

Good afternoon.

Thank you so much for inviting me here to Kanazawa.

It is a real honor to be an ally with your museum, and I have the best wishes also from our staff to your staff here in Kanazawa to Mr. Akimoto and his staff.

To do a talk about the trends in the current education museums, I really agree with Mr. Akimoto that you have to talk about the museum as such.

Our mission, our special situation, our resources, what we are about.

So before I dig into what we do in terms of education specifically, I will give you a brief outline on what Moderna Museet is about.

We have been around for a little bit longer than the museum; we are right in today, actually for 52 years.

But the building you see here on the image is not that old; it is actually erected in 1998.

But it is the same space as where we got started in 1958. It is on an island in the peninsula but it is also in the center of Stockholm. This was a navy island and the museum was set up in some navy barracks. I would call them some small buildings.

At that time there was already a kind of collection but it really got started with our first director and he was named Pontus Hultén, a name you might have heard of, and he came to the museum in the '50s.

The reason for me to mention that name

specifically is that museum is not just an organism happening like that; it is a result of what people do.

Directors are important and the artists are important, the staff is important and the visitors are important.

The artists, yes, I will give you a little bit summary of the collection because a museum without collection is not a museum, it is a kunsthalle.

It can be an art center in both cases. It should be a center of art and for people coming there but still a museum is founded on a collection. I mentioned this name of Pontus Hultén. He continued later on in Paris. He was the first director of the Centre Pompidou.

And we will learn later on a bit more about Centre Pompidou and their activities.

But what Pontus Hultén did at that time in Stockholm, the '50s, the '60s, and the beginning of the '70s was to make, to turn this museum into a real art center with collection. You see an early painting by Jasper Johns, and that is not a coincidence because Pontus Hultén knew lots of artists. He traveled quite frequently.

And that is kind of important because at that time 50 years ago, 40 years ago, Sweden was very remote far away from the real world so to say.

So, the connections the staff of the museum made was with the metropolis of the art at that time and that was Paris and New York mainly.

And Jasper Johns was not alone at the museum; there were others like Andy Warhol had his first European exhibition at the museum in 1968.

So to something different I will come back a little bit to the collection and the fundamentals for the museum later on.

The first image I showed was of the building as it looks like now. The architect is Rafael Moneo, the Spanish architect.

And this is far from a building; this is a bus as you can see.

The thing was that when Lars Nittve, our director today and I got started in 2001, 8 days after we started, we had to close the new building.

Why? Well, it was too rushed to the building process. So from '98 and up until 2001, it was functioning but then we had to close.

We were closed for 2 years and that really stressed the fact that the museum is not the same as the building.

A museum is what it does and what it stands for but it is good to have a good building of course.

Well, for 2 years we were out in an exile and that was a real trip.

We had the possibility to either lie down or die...

...or we could go on and try to make something out of it.

So, we did and we had a base camp in the center of Stockholm.

Symposium: Museum Education 21

## Keynote Lecture

Ann-Sofi Noring (Deputy Director, Moderna Museet, Stockholm)

And then we made lots and lots of projects under the label "care of".

That meant that we visited lots of other institutions. We were in their hands so to say. They could make their picks out of our collection and we could help out with all the knowledge we could bring.

And we had special projects like you see one example here, a bus touring round in Sweden. And Sweden is pretty waste far north deep down south.

That was really also the start of our real deep interest in making something with teenagers. At the museum, we had a very long tradition, a good tradition, a living tradition working with children in workshops of all kinds.

That was sort of really sorted out already and that was taken for granted but we wanted to do something new, and the teenagers we found never came to the museum before we closed, so we tried to reach out.

So, I created two productions, two projects, exhibitions in this bus as a tryout.

It is not a normal bus, it is a huge bus, and a whole class can easily enter this bus and can see what there is.

So, I made one project out of the collection with videos and films and one project with an American artist named Andrea Zittel.

Here is also an image from that period, the exile period, and this is from a shopping mall and we had some dance performance.

At the beginning of the museum's life, there

were no other scenes for modern dance for art movies and so on.

There are now; there are plenty. It is full of life, the city. So, if you ever come to visit, you will see for yourself.

But we have kept on to have the relation with other fields of art like dance, cinema, and such because that is also what art is about today.

And it deals with one word, which I find very interesting and good to think about when you think about vision and that is expansion. Because the field has expanded from the days of Pontus Hultén when the art world was US and France; it is globally expanded today.

It is also an expansion in terms of techniques material. In earlier days, art was sculpture, paintings, and such; today art is what is art that you name art in an art museum for example.

Here is an image from the collection. Back to that again, and you can see the famous Monogram or the Goat by Robert Rauschenberg.

The goat was brought to the Moderna Museet in the early days when Rauschenberg made performances at the museum.

Now it is a natural part of the collection, which we could not make without.

Back there you can also see another piece of art on the wall and that is a piece by a female artist named Lee Bontecou.

Pontus Hultén was still alive up until 2006 and I asked him why he acquired that piece by Lee Bontecou.

And he just said, well she was around.

So, this is a female artist and that also deals with the term of expansion.

Because when we were out in our exile, we also thought very much about how to install the collection getting back.

It is not only one collection; it consists of many, many, many, many possibilities to install.

So there are many stories to tell. Even though we give loans, we have, I would say the same level as Tate and the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the number of loans we approve every year. So many works are also outside the building of course.

But still there were things lacking and very major works, I would say, by female artists.

So coming back on the island again in 2004, we launched a project we called the Museum of our Wishes, second part.

There is always a lack of money for museums, and that was also the case when the museum was started.

So there was one project called only the Museum of our Wishes, where Pontus Hultén brought together 100 pieces of art and then he asked the minister, can I get some money, then we will get the best museum in the world. To his own surprise, I guess, he got at that time 500,000 euros.

And that made the core collection possible; for example, acquiring a piece like the Goat, the Monogram.

So, what we did coming back was to launch a

new project and we asked for 10 times more money to get a female artist of the same quality.

So, we tried to help history a bit because in the '60s and '70s, the ones who were in charge, of course, saw what they saw; they did not acquire female artists. Lee Bontecou was an exception.

And to our surprise, we did not get as much as Pontus Hultén did.

That is from the minister but we got lots and lots from private donors.

We got some from the minister of course and she, it is a she, thought this was a very good idea. She said that they got a hiccup at the minister before they had but they thought it was a very brave idea. They could not give us all the money.

But we got money from private donors and that is something, which is unusual in Sweden, which is very heavily taxed.

Contemporary female and male artists, we are able to, to some extent, acquire but it is a matter of just looking upon the history. That was the project about and we have acquired, and I will tell you some names.

For example, Popova, Russian avant-garde artist from the early 20th century.

Louise Bourgeois. And Dorothea Tanning and Carolee Schneemann and a couple of others.

That is a project we are very happy that we could bring about, and that has changed a little bit the view of the collection actually.

What we did coming back was also to install

the collection, but we did not do it in the normal way I would say.

So, we have turned the chronology backwards. We want the visit to start with the contemporary and then go backwards through the 18 rooms of the collection.

That is a simple red thread so to say and then we reinstall every other now and then, of course; more often when it comes to the contemporary part.

But what would a modern and contemporary art museum be without its exhibitions.

We are able to produce six larger exhibitions here...

...and several smaller projects.

Moving back, we started an exhibition series called "the First at Moderna."

We invited an artist or an artist group to do something each month, and we opened it no matter if it was the 1st of January or the 1st of May, the 1st of each month.

But after 3 years, we got a little bit tired of ourselves.

So, we changed it into another series, we called "Moderna Museet Now."

That makes it possible, I mean, these big exhibitions we have to plan for 3 years at least.

But to keep up the pace and to do something which is like more now out of your passion, out of the need of something.

So last year 2009, we started the series with actually Japanese artist. Her name is Tabaimo, if I pronounce it right.

Here is just an image from one of the

exhibitions we made together with a couple of other museums. So, we are sometimes producing, touring, and sometimes we are taking part, and sometimes we just do an exhibition for ourselves.

This is an exhibition that also Centre Pompidou was involved into Africa Remix.

And just to the left in the image, you can see an image of a piece by Yinka Shonibare, an African artist based in London.

I mentioned his name because when we moved back we could also redo the building a bit. Because Rafael Moneo, the architect, had made it very, very – I would say in a way very, very hard and empty in a way. And the lobbies were without any feeling of human presence.

So, Yinka Shonibare got to do the two entrances we have, one from the upper level and one from the seaside.

It is just semi-permanent so now we have Barbara Kruger, who has made the entrances.

Now to a part of the program, the education program, and I will come back to that more specifically later on, this is a part of something called Zon Moderna, which I will explain a little bit about. And we see here a part of, sort of, performance the teenagers made connected to an exhibition called "Fascination."

It is like a play with word out of fashion and the fascination for something or somebody.

I talked earlier on about thinking about vision and that is important to do. When you work

at a museum you are very – your hands are full but you have to think also, and our exile period made us think.

I talked earlier on about the word “expansion.” Another word, which is important for us, is the word “meeting place.”

To make the visitors comfortable no matter what reasons they have to come.

But of course also to promote the meeting between the visitor and the piece of art.

Some more images from the exhibitions also.

This is Swedish artist named Karin Mamma Andersson.

An exhibition we made a couple years ago, and actually we had a Japanese critic named Midori Matsui to write in the catalogue.

I talked about the meeting place and this is just an image. I brought just – this is also from the Karin Mamma Andersson exhibition – to also have a look upon what is an audience.

I am happy that we make surveys because if you look just upon this image, you would think that all our visitors are middle-aged women with blond hair.

That is not true we know. I would say like 50%–60% come from Stockholm and the neighborhood.

And the rest stands for all the visitors coming from far away from Japan but also from other places in the world.

We have around 600,000 visitors a year and I have just learned that Kanazawa has got many, many visitors.

And we are quite impressed by that fact but

of course we shall not always count numbers. But to have a good number of people coming is a good sign that what you make, makes sense.

This is an image from a part of the collection where we change pretty often, and there to the left you see a painting by a Danish artist named Tal R.

But what do I want to show is also the view. You will get a view from this room, not from all rooms, but from this room you will get a view.

That is of course a competition you have with what is around you, the beautiful nature.

The architect did not want any windows at all. He is a good architect I would say. But the circumstances in Sweden as in Japan, is that we really need the light.

And you need to have a rhythm between concentration when you look upon art and to relax a bit and contemplate what you see.

The painting here is, as I said, by a Danish painter. I can say that we mainly collect Swedish Nordic art; that is our main mission.

But we do collect other works of art of course, and then we try really to be very early and to get the key work.

So that makes the difference if we compare ourselves with some German museums. For example, we do not have a lot by some certain artist; we have one or two pieces but they are very carefully picked.

So for example, we have Donald Judd’s first stack...

...and some other examples, I will not go into

that. I will go on to another image instead. Well, under our exile period, we realized very thoroughly that the museum is not the building but it is good to have a building.

If a museum in the old days was very much of a white box, today we have to have black boxes.

Here is an image from also Swedish artist, her name is, well it is very hard to pronounce so do not try, Miriam Backstrom.

In that sense, well, when I mentioned Swedish art I can say that today, in the old days, Swedish art was Swedish but now many Swedish artists live somewhere else. For example, Miriam has lived her whole artistic life outside Sweden I would say.

So when we install the collection, we do not say that well this is the room for Swedish art and there is the rest, the international.

This is an artist who has found her own space, a space we did not think could be usable, her name is Klara Liden.

That is also to remember that a museum always has to follow the artist.

We can ask ourselves for how long are we valid, for how long in the future will we make sense.

Our starting point is Marcel Duchamp...

...and we have the largest group of art by Duchamp in the world after Pittsburgh actually.

So he stated, “the art is in the beholders eye.

The beholder, the visitor is the one who really makes it into art.”

And as long as there are living links and connections between an artist like this one you see here and Marcel Duchamp, then it goes together and makes sense.

So, we are both a modern museum and a contemporary museum, and that is really a paradox.

That is good we think because there is always a friction between history and now. And to make history worthwhile and interesting, you have to always have the contemporary perspective of course.

Now on to what is really the matter of this seminar? I just want to give you this broad background to what we are about and museum, and how education can fit into and be useable and interesting and living.

The living person, the guide, the voice, and the knowledge of one person who tells somebody else with passion about what he or she is interested; that is really something we cannot do without.

I would say that no matter how technically advanced the projects are and how surrealistic or adventurous the projects can be, it is a matter of meeting with a living person which is the fundament often I would say always.

It can be the artist, it can be an educator, or it can be somebody else.

Here we have one of our \*guides\* who is also an actor, and this is during our exile period

when we did not really have real works of art to show that much. We had some exhibitions but not too much of collection.

But during a couple of weeks, we reminded all the people in Stockholm about our collection by all these posters we had all over Stockholm in the small \*\*\* waiting for the bus.

This is just to show one of the cases. We have this special treatment where it is needed. I mean, for example, people who do not function in all senses. For example, this woman is blind and we have special blind tours.

But it is important to remember that people are not just a part of one group; as individual, you are part of many groups. And to leave over something to the spectator, the visitor is very, very important.

Nowadays, we take certain things for granted in museums, for example, that we have text panels in the rooms, that we have audio guides, that we have all kinds of tools.

But what it comes down to is that it is that the visitor shall have the best circumstances to really see the work.

Because to see and see again that is really the clue I think.

But then you also have the notion of that the more you know, the more you see.

I will just briefly also show you our new premises in the Southern Sweden because that is a new tool for us to bring out the collection and to bring out what we are about. This is in the city of Malmö.

It is an old factory and it was a kunsthalle before.

And here you see Monogram has moved in for a short while...

...with the Kusama I see there in the background.

We opened just right before Christmas so it is brand new, and here we see the artist Luc Tuymans who is installing his works.

Here, it is from a pre-opening. The region and the city asked us to come.

And we said, we had no money, but then the state – our minister said, well, let us have a three-part agreement.

So, we have, but we do not have money for everything we want to do; we have to earn the money. We produce exhibitions and what we buy art for, from the state, from the taxes we get money enough to rent the building and to pay the staff.

So all the rest we have to earn and that makes us very conscious about working together with others.

Also, when it comes to education.

This is a new place we have in our museum in Stockholm now, and it is a Study Gallery.

It works like with the robot, and there are 32 panels you can handle. It is a machine. You push the button and then panel moving and going down.

In that way, we can store and also show works, which would otherwise be down in the cellar, so to say.

This is an idea by Pontus Hultén who got this idea before he deceased, together with the

architect Renzo Piano.

This is a good room for researchers, for people coming from the colleges who need to dig into something to have discussions more informal.

So from this study gallery I will go into this teenager project now, which is called Zon Moderna.

As I mentioned before, it came out of, sort of, an interest and a need to do something for the ones who did not come to the museum.

Children, they can be brought to wherever by parents, by teachers and it is real good to have children in museums. So, I was happy to see many children here yesterday.

We do have children in our museum too, not as many as you have, of course not, but we have some.

And we have had that for many years and they have come and had visit and then they have had workshops for children.

That is very, very good and there is no competition between children and teenagers.

But I think there is some research, which should be done on children education in terms of art museums.

Because I do think that one purpose for children coming to museum, for us, and for adults is to really bring them some good views about what a museum is about, and what society is about, and what it can give to; for example, see something or paint something. That is good.

And to get a sense of color and to get senses of all kinds but when it comes to the notion of

what art can be...

...on another level that is the complexity of it all...

...then I do and we do in Stockholm at least think that teenagers is a real interesting group to work with.

At that stage when you are trying to find your own self, your own identity...

...then art can be very good for you.

So then into this Zon Moderna project. Right now we have this exhibition, which you see an image, just one part of it, and it is called Dalí Dalí featuring Francesco Vezzoli.

It deals very much with the notion of Dalí who is more of Warhol really than we...

...than we really thought. And the contemporary artist is sort of really dealing with the same issues.

So the teenagers in this case I have worked with this exhibition and they have really, really got a big interest in dealing with the artist as a role model.

So the idea for this Zon Moderna project is not to make artists out of the teenagers, it is not. But some have actually come back.

We have run this project now for a couple of years...

...since 2004, and some have actually come back and started a series of \*bars\* and seminars backstage.

Some have been interns in the museum and some have come back, of course, as visitors. So back to this project. You just saw this image of our person from the restaurant, and she is helping out with a meal, and here we

have the group who worked with this Dalí project.

Everyday they cooked something out of Dalí's cookbook.

Here is a party, little bit of glamour, no alcohol in the glasses.

And in one space of the workshops they are able to make real exhibitions, and this is the entrance and here you come in.

Here is one of the students playing around a little bit with identities...

...and here is from their own exhibition.

The framework for this is that the museum invites several students from different schools in Stockholm and the suburb.

So, we try to mix for each project. We mix like students from five schools.

It is hard work, as you can understand, to convince the principal and the teachers that the students will get time to work in these workshops.

So the youngsters, the teenagers, they are really handpicked to get an interesting and good mix.

Here is another project and it is from a video exhibition and it was called "Play."

And the students were handpicked from spaces where new Swedes live and these youngsters, they do not speak Swedish, hardly anything, and communicate in other ways with as many languages as you can see the numbers of the students.

So the students have to be able and willing, well, not always in the beginning but towards

the end they are, to cope with this project and to be there. Some have problems in their own schools. They do not go to classes.

But towards the end and we have not failed in any case now; we have had 15 projects, everybody participate.

So they have to spend some time with us, hang around, be active as much as they can.

And in this Play case, there were four youngsters here, they formed a sort of rap group and did something, which was a new video, which could have taken place in our exhibition.

I will give you a couple more examples from these projects and here is one.

It is from an Andy Warhol exhibition we made only with his films.

And these teenagers, they choose to make a factory out of it.

They are not alone. They have one educator who supports our team and then they always have one artist who is handpicked for the project.

The teachers do not take part; more than that they are aware of what is happening. They are not in the workshop. They are in school or somewhere else but they are aware of what is happening.

That is to give the teenagers a free zone, so to say, to get out of the rules they already have in the classroom.

It is amazing to see what they come up with. Many, as I told you before, are sort of drop-outs and some behave very well, but in the

end they all produce something.

Often they choose to work together not as individuals. As in this case, an exhibition we made which was focusing the art of Los Angeles in the '50s.

Here they have made a collective sculpture, which is sort of forcing its way into the museum.

Some robots and here is the result in the space in the workshop where they make this exhibition, where we have an opening just as normal exhibitions and invite all the friends and the families.

Just as I saw here at Kanazawa yesterday that children and teenagers, they bring their own friends and families and that is really a good way to work it.

Now we almost come to the end but just two short more projects and then we will wrap up. Here the teenagers prepare a demonstration.

That is the time when we show Swedish artist, concrete artist, Olle Bærtling.

At one time in the '60s when Sweden was very radical, he was into the May demonstration with one big poster.

The poster showed the image of Picasso's, Guernica, that was all.

Here they show sort of remix of his paintings marching away to the center of Stockholm.

Then the last project goes back to "Fascination", which I mentioned a little bit earlier on.

Here we have an artist working with this group and she was actually employed by the

museum later on, and she is our educator now working with this project.

As the exhibition deals with art and fashion, the teenagers do the same but in their own way.

The most fantastic thing when you take part in a project like this or come as a visitor is to see how a young person goes from making something which is pretty nice to making something which is maybe what you could call art.

To come up with the ideas like this one, the label clothes, and have sort of an activity when all the visitors were welcome to come with their Gucci clothes or whatever Kenzo... So, what I would say now when we have the last images just to stress the fact that to have education with children, and to have education with teenagers, and to have education and learning process with adults – they do not compete – we have to do it at the same time but differently.

Of course there are different traditions in museums and through history how to cope with this, what kind of education it shall be.

For example, look at a painting and paint what you see, that is one tradition.

Or to see art as it is like a tool, it is like something, which you do not really have to see, you just have to talk about and use the art as bricks of the wall you build.

Or to follow the artist wherever he or she goes.

What I think so fantastic is that we can actually have space for it altogether.

At some times you stress certain things; at other times you stress others.

And I will end this now by just a quote from one artist who has been involved in one of these projects.

Now I have to read, "what struck me was that I was surrounded by young people...

...to seemed to have all of them actually experiences of grief and pain.

That was probably the reason for us to meet.

Did they think that I was the one who could come up with the solution?

I do not know. I listened.

From what I know, they reminded me of something important.

That by meeting a work of art, you always put your life at risk."

That is really what is so fantastic about this, with their education program, and what you do with the young visitors and the old ones also that is that you get new perspectives, you get something back.

And there I should end. Thank you.

Ann-Sofi Noring

Ann-Sofi Noring is Deputy Director and Chief Curator at Moderna Museet in Stockholm, Sweden. She is born in 1955, educated in Sweden but has spent one year in the USA and one year in France for studies in language and art. She graduated from the University of Uppsala in 1980 with a B.A in art and literature and has since then worked with modern and contemporary art. 1980, Åi 86 she was running two community galleries in Solna (north of Stockholm) where she was responsible for acquisitions and art education in the city. Until 1991 she worked as curator for the Swedish Travelling Exhibitions, where she curated several art exhibitions on tour in the Nordic countries. She continued to the National Public Art Council as Head of Communication, writing and editing books, arranging seminars and exhibitions in the field of art in the open space. In 2001 she joined Moderna Museet as Head of Education and Program, later on she shifted to Exhibitions and Collection and since three years she is Head of Art and Education (the two departments have been reorganized into one). She has curated several exhibitions at the museum with among others Andrea Zittel, Adrian Paci, Carlos Capelán and Karin Mamma Andersson and is right now working with Ed Ruscha, Eva Löfdahl, and Eija-Liisa Ahtila for future projects.