

Award for a Study in Cultural Management 2018

Report of the Jury

Since 2005, the Fund for Cultural Management at the University of Antwerp has awarded a prize for an unpublished study on cultural management. Alternately, the Fund for Cultural Management awards a master's thesis and a doctoral study on cultural management. PhDs were eligible for the 2018 Award. The fund aims through this award to stimulate the quality of management in the arts and cultural sector and give opportunities to young researchers.

The jury of the Award consisted of six experts from both the academic world and the arts and cultural sector: Patrick De Pelsmacker (professor of Marketing and Marketing Communications at the University of Antwerp), Ian King (professor in Aesthetics and Management at the University of the Arts and London College of Fashion), Johan Kolsteeg (professor of Cultural Entrepreneurship and Cultural Leadership at the University of Groningen), Annick Schramme (professor and academic director of the Master in Cultural Management at the University of Antwerp and Academic Director of the Master in Fashion Management and the programme Leadership in Culture at the Antwerp Management School), Olga Van Oost (coordinator of the Flemish Museums Platform and advisor museology at FARO, the Flemish Center for Cultural Heritage and professor of Art Sociology at the Free University of Brussels). Ernest Van Buynder from the Fund for Cultural Management was chairman of the jury. Annick Schramme was involved in some of the doctoral studies. Therefore she didn't participate in the voting, but she provided the necessary background information when required.

The Fund for Cultural Management received doctoral studies from universities in Belgium, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Italy, Estonia and Spain, dealing with a variety of topics. For example, one study was submitted on the value of ethnic identity for creative entrepreneurs, another on the sociology of culture's creative processes in an urban context, while another PhD dealt with performance evaluation in the arts and yet another study showed us a configurational perspective on success in small-sized creative organisations. The jury also received PhDs regarding very different contexts, such as a qualitative study of drivers for change in Norwegian museums and archives; a PhD on Urban Heritage Conservation, Management and Development in Florence and Edinburgh; a dissertation on industrial heritage production in Taiwan; a PhD titled 'The Context of Changed Legal Status of Estonian Public Cultural Organisations' and a doctoral study on Community Engagement in English Museums.

The jury recognises the wide variety of topics and finds this a great added value. However, it does not make it easier to evaluate the submitted theses from a comparative perspective. The jury took the following criterion into account during the selection.

- Clarity of the research questions and the quality of the conclusions and recommendations
- Innovation in terms of the research process and methodology
- Contribution to the field in terms of new knowledge
- Quality of the presentation, the writing and the structure

After two discussion rounds, the jury retained a **shortlist of three candidates**.

The first nominee is **Renate Buijze** with the PhD “Philanthropy for the Arts in the Era of Globalisation. International Tax Barriers for Charitable Giving”, Erasmus University of the Arts, The Netherlands. This study addresses a topic that is highly relevant to cultural organisations and governments, namely the tax aspects of donations to cultural and arts institutions. The jury finds the research questions very clear and the conclusions thoroughly researched and well presented. Buijze has applied a sophisticated research methodology based on various approaches, including experiments. The study offers an international survey of the character of philanthropy and critically explores future developments. Furthermore Buijze has succeeded in presenting an original and technical topic in an excellent way. This study is likely to become a valuable resource in the arts and cultural sector, both because of the relevance of the topic and the excellence of the research.

The second nominee is **Laura Gibson** with the PhD “Decolonising South African Museums in a Digital Age: Re-imagining the Iziko Museums’ Natal Nguni Catalogue and Collection”, King’s College London, United Kingdom. Gibson tackles a relevant and challenging topic, not only for South African museums but also globally for museums that hold collections accumulated during the colonial period. She presented a well written, well researched contemporary anthropological study. This thesis demands engagement with a difficult and complex subject, yet Gibson handles salient research questions in a critical way. In addition, Gibson links two current trends, namely decolonisation and the role of digitisation in this process. The study investigates the management of the museums, but also analyses and formulates recommendations for policy makers. That is why the study is relevant in terms of both management and policy.

The third nominee is **Marjo van Schaik** with the PhD “Spaces of Culture. A trialectic analysis of the recent developments of cultural venues in Amsterdam”, Tilburg University. Van Schaik provided innovative research into the role of cultural venues in a changing society. Here too, the research question is relevant and contemporary. The study is based on an innovative "trialectic" method using various and challenging literature to support the research. The dissertation shows how important cultural management is in finding a dynamic and context-specific interaction between spatial-economic, social and artistic interests. She really makes a contribution to the field regarding policy recommendations.

After the final deliberation, the jury indicated **LAURA GIBSON** as the winner. Gibson obtained a PhD in Digital Humanities at King's College London, United Kingdom in 2018. She is currently working as a lecturer at the Department of Digital Humanities at King's College London.

In the selection, the jury used the following argumentation.

- The research questions are highly relevant and clearly defined. The conclusions and recommendations are qualitative and useful and contribute globally to the field of arts and cultural management.
- The innovative methodology is based on various scientific approaches and offers a thorough scientific analysis.
- The study presents an important and challenging topic, both for South Africa and globally. Therefore, the importance of the study cannot be underestimated.
- The study was well written and presented in a qualitative and comprehensive way.

Based on these qualities, the jury rewards Laura Gibson's PhD "Decolonising South African Museums in a Digital Age: Re-imagining the Iziko Museums' Natal Nguni Catalogue and Collection" with the Award for a Study in Cultural Management 2018.