Occasional Seminar

Decolonizing Museum Practice in the Philippines: Preventive Conservation and the National Museum of the Philippines

Dr. Ana Maria Theresa P. Labrador, Assistant Director, Chief Curator, and Head of Collections Management, National Museum of the Philippines

Thursday September 20th
Saunders 345
3:00 - 4:30 pm
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

Preventive conservation is in a period of transformation as numerous practitioners within and outside the conservation field reshape its principles and practice. Conventional tools of conservation that protect cultural material from the ‘ten agents of deterioration’ remain central to the work, but have opaque relationships to the people for whom objects are conserved. This presentation uses Philippine case studies to argue for more anthropological approaches to conservation that recognize and respect the contexts of objects, people, and place. The case studies of ecclesiastical Church collections, and museum environments in the Philippines, demonstrate the interdependency of objects, people, place and time in more holistic and conceptual conservation frameworks.

About Our Speaker

Dr. Labrador (M. Phil, Ph.D. in Anthropology, Cambridge University; MA in Museum and Gallery Management, City University London, UK) has extensive field experience studying ethnicity, representation and material culture in Luzon (Philippines) and expatriate Filipinos in Italy, Singapore and Malaysia. Her previous appointments include Associate Professor of Anthropology at Ateneo de Manila University, Curator of the University of the Philippines University Museum, the Jorge B. Vargas Museum and Filpiniana Research Center. She has published on several of her research projects and served as the Vice President of the International Committee for Training of Personnel (ICOM), editorial board member for Journal of Museum Management and Curatorship, and Honorary Academic fellow at the University of Melbourne’s Center for Cultural Materials Conservation.

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