

The Women's Museum, Norway

Nominated Museum of the year 2022

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Gender In / Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society

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Nobody comes from a place without women
(Ane Landfald, 2017)

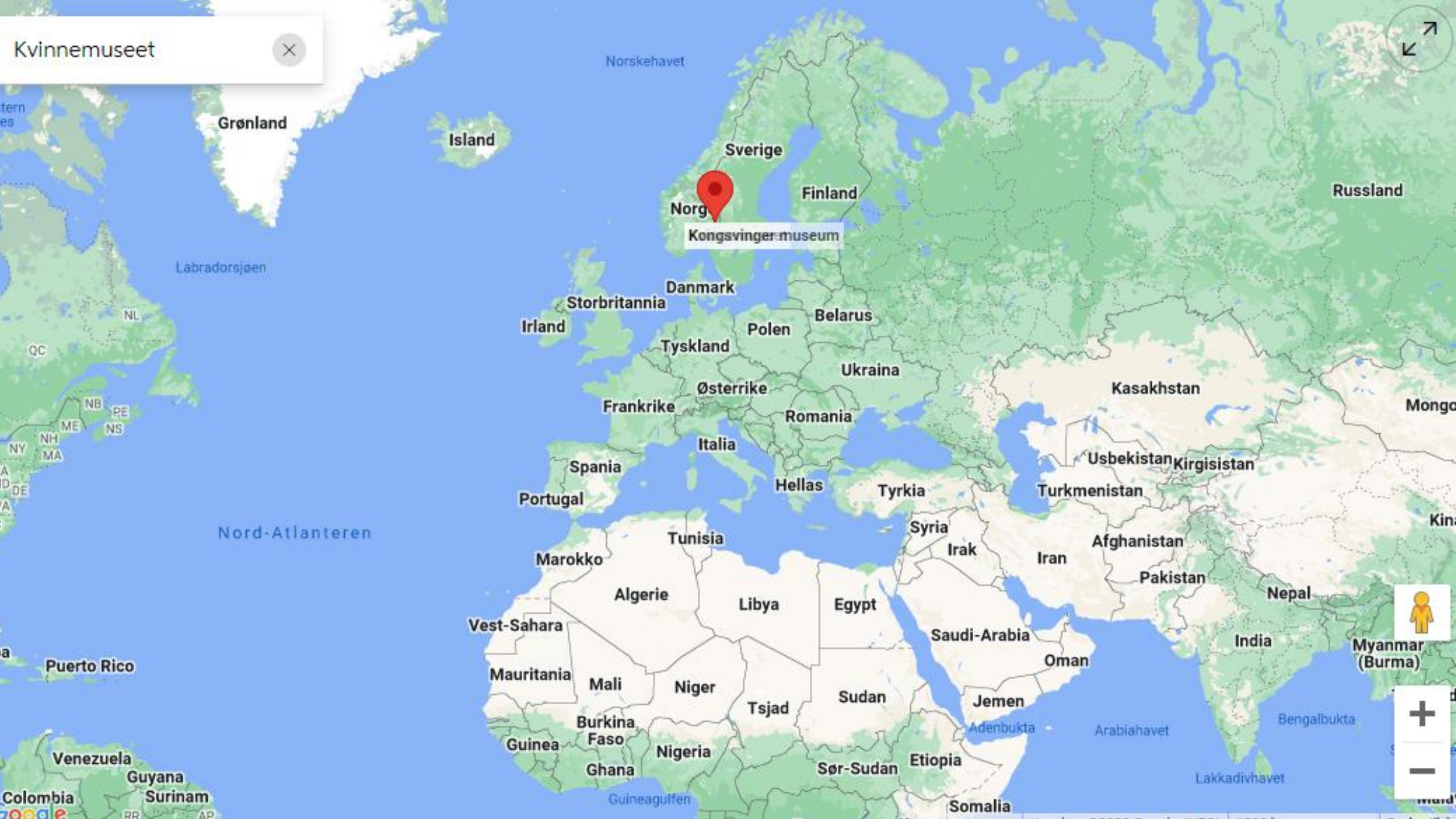
Nobody comes from a place without women

However, when we study cities, places and museums based on the memory landscape that honours important people and events, the stories about women are fewer and often less significant than stories about men.

Why are roads, places, and public monuments mostly named after men, and museums predominantly structured according to a patriarchal narrative?

How does this affect our understanding of our common collective identity and cultural heritage?

Kvinnemuseet ✕





Dagny Juel (1867-1901)

Educated pianist who also wrote poetry and plays

Worked as translator and curator for the great male artists of her time – e.g. Edvard Munch and August Strindberg

Part of the bohemian artists group around turn of 1900 – mainly Berlin/Poland

Married to Polish writer Stanislaw Przybyszewski

Life ended tragically in 1901 when she was shot by family friend Wladyslaw Emeryk in Tbilisi, Georgia



Founded in the 1980's – opened in 1995

- **Purpose:** collecting, studying and disseminating the history and culture of Norwegian women. It had a clear feminist approach and an emancipatory vision “to contribute to a better development of society”.
- **Academic influence:** Emerging academic fields of women's history (now: women's and gender history) and interdisciplinary women's studies (now: gender studies) whose early goal was to increase women's visibility and status.
- **Goal:** Raise awareness of the absence of women and perspectives on women's history in Norwegian museums. Making the invisible visible.

Two different positions

- First, to establish proper women's museums where staff and visitors can focus exclusively on women's history and culture ("A room of one's own")
- The second approach was to change existing practices within established museums.
- These dual, internal and external functions of the women's museum can be related to the conclusion drawn by Kari Gaarder Losnedahl, the first scholar in Norway to specifically research gender and museums. In 1993 she argued that museums need to take two approaches to render their collections more gender equitable.



Familien Juel



Her er en af de mange billeder af familien Juel, som er kendt for deres store samling af kunst og antikviteter. Billedet viser en gruppe mennesker i et elegant interiør, som er typisk for den tid.



arbit-årsbil



Til Z
Sov!
Nu de vrede
Som om dagen talte
Solen synker bag
Himmel af jern
Sov!
Som
Sært de brede
Vækker stormen over
Vækker storm i dia
Stormen åbner da
Sov læ



CAMILLA COLLETT

(1813-1895)

var forfatter og taleperson for kvinners rettigheter. Hennes berømtede roman *Ansamlens datter* utkom i 1864. Hun argumenterte offentlig for kvinners frigjøring flere tiår før det første organisert kvinnesaksbevegelse i Norge. Å delta i offentlig ordskifte var spesielt som svært upassende for en kvinne. Hun kjempet ikke for reformer, men for respekt og likeverdi

CAMILLA COLLETT (1813-1895) was an author and a spokesperson for women's rights. Her groundbreaking novel *Ansamlens datter* (The Ancestress's Daughters) was published in 1864. She persisted in public discussions concerning the liberation of women for several decades before any organized women's rights movement was established in Norway. Debating publicly like this was considered incredibly inappropriate for women at the time. She did not fight for reforms, but for respect and equal worth.



EBBA DONS

(1843-1908)

berømt i mange kilder for sin åpne salong. Hun samlet mange unge kunstnere og litteraturer på slutten av 1800-tallet rundt sin salongtid varde samovare. Slike semi-offentlige samlingssteder var åpne for kvinner, og utgjorde viktige diskusjonsarenaer for kultur- og samfunnsutviklingen.

EBBA DONS (1843-1908) is mentioned in several sources as the owner of an open salon. She gathered a number of young artists and literates at the end of the 19th Century around her "salong" were essential. Such semi-public gathering places were open to women, and functioned as important forums for discussions about cultural and societal developments.



AASTA HANSTEEN

(1824-1908)

var maler, forfatter og forkjemper for kvinnesaken - ikke bare med ord, men ved handling. I en tid da kvinner ikke kunne gå på gaten uten ansatt og stoffet ikke bare ut på kveldstid, gjorde hun forord ved å gå alene på kafé etter mørkets frembrudd

AASTA HANSTEEN (1824-1908) was a painter, author and women's rights activist - protesting with actions as well as words. In a time when women could not walk the street without a chaperone and not go out at night, she showed everyone by visiting cafes alone after dark.







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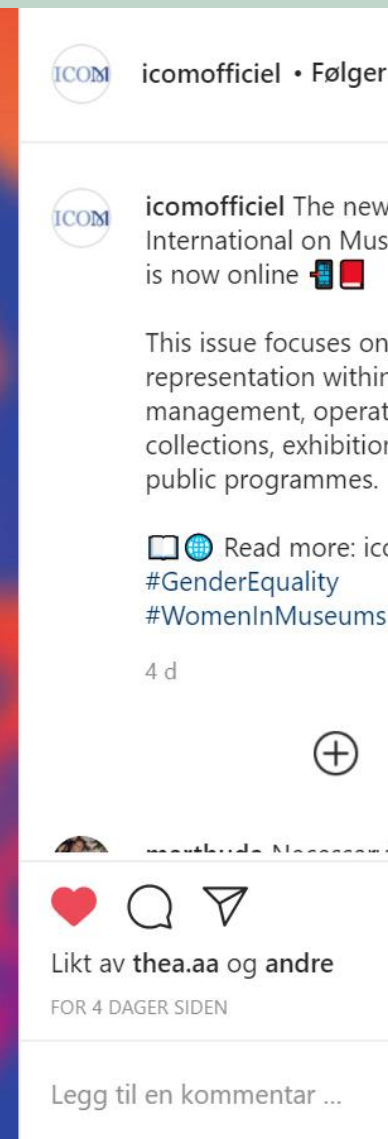
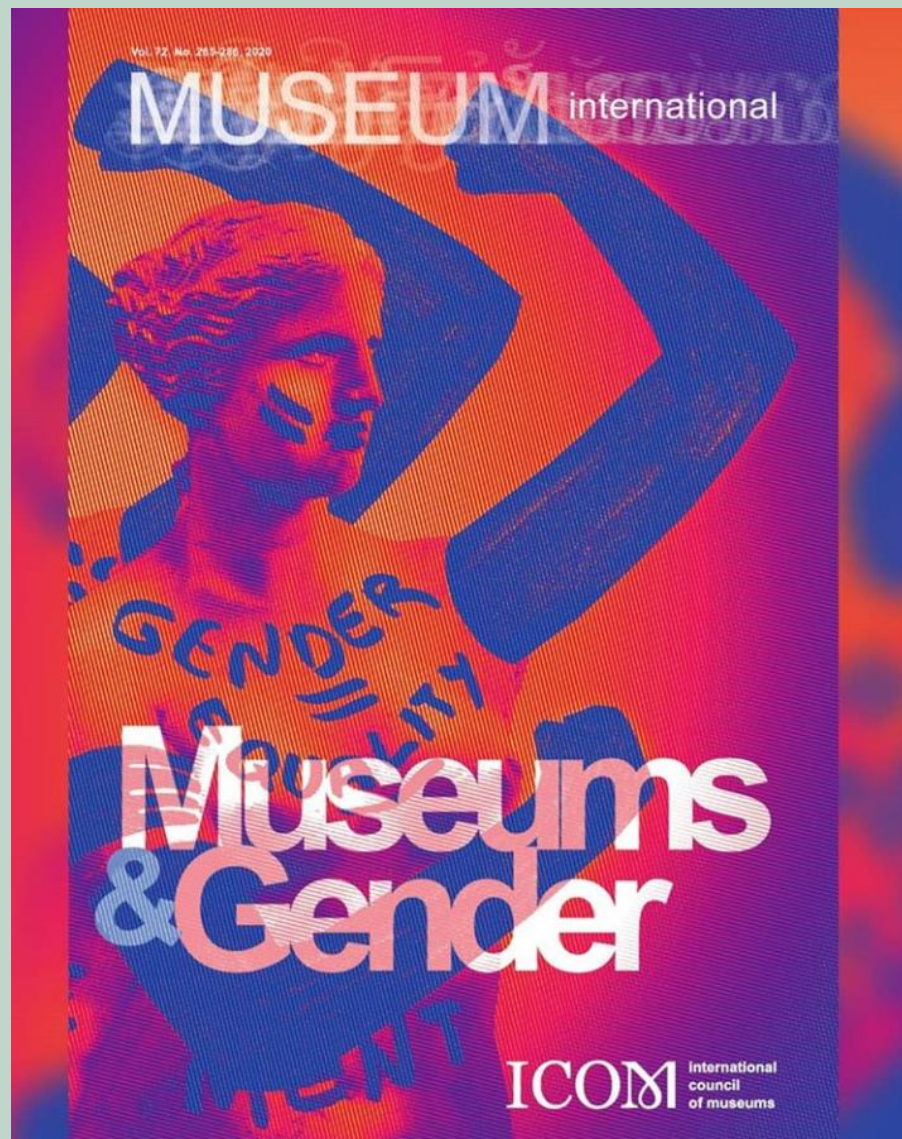
En hyllest til Monica Kristensen

2020: 25th anniversary

Mona Holm and Thea Aarbakke published an article in ICOM (International council of museums) in the issue about Museums and Gender.

“There she goes again: A project on Gender representation in Norwegian Museum’s Collections and Exhibition practices.”

A collaboration with members of the Norwegian Museum Network for Women’s History. (Established 2004)

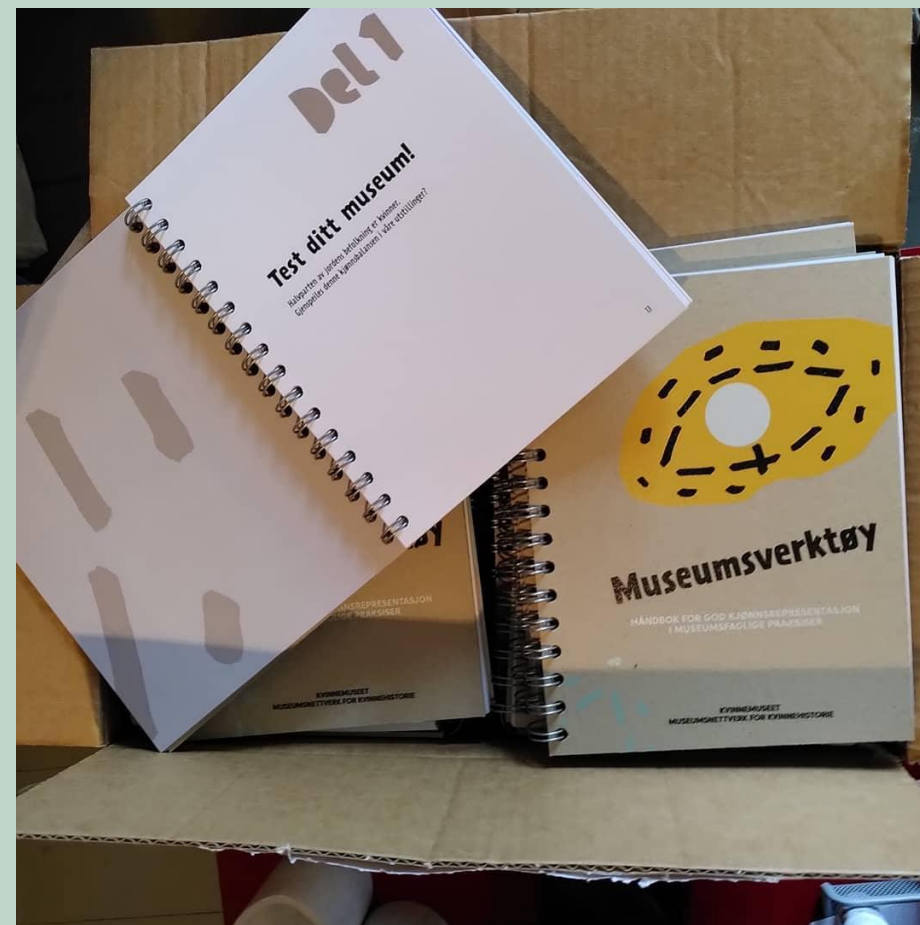


There she goes again...

- Norway – the land of «gender equality»
- Has this development led to an increased focus on women's history in museums?
- The issue was raised at the 2018 meeting in the Museum Network for Women's History, the first meeting after the conscious raising #MeToo movement. The network saw an opportunity to mobilise since patriarchal power structures were again on the agenda.
- There she goes again: A project to develop a methodology to help Norwegian museums become more gender democratic, both in terms of curatorial work with their collections and their exhibitions. – supported by the Art Council Norway's programme «Museums and their Societal Role 2018-2020»

There she goes again...

- Research was conducted in three different areas:
- Museum's strategic documents/Museum practices/Museum self-reflections
- All three areas pointed in the same direction: There is a considerable gender gap in Norwegian museums. Men are still considered the universal subject, while women are frequently understood in narrowly gendered terms, or put into the «diversity» category. Often women are left out entirely, misplaced, or forgotten in museum exhibitions.



Thea Aarbakke, Mona Pedersen, Mona Holm.

«Museum tools.» A practical approach to identifying and implementing gender perspectives in collections and exhibition practices.

New project in progress: The value of gender in a museum hierarchy

- Phase two; The value of gender in a museum hierarchy
- The objective is to develop courses and methods to help implement women and gender perspectives in all aspects of working in a museum.
- Funding secured from The Arts Council Norway
- Seven museums & Kilden participating.

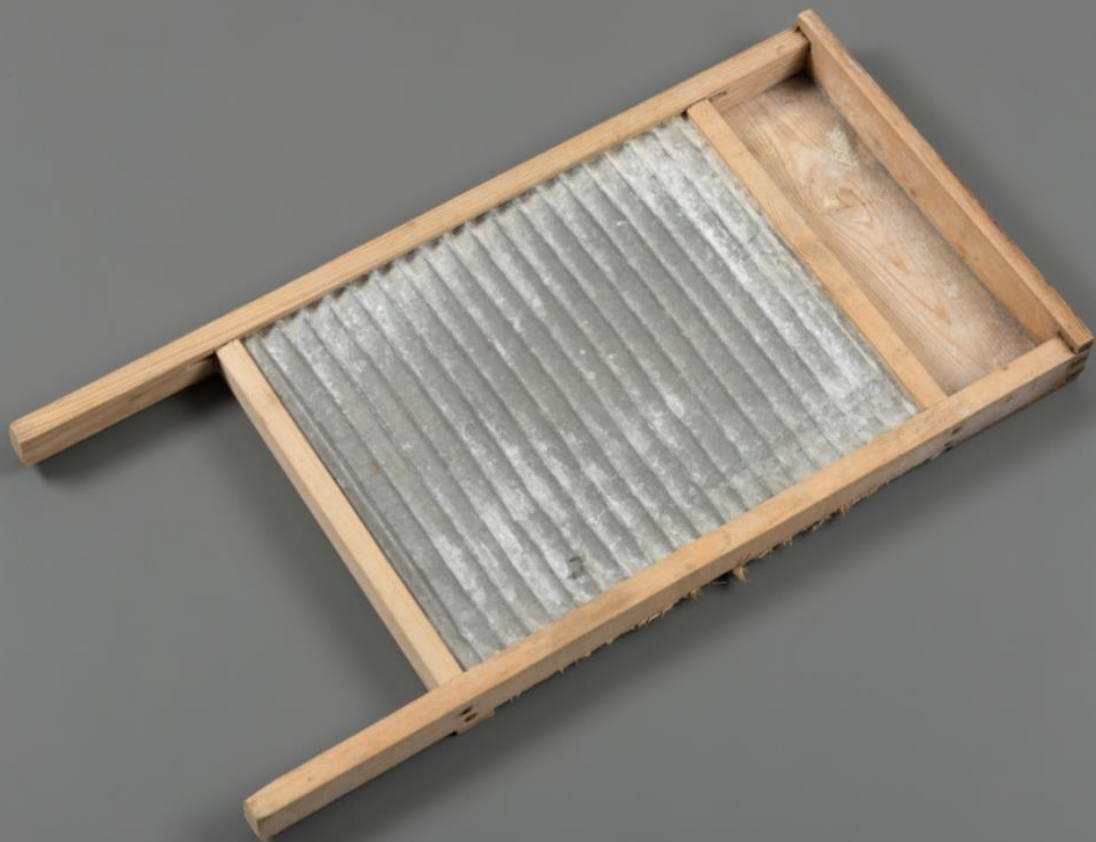
What objects would you put in a women's museum?

Collection:

Tangible and non tangible culture

Objects and contexts

Collecting stories





Women's museums around the World



100 museums, 21 of them virtual, 47 initiatives (01/2021)



FOUNDATION

I A W M
International Association
of Women's Museums

2012
Alice Springs
Australia



Austria



Vietnam



Australia



Gorée/Senegal



Istanbul



Mexico City

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