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The new ICOM logo: a Greek gift

ICOM has made itself a gift: after years of preparation, once again a revised logo was launched in Milan and marketed as a birthday present. Besides of the fact that the subcommittees and members pay the costs for branding and the costs for the Paris based central unit will be approx. 15,000-20,000 € including three mind-numbing formal videos, the nice surprise had turned into a "Greek gift".

As Anette Rein states in her detailed research in this issue (p. 27ff), something went wrong not only during the presentation in Milan. More important to me: there is not one good reason why ICOM had to replace its logo at this very moment when it just became established worldwide: ICOM neither needed such a birthday gift, nor is it urgently needed for obvious reasons like a real colour problem with the 113 national and 30 professional subgroups. Neither was the former logo looking outdated, nor was the new one a bargain, nor was there a real need to take a stand against UNESCO symbols nor will the museum term be more emphasized by the looped "M" logo. All these rationalized justifications cut no ice, the whole matter reminds me of similar quasi activities like the costly re-naming of museums.

After Milan, ICOM has got a logo with a terrible mix of fonts of which the most prominent character seems to stem rather from embroidery than from calligraphic art having a strong 19th cent. approach. The looped "M" has almost (all or) nothing to do with (Islamic) calligraphy: the loop is a common feature of any fast handwriting. Thus, it refers to a kind of writing which disappears rapidly from our daily digital life.

Therefore, the new ICOM logo is not a tribute to the 21st century, it looks antiquated, old-fashioned and signals exactly the opposite of any modern ICOM strategy. Since the "M" stands for the Museum term, the logo contradicts the target to replace gradually widespread negative museum connotations. This is reinforced by the fact that the new M-logo is not based on a new graphical idea, because it copies/plagiarises several older logos and monograms. At least four commercial institutions used to work with the looped "M", among them the magazine "Monocle" (widely known among type designers), the American Eagle Outfitters with her former brand "Martin + Osa", the "Meert" logotype, the M letters by Roma Korolev or Ryan Magada, and "La Sociedad del marketing" – but even more important: the looped "M" is in the Catholic cultural sphere the global symbol of the Virgin Mary and is used since the 18th cent. in various modifications (sometimes with cross or moon, crown or stars, sometimes combined with an "A" for "Auspice Maria" or "Ave Maria", sometimes as a counter-symbol to IHS etc.), it can be found in many churches as a religious and political symbol on altars or ceiling paintings, on candles, textiles, pilgrimage souvenirs, or nowadays as tattoo as a sign of devotion to the Virgin Mary. And the looped

"M" is the official logo of the Marist Brothers.

Whether the new Turkish ICOM President Suay Aksoy, who is currently expected to have enough troubles anyway, likes to act her presidency under a logo with such strong Catholic background? On a background which commemorates the Virgin Mary's help of the Battles of Lepanto and Kahlenberg against Ottoman expansion?

With today's tools of internet picture research, it would have been quite easy task within the two years of preparation to find lots of examples from all parts of the world just by entering 3-5 search terms. Of course, any global institution like ICOM may simply not use (or misuse) important symbols of a particular religion. Especially not in times of global uncertainty which pushes forward the cult of the Virgin Mary. And especially not in times in which terrorists accuse the West of yet another Christian "crusade against Islam".

It might be acceptable for companies that they neglect existing religious connotations, but an institution that deals exclusively with cultural heritage should actually know common cultural heritage. Churches with a Marian iconography and Marian pilgrimages exist, God knows, in great numbers on all continents.

Therefore, one might assume hypothetically that the new ICOM logo with the Marian "M" loop was deliberately chosen to give ICOM in the future a combative Catholic connotation. That would explain – *sub tutela virginis* – why the members were not consulted on this proposal, the presentation was threaded as a surprise coup and a discussion about the new logo in Milan was avoided.

For their engaged and their important professional work, all 36,000 ICOM members need a modern, global, distinct and sustainable message behind its logo which is not to be changed at the next opportunity. As the ICOM members belong to none or different religions, its logo should not imply obvious religious connotations and avoid all messages of confrontation. Nevertheless: Enjoy the issue.

Christian Müller-Straten
Editor of EXPOTIME!, art historian

The thumbnails show examples from three different Google picture researches. © at the owners



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If art historians are right, this delicate painting shows the very rare motif of the Virgin Mary with child, together with John the Baptist and Magdalene as young girl (mind the consequences!)
Parmigianino (Francesco Mazzola, Italian, 1503-1540): Virgin with Child, St. John the Baptist, and Mary Magdalene (about 1530-40). Oil on paper, laid down on panel, 75.5 x 59.7 cm (29½ x 23 ½ in.)

Anette Rein

The new ICOM logo. Its history and hidden messages ¹



The history of the ICOM logo

The founding of ICOM – The international Council of Museums – in Paris in November 1946, has to be seen in the context of the founding of two other institutions one year before: The United Nations ² and the UNESCO ³. After the two World Wars, it was their shared will to establish peace worldwide.

The newly founded ICOM needed a convincing visual icon, to be easily recognized on the first spot and to be printed on letter paper, press kits and name cards. The use of a digital version of the logo, as indication of international partnerships on websites, came about 50 years later. ⁴

The history of the different ICOM logos seems to be closely connected with the specific political and cultural development and social transformations of the world, in which ICOM is active. Sharing the same values, the first visual identity of ICOM was strongly influenced by the UN's model "the circular logo featured the image of a map of the world in polar projection". ⁵ There was not one Nation shown as a political or cultural centre on the map – but the area of concern to the United Nations. The olive branches symbolized peace. Thus the main purpose: peace and security were represented in this UN logo. ⁶



The oldest ICOM logo, together with the UN logo. Source: e-newsletter ICOM, April p. 3, 2016

The constituent assembly of representatives of 14 nations chose for the first ICOM logo the colours black and white. ⁷ A circle surrounded the acronym ICOM, written in fat lengthened letters and positioned underneath the outline of a world map. The two larger letters "CO" of ICOM allowed the annotation of

community in the centre. Thus, the original role of uniting museum professionals from across the globe around the shared objectives of preservation, conservation, exhibition and communication of cultural objects was understood by the museum community.

In 1966, ICOM was celebrating its 20th anniversary and it was decided to develop a new logo. The black and white circle became a blue square and the acronym ICOM was printed in light blue letters. Above it, the world map was changed to an abstract circle, but still representing a world map, now also featuring as a pupil of an eye. With this design, ICOM reflected the geopolitical context of the Cold War – still promoting the cause of a global museum community under the roof of a strong neutral and universal institution. ⁸ It is not further explained how the ICOM community could recognize in this logo through "The precision and minimalism of the design [which] clearly reflected the geopolitical context of the Cold War". ⁹

In 1972, the acronym, again in black and white, was isolated and surrounded by two half circles for two years, which reminded of the former eye. ¹⁰ The world map had disappeared. In 1974 another new logo was created. Elements of the second design from 1966, the eye and the world as its pupil, were picked up again. Now, lightly changed, they were incorporated in the acronym as the ICOM-O. For the next 21 years, this forth logo in black and white represented the International Council of Museums.

In 1992, ICOM started to revamp its identity again and published a new key visual in 1995. The reasons given were the calmer geopolitical context marked by the end of the Cold War and a substantial growth in its membership. ¹¹ The colour blue was back (together with a contrasting white), associated with international working institutions. For the first time, the acronym was additionally explained as "International Council of Museums" under it (first in English and French ¹²; since 2001 also in Spanish). There were several associations combined with the different letters. The "I", with its parallel lines should symbolize the array of ICOM committees. The big "O", again central element in the logo as in 1974, was accentuated by a semi-circular comma, somehow a quotation of the former eye and

globe. Now, it should emphasize the universality of a network whose activities span the globe.¹³



The historical ICOM logos, provided by Bastien Noël

Since April 2016, each of the three ICOM e-newsletter until June was announcing the presentation of a new visual identity on July 6, 2016 during the 24th General Conference in Milan. This new logo would again emphasize ICOM's fundamental values of community and universality. The e-newsletter community was kept in suspense - the members, however, were not invited to participate in this project.

The process of developing and publishing of the new logo

The actual redesign initiative began already back in 2014 as part of the celebration of ICOM's 70th anniversary when a new strategic plan for the 2016-2019 period was launched. The rebranding project was driven by the ICOM Executive board, the Secretary, in collaboration with colleagues from the ICOM network.¹⁴ As mentioned above, the info-campaign for the new visual identity for ICOM started to be announced in the e-newsletter from April 2016. In the June e-newsletter, the first two teasers were announcing the great event for Milan.¹⁵ The last sentence of the newsletter promised "A number of surprises await to go hand in hand with the change. Get Ready!" No individual invitations to journalists were distributed, no special press conference for the presentation on the logo happened and no special announcement in the first press kit could be found.¹⁶ A real mind-blowing surprise seemed to be planned.

In the printed programme of the General Conference on p. 194, the presentation of the logo was announced for July 6, 2016, 10.40 a.m. to 11 a.m. This special event was advertised with a simple couplet without any special accentuation through design, letters or a different colour. On July 6, 2016, according to project manager Bastien Noël, the conference schedule was so delayed and many of the colleagues had to leave for their own committees, that the EC decided to repeat the presentation as a short reminder three days later on Saturday (!) at the end of the meeting of the Advisory

Board. However, here again the schedule was so delayed, that the presentation concentrated mainly on showing the logo video clip without any time left for further discussions.¹⁷

After the official presentation on Wednesday, several photo sessions took place and the new logo was distributed being printed in blue on white fabric bags. These bags contained a USB drive.



This presumably official ICOM picture from Flickr¹⁸ shows the use of the looped ICOM-"M" as a single character.

At 3pm on July 6, ICOM published on Facebook a picture collage together with the complete film as a visual documentation of the new logo.¹⁹



The photo collage of July 6, 2016, on Facebook.

This collage was carefully prepared. One month before the conference, 19 members from various backgrounds and active on social networks, were picked by ICOM and asked to take a picture together with the new logo combined with the request to maintain silence over the project.²⁰

A few weeks after the conference, the new Graphic chart together with the concept book and the colour system free to chose were sent by e-mail to the international committees to make their choice of colour for the new key visual.²¹



The official logo video, entitled "The story of ICOM's new logo"

Comments on a matter of no major concern

During these two presentations at Milan, there was no opportunity to have a longer discussion on the new design and to explain the underlying concept. At the end of the advisory board meeting it became clear by questions from the press that the international committees would not receive any financial help to implement the new logo in their printed and digital media, and that there would not be a strict time table of implementation. Bastien Noël explained later, "the implementation period already started and will last up to the end of 2016. We invited committees to use their logo digital media, and to implement it as stationary material is gradually replaced. We know that some of them already ordered documents, publications or business cards using the old logo. This is not a major concern. During the transitional period, both the old and the new logo of ICOM can be used. We worked a lot upstream in order to ease the work of committees. We prepared all the logos, both in English and in the local languages of committees, in various formats (both jpg and vector) ... My major concern all along this project was to make things as simple as possible for committees ... We will not send new cards to ICOM members. However, it is planned that annual stickers will soon be replaced by annual membership cards for ICOM members. We will use the new logo on these new cards."²²

The deeper meaning behind the 2016 logo

In the introduction of the concept book of the new visual key the following sentences explain the idea behind the logo: "Our approach was to look for a graphic element that would be a synthesis of ICOM's values, as enhanced in the new ICOM's strategic plan: independence, integrity and professionalism. This symbol must be global, largely understandable and fit all cultures and beliefs. We like to imagine this symbol as a rallying cry. It has to gather a strong community, which commit to improve and stand for museums, rather than a disparate sum of individuals. Going straight to what is essential, the new ICOM's identity gathers the strengths and expresses the role of the organisation. The monogram stands solidly. It is stable and trustworthy, a little monumental; but also modern enough to be future driven. It also embodies intelligence and creation."²³ After this declaration the book continues with an interesting overview of the word "museum" around the world and shows examples from 84 languages, in which the translation of the word museum "highlights the linguistic root [MUS]".²⁴ How museums may be called in the other 54 countries, which are members of ICOM too, is not mentioned in this book.

The chosen languages resp. the translations for "museum" were grouped in six columns with 14 languages each. 29 languages show no similarity with the word "museum", whereas the rest of the languages start with a big "M" or they have as the first three letters "MUS" in their words naming the institution. As the next step for finding a new key visual, all the translations were superposed with the result that the letter "M" appears as the most common root which can embody the full term.²⁵



Under the headline: "The body, the serif and the vertical line", associations between pillars, a serif in the reale style and the Louvre, both created in the 17th cent., shall signal a strong base, elegance and modernity.²⁸ In the chapter "The calligraphic gesture. A human link", the loop is explained as strengthening the links between people. "It expresses a weave, a network."²⁹

Interestingly, variations of a loop have been used since centuries as key visuals for different contents. Just to mention a few examples: beginning with the Christian *Ichthys* in the first century AD until the sign of Airbnb founded in 2008. Referring to these associations, the loop in a key visual shall express the dedication to an ideology, a network and a community like the Red

Ribbon, created in 1991 as a symbol of awareness and support for those living with HIV. ³⁰



Red Ribbon ³¹,
Christian Ichthys



³², Airbnb logo ³³, and the usual ampersand (Arial) ³⁴



ICOM-M with loop ³⁵

This possible shared conceptual tradition of loops was not mentioned in the concept book of ICOM. Here, the authors started from the art perspective and interpreted the loop as “the calligraphic [Islamic] gesture”, created by an artist as a manuscript gesture “why it embodies culture, humanity and civilisation”. ³⁶

For the new key visual the colour blue was chosen, as a sign for internationality, like other global players. Blue, as the colour of our planet, symbolizes “peace, serenity, continuity”. ³⁷ Under the headline: “The typography. A multi-cultural system” the fonts “Georgia” for the logotype and “Arial” for common compositions were chosen because of their availability on most computers. ³⁸

On the last pages the monogram and the logo with different try outs together with the last, official key visuals were presented. ³⁹

An example: “ICOM main English” ⁴⁰



The looped ICOM “M” can stand alone – as seen on the distributed bags during the conference. ⁴¹

Like the loop, the “M” as a single monogram has a long tradition. It is used in Christianity as the symbol for the Virgin Mary – as the two art historians Dr. Adelheid Straten and Dr. Christian Müller-Straten independently from each other observed, when they saw the new ICOM logo for the first time. ⁴³ It is used in several symbolical contexts, often combined with an “A”, with a loop or

cross, or as a counter symbol to IHS: “This symbol consisting of the intertwined letters A and M is called *Auspice Maria*, a monogram of the Virgin Mary. *Auspice Maria* is Latin for ‘Under the protection of Mary’ and is commonly found in Catholic religious art, on churches, and inscribed on jewelry. It is sometimes (incorrectly) referred to or used as a stand-in for the salutation ‘Ave Maria’”. ⁴⁴

The monogram of Maria symbolising *Auspice Maria* / Ave



Maria, here stitched within a stitching frame ⁴²

Without discussing if the new ICOM “M” has to be seen as “plagiarism” of existing commercial or religious logos/monograms or not, one may say that the new ICOM key visual (the looped “M”) has indeed very strong connotations with one of the main traditional Christian symbols, which since centuries shall mediate the contemplator the confidence to be a member of a global network, which successfully shares and stands for its worldviews, interests and duties. ⁴⁵

The introduction in the concept book announces a graphic element, which “We like to imagine this symbol as a rallying cry” being “the synthesis of ICOM’s values, as enhanced in the new ICOM’s strategic plan”. ⁴⁶ The purposes of this strategic plan have been encapsulated in three following key words: INDEPENDENCE / INTEGRITY / PROFESSIONALISM as explained in the Working Papers of the 31st Ordinary General Assembly. ⁴⁷ There, on one and a half pages the three keywords are further exemplified. If one compares some of the used words in this explanation with the text in the Concept Book, one discovers only a few corresponding words like: museum and international, which are mentioned several times in different contexts. The three key words of the strategic plan: independence, integrity, professionalism together with heritage and members are mentioned on p. 3 only. Words like cultural, ethic, illicit trade, tangible and intangible as further basic words in the strategic plan of ICOM, are not mentioned in the explanations of the Concept Book at all. It remains open, how far the new key visual in its aesthetic and symbolic appearance mirrors chosen ICOM values in accordance with the strategic plan 2016-2022 at all. ⁴⁸

Why? The perspectives

To develop a new key visual for an association like the International Museum Council with over 36,000 members in 138 countries is a very ambitious and challenging project, while the former logo (*1995) is internationally distributed and well known. It is a time-consuming project for all participants. But why at all a new logo was needed and why was it to be published in this very moment?

1) An “inexpensive” birthday present?

One reason for the new key visual was the idea to celebrate 70 years of ICOM together with the 24th General Conference in Milan with a new logo as an appropriate (not exactly cheap) birthday present. As the former President Prof. Dr. Hans-Martin Hinz together with the ICOM Director General, Prof. Dr. Anne-Catherine Robert-Hauglustaine expressed in their foreword in the Annual Report 2015: “In 2016, we celebrate the dedication, integrity and professionalism of our members, who have allowed ICOM to come this far and be as active, ambitious and extensive as it is today”.⁴⁹

2) An urgently needed sign of Independence?

However, this was not the only official reason to create a new logo. According to the Chair of the Advisory Board, Prof. Dr. Regine Schulz: “With the new key visual the International Council of Museums will strengthen its identity as an own institution, independently from the UNESCO with which ICOM was closely connected since its foundation in 1946. In the meantime, ICOM has developed many international programs for museums independently from the UNESCO. We choose the ‘M’ as a single monogram to express our strenght for our museum community which means more than 36,000 members in 138 countries and territories”.⁵⁰ As the Director General of ICOM at the end of the advisory committee meeting exemplified: the new key visual was created as an expression of the new strategic plan (2016-2022). Actually, it seems to be unclear in how far the new key visual may represent and emphasize ICOM’s fundamental values of “community and universality” as announced at the end of the ICOM e-newsletter from April 2016. In the Concept Book, “universality” is not mentioned once and “community” several times on p.3 only.

3) A stronger emphasis on “Museum”?

According to the Director General, during the next three years there will be another intensive work for creating the ICOM-story behind the new logo as a visualisation of the new strategic plan - besides the content MUSEUM.⁵¹

Notes:

1 Thanks to Bastien Noel (ICOM Hq.) who answered many questions concerning the conference and the history of the six logos (email August 4, 2016). The different stories behind the first five

logos can be found under <http://icom.museum/news/news/article/new-visual-identity-for-icom-the-saga-of-icom-logos/> (accessed August 4, 2016). But, on the website of ICOM the different logos are not published together with the text.

2 The constitutional meeting happened in Lake Success, New York, on October 24, 1945.

3 UNESCO was founded in London on November 16, 1945.

4 The first website was online in 1990.

5 ICOM e-newsletter of April 2016. The information about the history of the ICOM logos are referring to the three ICOM e-newsletters (April-June 2016) which were meant to serve as attunement of the members to the presentation of the new visual identity in Milan. The design of the UN logo is “a map of the world representing an azimuthal equidistant projection centred on the North Pole, inscribed in a wreath consisting of crossed conventionalized branches of the olive tree, in gold on a field of smoke-blue with all water areas in white. The projection of the map extends to 60 degrees south latitude, and includes five concentric circles”. <http://www.un.org/en/sections/about-un/logo-and-flag/index.html> (accessed August 6, 2016).

6 <http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/maplib/flag.htm> (accessed August 6, 2016)

7 These 14 nations were: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK and US. (E-newsletter April 2016)

8 E-newsletter Mai 2016

9 ICOM e-newsletter April 2016

10 In the e-newsletter from May 2016, this third ICOM logo was not mentioned. Thanks to Bastien Noël, who sent me all the logos as pictograms together with the years of their creation.

11 ICOM E-newsletter June 2016

12 The video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FvTgKls4EFU> (access August 4, 2016) shows aspects of the development of the logo in 1995.

13 E-newsletter June 2016

14 Noël explained the process of a selected participation of ICOM members as follows: First, I worked with ICOM International Committee for Marketing and Public Relations. Then I addressed an email to National Committees and asked them to suggest names in order to gather a kind of informal rebranding working group. All along, I was working with Michael Ryan, President of the Working Group Committee on ICOM Strategic Plan”. (eMail August 19, 2016). Noël will publish an article about “How and Why we rebranded ICOM” on the website of ICOM (e-mail of August 4, 2016)

15 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eLsafjX13yl&feature=youtu.be> (accessed August 4, 2016) published on June 14, 2016. The second teaser can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=id8D3AUS2vM&feature=youtu.be> (accessed August 4, 2016).

16 I received the first press kit for the conference per e-mail on June 27, 2016 from the ICOM Milano 2016 Registration Department, c/o K.I.T. Group GmbH. In the printed press kit, which I picked up in the press office during the conference, the info about the presentation of the new ICOM identity was added as the last lines under the heading “Content and Highlights”. Whereas, in the press release for journalists the “launch of ICOM’s new visual identity” was only mentioned without any date of time.

17 The Story of ICOM’s new logo. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rdTpPREtics> (accessed August 9, 2016), published July 6, 2016 (1:30 min.).

18 https://c2.staticflickr.com/8/7294/27537873613_6945631904_b.jpg (accessed August 4, 2016)

19 <https://www.flickr.com/photos/143526034@N06/28153126295> (accessed August 4, 2016)

20 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rdTpPREtics&feature=youtu.be> (accessed August 4, 2016)

21 Thanks to Soeren La Cour Jensen, who participated in this pre-photo shooting. (Noël, e-mail of August 4, 2016)

21 The mentioned design agency on these two documents is c-album, Graphic design studio, www.c-album.fr, which, however, until August 4, 2016 did not mention this project on its own

website. "Each committee can chose a particular colour except the blue range." ICOM's new identity. International Committees 2016, p. 2

22 Noël, e-mail of August 4, 2016

23 Concept book 2016, p. 3

24 *ibid.*, p. 6

25 *ibid.*, p. 8

26 *ibid.*, p. 9

27 *ibid.*, p. 10

28 It was the Louvre housing the constituent assembly of ICOM in 1946. Concept book 2016, p. 10

29 Concept book 2016, p. 10-11. According to Noël, the designers "created the loop basing their work on the oriental [!] calligraphic gesture" (e-mail of August 4, 2016).

30 "The red ribbon is the universal symbol of awareness and support for those living with HIV. The red ribbon has inspired other charities to utilise the symbol, for example breast cancer awareness has adopted a pink version". <https://www.worldaidstay.org/the-red-ribbon> (accessed August 8, 2016)

31 https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rote_Schleife (accessed August 8, 2016). This loop exists also in different colours for different opportunities.

32 This Christian symbol was used primarily amongst Christians in early history (1st and 2nd century A.D.) https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/8/86/Ichthys_symbol.svg/2000px-Ichthys_symbol.svg.png (accessed August 8, 2016).

33 Airbnb is a private online marketplace that enables people to list, find, then rent vacation homes. Airbnb.de (accessed August 8, 2016)

34 Noël reads the loop as "an ampersand" (e-mail of August 8, 2016).

35 Concept book 2016, p 13

36 Concept book 2016, p. 12

37 Concept Book 2016, p. 16

38 Concept Book 2016, p. 14-15

39 Concept Book 2016 pp.20-31

40 Thanks to the K.I.T. Group in Berlin, who sent me the single logos. K.I.T. was the organizing secretariat besides the organisers ICOM and ICOM ITALY, responsible for the organisation of the conference.

41 Concept Book 2016, p. 27

42 https://www.etsy.com/market/ave_maria (accessed August 9, 2016)

43 "The new ICOM-M, which was invented to raise the attention more to 'M-words like Museum' is not a new compelling symbol, it's a plagiarism. It is – except for a negligible detail – the looped 'M' standing for the Virgin Mary, which is commonly known in the Catholic world... By a simple online picture research anyone can find today lots of examples; but there are even more undigitized in emblematic religious art." ["Das neue ICOM-M, das angeblich den Bestandteil „Museum“ stärker hervorheben soll., ist ein Plagiat. Es ist (bis auf ein unerhebliches Detail) das seit dem 19. Jahrhundert im katholischen Raum bekannte, im Mittelteil verschlungene Mariensymbol M... Durch einfaches Bildgockeln kommt man jederzeit auf genügend Beispiele... " Christian Müller-Straten by e-mail to the German Museum discussion list [museums-themen] and to the new ICOM President Suay Aksoy (July 21, 2016). Graphical artists have shown in an additional discussion on the new ICOM "M" on Twitter that it copies the looped M of several products and firms (http://www.underconsideration.com/brandnew/archives/new_logo_for_icom_by_c_album.php#disqus_thread): Monocle, MARTIN + OSA, and La Società del Marketing (accessed August 16, 2016)

44 <http://symboldictionary.net/?p=2255> (accessed August 9, 2016)

45 To speak with Bastien Noël words, the ICOM design of the monogram "can be read according to your own sensibility". (Noël, eMail of August 8, 2016)

46 Concept Book 2016, p. 3

47 "Working Documents", p. 62, online p. 8. http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/Strategic_Plan/ICOM_STRATEGIC_PLAN_2016-2022_ENG.pdf (accessed August 11, 2016)

48 Of course, the blue colour is of the key visual is mentioned as signalling internationality – one value of ICOM. Concept Book 2016, p. 16

49 ICOM Report 2015, p. 3. http://icom.museum/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/Activity_report/ICOM_activity_report2015_eng.pdf (accessed August 12, 2016)

50 Schulz, eMail August 16, 2016. "There was also a need for clarification in the ICOM network. Year after year, ICOM's committees and programmes started to develop their own identity and it resulted to a visual chaos. We needed a new system (more than a logo, the logo is less important than the system). Also, ICOM past logo fit badly with partners' visual tags, especially those of museums which rebranded themselves these past years. This entire framework leads to dissonant brand architecture". Noël, eMail of August 19, 2016

51 Many thanks to my colleagues and friends Marie-Paule Jungblut and Ralf Ceplak for their helpful comments.

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