



Today? photographic images account for a large portion of the world's memory and are found in diverse contexts. Whether autonomous objects or documents, photographic images can be of immense value. However archives, museums, libraries and other institutions around the world are struggling to conserve image collections in both analogue and digital formats. Despite multiple tools, best practices, CEN regulations, ? the implementation of a strategy for efficient management of photographic collections is a complex task for collection managers and archivists. This conference intended to present some practical case studies of the management and conservation of photographic collections that have successfully applied theoretical ideals to good practice on the ground.

Next to the practical questions of storage, inventory, digitization, etc., the field is also faced with other less obvious problems. As digitization and worldwide access become key elements in collection management, copyright issues are often a stumbling block for museums and archives. Moreover, underlying politics can either be detrimental to or a positive influence on the care of photographic collections.

The management of photographic collections is therefore highly dependent on the context and the status of the photographic image. As a result similar images are subject to different conservation methodologies depending on whether they are found in archival or museum contexts. Moreover, photographic collections are frequently considered as miscellaneous and marginal to the activities of museums, archives and other cultural institutions. Although most images have been created for documental purposes, a lot of these documents are now being preserved for their intrinsic value. Over time, photographs have become more than just carriers of image content; they are now considered as cultural objects and present a significant potential for the general historic consciousness. A reflection on the status and management of photographic collections in various contexts is thus vital for the preservation of these images. Furthermore, there should be an awareness of the importance of conserving photographic images of our past as well as maintaining a tangible record of the present.

This conference therefore also aimed to critically investigate the relationship between collection management and the status of the photographic object within the institution, whether it be a museum or an archival repository. The overall aim was to bring together professionals dealing with photographic images from different standpoints in order to develop a practical and philosophical framework for the management of photographic collections in different contexts.

**Scientific committee members:** **Hilke Arijs** (Audiovisual Preservation specialist, KIK-IRPA), **Agnes W. Brokerhof** (Senior scientist, Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands), **Christina Ceulemans** (General Director a.i., KIK-IRPA), **Marjolijn Debulpaep** (head of the Preventive Conservation Section, KIK-IRPA), **Prof. Dr. Hubert Locher** (Direktor Deutsches Dokumentationszentrum für Kunstgeschichte - Bildarchiv Foto Marburg, Philipps-Universität Marburg), **Martin Jürgens** (Conservator of Photographic Materials, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam), **Juozas Markauskas** (vice-president, Baltic Audiovisual Archival Council), **Prof. dr. Johan Swinnen** (Vrije Universiteit Brussel), **Aparna Tandon** (Project Specialist and Coordinator SOIMA-Sound and Image Collections Conservation programme, ICCROM), **Drs. Martijn van den Broek** (Head of Collections, Nederlands Fotomuseum).

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Download the programme ([PDF](#), 352 Kb)

Official website of the event: <http://org.kikirpa.be/coma2013/>