

The Beatles and The Netherlands

A comparison of collecting and presenting practices



Chen Zhixi

June 2019

Master Thesis

Master of Museology, Reinwardt Academy, Amsterdam

The Beatles and The Netherlands
A comparison of collecting and presenting practices

Chen Zhixi

June 2019

Master Thesis
Master of Museology, Reinwardt Academy, Amsterdam

Supervisor: Judy Jaffe-Schagen

Welcome to our Fan Club,
all our friends in Holland,
we are glad to have you
join.

Best wishes to everyone

The Beatles—

John Lennon

Paul McCartney

Ringo Starr

George Harrison

Letter from the Beatles to the Dutch Beatles Fanclub, 1963

Table of contents

Abstract	5
Introduction	6
Theoretical context: Different practices of making popular music heritage	10
Methodology	13
Section 1 The Beatles becoming heritage	17
Chapter 1 Special objects of the Beatles collected by fans compared to objects collected by museums	17
Chapter 2 Heritages veiled in private houses of fans and heritages displayed in public museum exhibitions	30
Chapter 3 What does the song mean to you: the music of the Beatles in individual stories and exhibition narrations	36
Section 2 Recordings of communication in communications	40
Chapter 4	
Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and the Bed-in for Peace movement in <i>Amsterdam the Magic Centre</i>	40
Tropenmuseum and the searching for George Harrison's sitar in <i>the Sixties</i>	42
Museum het Grachtenhuis and the display of the Beatles' canal cruise	44
Textile Museum Tilburg and <i>the Beatles, Populaire Stof</i>	46
Hilton Amsterdam and its 50th-anniversary events for the Bed-in for Peace	49

Section 3 We can work it out	52
Chapter 5 Narratives of the Beatles as a heritage from museums and fan experts, and the environment of them	52
Chapter 6 The issue of growing digital archives	58
Conclusion	61
Discussion	64
Chapter 7	
How can museums build a long term relationship with fan communities?	64
Thought of a new Beatles museum in Amsterdam curated by fans and museum professionals	66
Bibliography	69

Abstract

This research thesis compares different institutional (professional) ways of dealing with objects of heritage related to popular music and musicians, and to reflect on them in relation to non institutional collecting and presenting practices, such as those of fan communities. The main question of this study sets out to answer is ‘how do the institutional and non institutional ways of heritage making relate to each other, and what can we learn from his comparison in terms of professional practice?’ The topic is explored in a case study focusing on the English rock/pop band the Beatles and their traces in the Netherlands. The Netherlands, as a specific location, plays an important part in the Beatles’ biography as the location where two major events took place.

This is an interdisciplinary research that combines museology with heritage studies, sociology and popular culture studies. It is a qualitative research that sets out to collect three sets of data: stories, objects, and music. These sets of data are of course intertwined.

The research shows that communications seldom happens between museums and the Beatles’ fans in the Netherlands. Museums have abilities and possibilities to involve fan communities in their collecting and presenting practices, but they stand in limited conditions. Fans are holding their values towards the heritage, but still relying on the power of institutions to authority.

Keywords: popular music; cultural heritage; museums; fans; communities; Beatles.

Introduction

This research thesis compares different institutional (professional) ways of dealing with objects of heritage related to popular music and musicians, and reflects on them concerning non-institutional collecting and presenting practices, such as those of fan communities. The main question of this study sets out to answer is ‘how do the institutional and non-institutional ways of heritage making relate to each other, and what can we learn from this relationship in terms of professional practices and notions of authority?’

The topic is explored by focusing on the tangible and intangible heritage connected to English rock/pop band the Beatles as collected and presented in particular in the Netherlands. The Netherlands, as a specific location, plays an important part in the Beatles’ biography as the location where two major events took place. The events are the tour in 1964 and band member John Lennon’s art movement with his partner Yoko Ono in 1969. More in general, the band continues to influence generations of Dutch fans as well as a variety of museums, in their collecting and exhibiting activities. This pop group became one of the most influential subjects in the art revolution of the new music genre and counterculture in the 20th century. It was responsible for a change in the history of relationships between cultural heritage institutions and fan communities. The research has been focuses on both aspects, i.e. on the professional and on the fan. The aim of the research is to come to a comparison of collecting and presentation practices done by among other museums, fans, and locations that play a role as a heritage place.

The process of heritage making of The Beatles’ in the Netherlands by different stakeholders, will be studied by comparing museum collections/exhibitions with collections built by different generations of fans. Since this research is with intimate emotions and sensitiveness all along, which concerns museums’ considerations to communicating with their audiences and the personal memories of the fan

communities, data collecting is conducted in face-to-face interviews in the workplace of the interviewees. For museum professionals, who have been working on relevant topics before, the interviews took place in their museum buildings into the genuine working space where they found and developed the ideas. For the Beatles fans, interviews took place at their personal spaces where they keep the objects or memories about the band, and sometimes this is within their living space.

The research project sets out to collect three sets of data: stories, objects, and music. These sets of data are of course intertwined. In the chapter on methodology I will elaborate on these sets. The thesis is divided into four parts. In the first section, three sets of data are laid out. The data of objects is first positioned in the related historical events to see the process of collecting and preserving in the Beatles' chronology, and the next part focuses on demonstrating detailed differences between objects in possessions of fans and heritage institutions, with information collected in the interviews. Data of music stands between themes of tangible (objects) and intangible (stories) heritage. It will be shown based on the stories and compared with forms or functions. The second section presents stories categorized in cultural heritage institutions. Stories of making the exhibitions or public events are the axes with stories involved fans building around. Section three presents stories of fan communities outside the museums. The first chapter in this section discusses communities' histories and long existed issues, and the second chapter focuses on recent changes mainly on the issues of growing digital archives. After the conclusion, the last part addresses some discussions on how museums can build a long term relationship with fan communities, and discusses a new Beatles museum in Amsterdam that is managed by fans and museum professionals together.

Personally, I would like to introduce this paper with a review of the 1998 musical drama film *Velvet Goldmine*¹. It tells the story of a fictional pop star Brian Slade, mainly focusing on his life and career from the late 1960s to 70s in Britain. Ten years

¹ Haynes, Todd. *Velvet Goldmine* [Motion picture]. United Kingdom: Filmfour International. 1998.

after he faked his own murder and withdrawn from the public since then, a British journalist Arthur Stuart is assigned to write an article about this failed stunt. When Stuart asked if he got the assignment because of his background or his knowledge in rock music, the editor answered, “no, because you remember”. In this research, I reached out to find the people who have knowledge in music history: the museums, and the people who remember: the fans. Same as Arthur Stuart I started this “Citizen Kane” kind of journey of interviewing, and through the faded figures and social interactions, a small piece of history re-woven from their memories.

The movie is the first enlightenment for me that the sexually appealing character of rock music and musicians is the core of all the fanatic phenomenon. The scene of Stuart pointing at the television on Slade’s proud and insolent statements at a press conference, and him shouting to his rigid parents “that is me!”, is a perfect metaphor for popular music culture striking in mainstream society. It also shows that the attraction in rock icons is not only of sexual nature but also of an identity of belonging. Stuart and I both as rock kids once we caught the tail of a glamorous generation, and years later we both as expert authors are called to trace the larger figure from it. There are special objects passed on to us; Stuart received the emerald pin, and I the documentation of the collections.



Movie: *Velvet Goldmine*, 1998

The ending of the film is a mock at the character Brian Slade, which is inspired by the famous pop musician and icon David Bowie. He discarded the identity, that his old self, and changed into a new image to continue his career as a star. He had broader audiences, a higher reputation and a lot of forgotten stories. In my view the transforming also happened to the Beatles, only it is by the force of time but not themselves. When the Beatles as a theme or a subject matter received by heritage institutions, some stories are forgotten in the process of re-identifying. Still, these stories are haunting the simplified concept and image of the Beatles from getting fixed into history, like Slade saw his murdered on-stage character haunting him on the screen.

In the same way as the director Todd Haynes was criticized in this movie, I also use (too) many analogies, subjective expressions, and theatrical writings to perform my topic instead of document it. I argue that both Haynes and I believe in poetic documentation being the way to present that one's emotional attachment can be as important as historical significance in a subject, such as discussing the transforming of pop icons. And that's why this thesis contains more subjective descriptions, and with an article version of the same contents, some analyses are left aside. To end this introduction in a literary way is, of course, an appropriate quotation, this time a citation from Oscar Wilde used in the film:

There were times when it appeared to Dorian Gray that the whole of history was merely the record of his own life, not as he had lived it in act and circumstance, but as his imagination had created it for him, as it had been in his brain and in his passions. He felt that he had known them all, those strange terrible figures that had passed across the stage of the world and made sin so marvellous and evil so full of subtlety. It seemed to him that in some mysterious way their lives had been his own.²

² Wilde, Oscar. *The picture of Dorian Gray*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2006, Chapter XI, pp. 122.

Theoretical context: Different practices of making popular music heritage

This is an interdisciplinary research that combines museology with heritage studies, sociology, and popular culture studies.

One of Susan M. Pearce's research interests concentrates on the process of collecting. She wrote in multiple papers that the process of a "thing", whether it's tangible or not, becoming a museum object essentially depends on it being given cultural values or historical narratives.³ The transforming process also includes viewers' interpretations to change and/or to complete.⁴ This grounded the basic idea on collecting and presenting practices in this research, and brought up the hypothesis within: the process of making an object heritage is changing because the relationship between presenters and viewers changes; they shift inside and out of museums, or out of public cultural heritage institutions totally.

Anthropologist Daniel Miller, with his continuous work on material culture, argued in his essay *Behind Closed Doors*, that personal residence can show both one's social relationships and isolation. Objects and the arrangements of objects in its spaces are also reflections of the conflicted sides. "It is the material culture within our home that appears as both our appropriation of the larger world and often as the representation of that world within our private domain."⁵ I agree with this theory of one's relationships to things one owns, and to adapt the theory to fans and their private collections, which are normally kept in their homes, are given more understanding and empathy with his anthropological aspect.

In the process of heritage-making, music is special in producing emotions and

³ Pearce, Susan M. "Museum objects", and "Objects as meaning; or narrating the past". In Susan M. Pearce, *Interpreting Objects and Collections*. London: Routledge. 1994, 9-11; 19-29.

⁴ Pearce, Susan M. "Thinking about things". In Susan M. Pearce, *Interpreting Objects and Collections*. London: Routledge. 1994, 125-132.

⁵ Miller, Daniel. "Behind Closed Doors". In Daniel Miller (Ed.), *Home possessions: material culture behind closed doors*. UK: Berg Publishers. 2001, 1-19.

experiences in time. Based on theories of nostalgia by historian F. R. Ankersmit, suffering comes from realizing the unbridgeable separation to the past emotions and experiences.⁶ It is to explain the fundamental impulse in collecting objects about the intangible elements in music, that the efforts to bridge the past by the tangible materials. Museums therefore turn to defined models of communities when looking for broader social relevance in such objects with specific nostalgic memories.⁷ Or sometimes they don't, for they still have the authorities to decide whether to do so, but they present objects without connections on memories; since there is little emotional significance, it is hardly to be called historical.⁸ Both of these ideas are shown in the cases in this paper.

Nowadays, the 1960s is generally called "the golden age of Rock", with a nostalgia tone in looking back the blossoming time of rock music. Though the discourses of popular music heritage and relationship between museum and certain community have been changing in the past several decades, rock music is now part of the cultural memory of the generation of baby-boomers.⁹ The values from the irreplaceable cultural identity also make sociologists think about very personal heritage practices of inserting one's own meaning in.¹⁰

These practices transformed from physical objects and traditional paper work to digital. Social networking websites provide the platform for online users to build collective narratives with self-valued heritage, which came out from the same existed objects and documents. It makes the requirements to access information reducing fast, which means a flood of free information, and with both conveniences and difficulties

⁶ Ankersmit, F.R. *History and Tropology: The Rise and Fall of Metaphor*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 1994.

⁷ Shatanawi, Mirjam. "Engaging Islam: Working with Muslim Communities in a Multicultural Society". *Curator the museum journal*, Volume 55 Number 1, January 2012, 65-79. pp. 66.

⁸ Hale, John. "Museums and the teaching of history", *Museums and education, Museum*, Vol. XXI, No.1, 1968, 67-78. pp. 67.

⁹ Bennett, A. "'Heritage rock': Rock music, representation and heritage discourse". *Poetics*, 37, 2009, 474-489. pp. 478.

¹⁰ Fremaux, Stephanie, "Coming Together: DIY Heritage and the Beatles", In: Baker, S. (ed.) *Preserving Popular Music Heritage: Do-it-Yourself, Do-it-Together*, London: Routledge, 2015, 139-150. pp. 140.

to choose from the overload. While the pros and cons of community archives are still being discussed, established institutions form their own online collection catalogues. The issue of exchanging information that considered useful stays in the layers of evidential documentations and creative meanings, as expressed by Barbara Craig, “the usefulness of the memory recalled by archives” is affected by evidential documentations, the accessibilities to reach them and to interpret them, and together a base for creating one’s own meanings.¹¹

¹¹ Craig, B.L. “Selected themes in the literature on memory and their pertinence to archives”. *American Archivist*, 63, 2002, 276–289. pp. 287.

Methodology

The research for this thesis has been conducted in context of the Master's programme of Museology in Reinwardt Academy, and a research internship in LKCA (National Centre of Expertise for Cultural Education and Amateur Arts), which is organized as a foundation with an aim to encourage alternative cultural participation and connect a wide range of people in fields of culture and the arts.

To examine how institutions and fan communities collecting and presenting popular music heritage, 12 semi-structured interviews were planned, with 6 institutions and 6 fan-experts. 10 of them actually conducted and 2 plans in museums are failed because of the lost contacts of the related people in the two institutions. A purposive sampling method was used to selecting the amount of researched institutions that had experiences in popular music heritage and/or engaging with minor communities, based on their related exhibitions and projects in recent years. This resulted in 6 of institutions. Finding and selecting fan-experts relied on word-of-mouth recommendations, because the information from intimate networking in the fan communities is usually unavailable in public. This resulted in 6 of fan-experts. There are several essential clues and materials only discovered during the interviews from mouth to mouth; some fans are retired from the Beatles-related work, or deliberately have their information remained veiled from the media.

Overview interviews:

Institutions/ establishments	Interviewees	Description	Years of exhibitions
Rijksmuseum	Stephanie Archangel	Junior curator for the Rijksmuseum's History department, contributes to using Rijksmuseum's collections to showcase contemporary social issues.	

Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam	Leontine Coelewij	Curator of “Amsterdam, the Magic Centre: Art and Counterculture 1967-1970”. An exhibition about the city of Amsterdam in the late 60s, featuring some items of John Lennon and Yoko Ono’s Bed-in for Peace at the Amsterdam Hilton in 1969.	2018 – 2019
Tropenmuseum	Titia Zoeter	Curator of “Rhythm & Roots”, an exhibition about internationally influential music and musicians in times around 50s and 60s of the 20th century, and “The Sixties - A Worldwide Happening”, an exhibition about arts and counterculture movements in 60s all around the world, featuring the Beatles’ music and story of George Harrison and Indian arts.	2016 – 2017 2015 – 2016
Tropenmuseum	Liza Swaving	Freelance researcher and participated curator of “The Sixties - A Worldwide Happening”. Assisted in looking for an object of George Harrison for the exhibition.	2015 – 2016
The Dutch Beatles Fan Club	Ron Bulters	The current chairman and manager of De Stichting Beatlesfanclub Nederland, owner of the Pop-Eye Velvet music store. Approached by Tropenmuseum for the searching of George Harrison’s instruments.	
The Dutch Beatles Fan Club	Har van Fulpen	Founder and the first chairman of the official Beatles Fanclub in the Netherlands. Participant in the Beatles’ concerts in the Netherlands 1964, and Bed-in for Peace	

		movement of John Lennon and Yoko Ono in Hilton Amsterdam 1969.
Beatles Museum in Alkmaar	Azing Moltmaker	Owner of the Beatles Museum in Alkmaar. A museum based on Moltmaker's private collections.
Beatles Unlimited	Max Bokking	The current manager of the fan page of <i>Beatles Unlimited</i> , once a magazine of Beatles studies by a group of fans in the Netherlands.
	Hans Roosenbrand	Private collector of the Beatles souvenirs. 1995 Collaborator of the exhibition "The Beatles, Populaire Stof" in 1995, with Textile Museum Tilburg.
	Piet Schreuders	Independent researcher, publisher, and designer of <i>Furore</i> magazine's Beatles Special Issue. Co-author of book <i>The Beatles' London: The Ultimate Guide to Over 400 Beatles Sites in and Around London</i> , with Mark Lewisohn and Adam Smith. Illustrator and designer of <i>Chains</i> , the fan magazine of the Dutch Beatles Fanclub.

Apart from the 10 interviews, some materials are from personal conversations through emails with Mirjam Shatanawi, the main curator of "The Sixties" in Tropenmuseum, and Meike van Gemeren, an intern for the back office of Museum het Grachtenhuis. And I see myself in participations as both a Beatles' fan and a museology learner.

The research sets out to collect three sets of data: stories, objects, and music. These sets of data are of course intertwined; they are chose to both look at the tangible and

intangible heritage. The objects are in physical forms with intangible meanings, and the music, on the other way, are immaterial and embodied in tangible forms. And the stories are the clues to link the tangibles and the intangibles together. Stories from the curators in building exhibitions and stories from fans in their lives with music landed on the ground of their views on the same historical events. Data of objects from heritage institutions are focused on their purposes and perspectives in (or not in) display. And objects from fans are focusing on their emotional values and meanings linked to their stories. Data on music is intended to be collected more subtly. During the interviews with heritage institutions, there are questions on music if their events included videos or audios, focusing on the forms and effects for display. With fans, the data of music is only collected when any songs were mentioned in their stories or occurred events.

With the qualitative data, the analysis follows methods of participant observation, comparison, and interpretation. The data is to build a descriptive case or subdivided cases studies, and eventually gain answers to a subjective matter. Therefore they won't be analyzed as scientific objectivities by technological tools, but will be centered on explaining what a given phenomenon could mean. In the end, the narrated data sets serve to demonstrate an observational comparison of collecting and presenting the Beatles as heritage in the Netherlands.

Section 1: The Beatles becoming heritage

Chapter 1

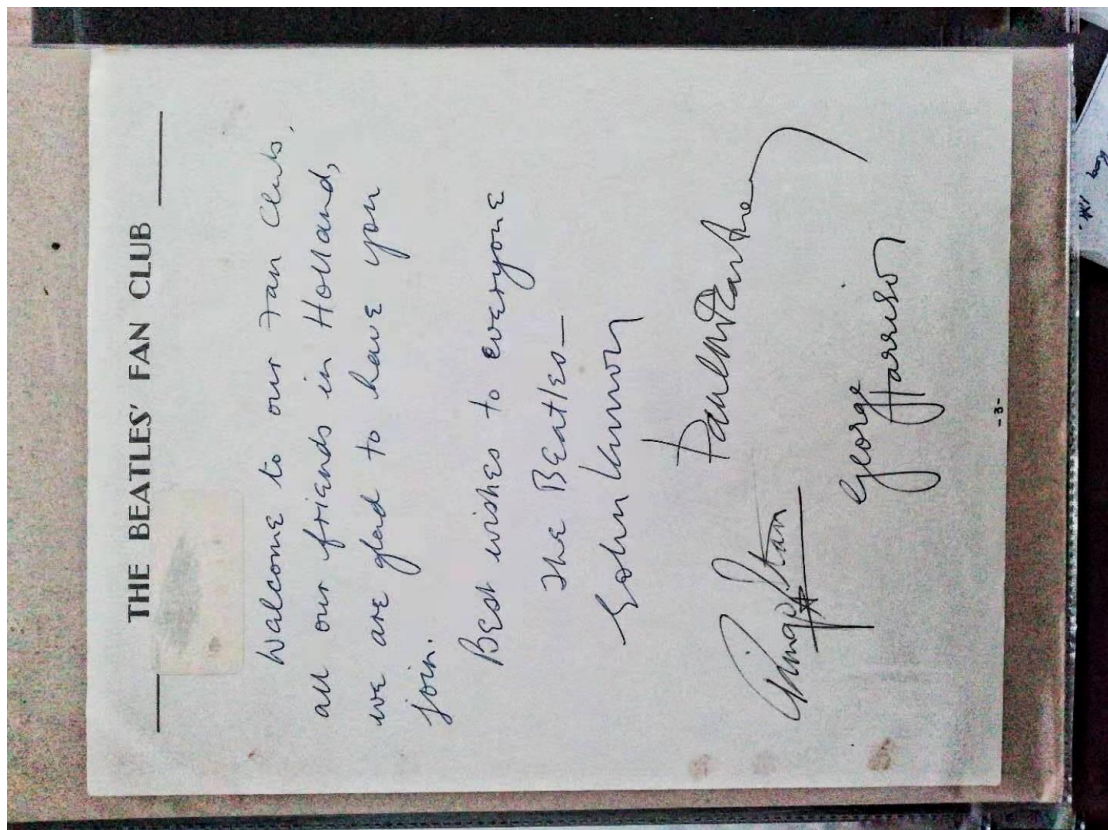
Special objects of the Beatles collected by fans compared to objects collected by museums

This chapter presents special objects placed in the related historical events of the Beatles' and band member John Lennon's tours in the Netherlands, to discuss the process of collecting and preserving within the Beatles' chronology. The objects from both museums and fans collections will be categorized by related historical events, for a more comprehensive picture of them as heritage by different or maybe paralleled ways of collecting and presenting.

The first encounter of the Beatles and the Netherlands was the band's tour in 1964. It was a booming year of the career of the Beatles around the world. Before that, they were still a young band trying to gain some fame. Though the geographical distance is short, the British band didn't have much recognition in the Netherlands. They were considered icons of rebels, therefore a parents-banned for teenage fans. In the Beatles' own feature film in 1964, *A Hard Day's Night*, they mocked about it by entering a character of a middle-class looking senior passenger, who turned off the rock music from Ringo's radio.

The founder of the Beatles' Dutch fan club Har van Fulpen was one of the teenage fans at the time. 1963 was the time when rock and pop music was not accepted on mainstream radios; he had to find Radio Luxemburg, a commercial radio station that broadcasted in English for Britain, for the kind. He recalled, during the interview I conducted with him on 13 February 2019, that he was impressed by the music of the Beatles before the band was well-known in the Netherlands, and had written a letter to ask about forming a local fan club. It took nine months to get a reply. In the visit to his residence, it seemed that he keeps most of his collection on a bookshelf in his study room. Since many items in it are in paper form, they are conserved as

documents in file boxes. The letter that he received after been given the permission to form a fan club in Holland was stored as a common document on his bookshelf quietly; very seldom it were asked for revealing. This letter, a piece of slightly yellowed paper with a black title of “the Beatles’ fan club”, was written by John Lennon, with short words: ‘Welcome to our fan club, all our friends in Holland, we are glad to have you join. Best wishes to everyone, the Beatles-’, and signed by four of them.



Letter to the Dutch Beatles fan club, 1963 / Van Fulpen Collection

In late 1963 the situation of rock music was turning quick. It started to get more accepted by the public, and the market followed to be broadened. About the time Har van Fulpen received the letter, managing director of the Dutch record company M. Stibbe & Co. Robbert S. van Santen ‘started promotion for the Beatles, the rage in England and also very popular in Holland’¹², as reported by *Billboard*. Later in the spring Van Santen advocated the band’s tour in Amsterdam. Recommended by EMI employees in England, Van Santen was not very optimistic about promoting the

¹² “Youth Zips Up Dutch Firm”. *Billboard*, 28 December 1963, pp. 21.

Beatles in Holland, and even had to pay for the fee himself, as he revealed in his personal memoir.¹³ Six months later things changed dramatically. In the article researching the day the Beatles in Amsterdam by freelance researchers Lucas Ligtenberg and Piet Schreuders on magazine *Furore*, another important letter was mentioned, in which Van Santen illustrated the route design of the canal cruise to the impresario Dirk van Gelder. The letter copy shown in the article, with comments of the police commissioner, is in possession of the Amsterdam police documentations in the municipal police archive.¹⁴

The Doelen Hotel was the choice for the boys in Amsterdam. No reliable sources of proofs of the choice were found in this research until *Furore* published the article with Van Santen's letter when Doelen Hotel as the start of the planned route, and photographs of him and the band in the hotel.¹⁵ The photographs are part of Har van Fulpen's collection in his home, six printed pictures, not larger than wallet-size, are stick on two pages, with random handwriting remarks as 'the Beatles', 'in Holland', and '5-6-7 juni 1964' in colour pen.



Robbert van Santen (right) with the Beatles at the Doelen Hotel, 1964
Van Fulpen Collection

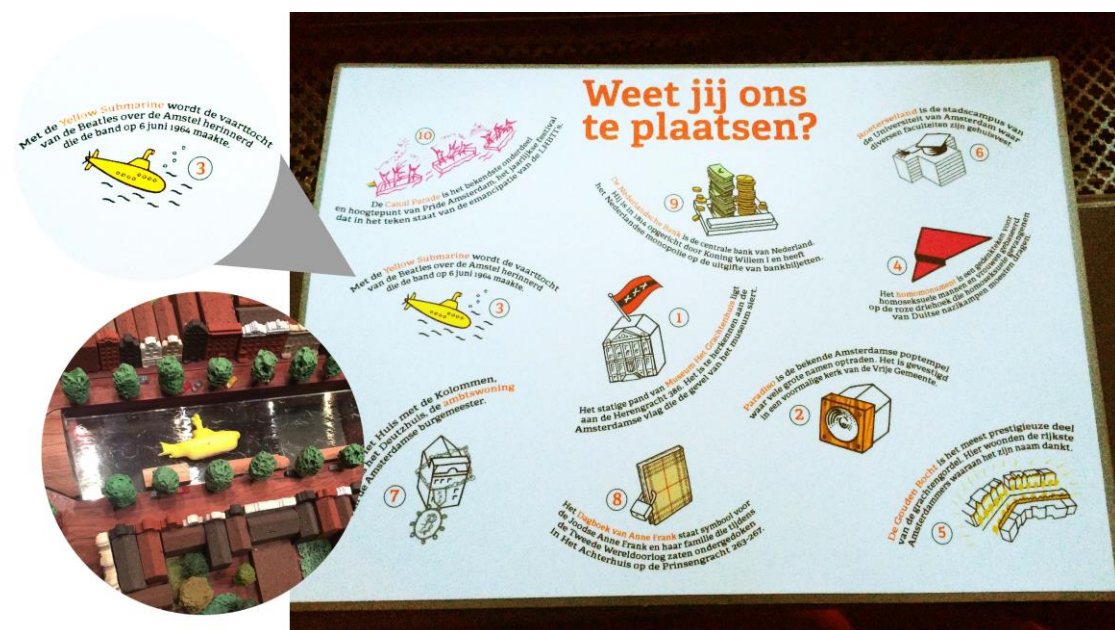
The canal cruise on 6 June in 1964 was eventually beyond expectation and out of

¹³ Ligtenberg, Lucas. & Schreuders, Piet. "'So they canal see us,' June 6 1964 – the Beatles got a taste of Amsterdam". *Furore* 24, Jan 2019, 86-108.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

control, too. A large number of fans were swarming through the line and caused a delay to the schedule of the band's performance in Blokker after. For a glimpse of the historical event in Museum het Grachtenhuis, a tiny figure of a yellow submarine is on the museum's model of canals. This is one false interpretation: yellow submarine only became an icon of the Beatles when the animated film *Yellow Submarine* came out four years after the canal cruise, in 1968. On the text card Museum het Grachtenhuis narrates these spotlights on the canal model, and 'yellow submarine' is marked on Amstel. But there is no reference from the museum to show why Amstel was the particular point to represent this event. Unfortunately, when I tried to approach the museum about this chapter of display, I was told by its back-office that the curator who is currently in function had no involvement with the part, and it was made by an external company.



The yellow submarine figures in Museum het Grachtenhuis

Based on the research Ligtenberg and Schreuders did in their article, the whole cruise from start to the end was sworn by fans over the bridges, on the streets, on the boats and even in the water. The authors tracked the accidents, especially several times some fans trying to reach the boat of the Beatles by swimming through.¹⁶ Comparing

¹⁶ Ibid.

to the short video playing alongside the canal display in Museum het Grachtenhuis, which shows a more subjective view from the band with a camera angle on the boat, in my view, the *Furore* article re-pictures the canal cruise more vividly and heartily with collectors' photographs and detailed studies. To re-picture the scene, the video from the museum focuses on the impressions of the band members, using a close camera on their faces and postures, with the crowds and the city in background; there are only brief moments of viewing some fans in aggressive actions, such as swimming by the side or climbing on a lamppost. In Ligtenberg and Schreuders' article mentioned above, they provide photos from varied angles and information on the fans in the photos, including their names, clothes, and processes of happenings especially of those who jumped in the canal.

The first performance of the Beatles in the Netherlands was supposed to happen three hours after the canal tour, but the unexpected number of the crowds postponed it two more hours later.¹⁷ The tickets were sold out as most of the Beatles' concerts at the time. In the interview with Van Fulpen, he told me that underage fans were facing basic problems in traffic.¹⁸ Since many of them were not eligible to drive, they had to choose between Amsterdam – to see them by the canal, and Blokker – to watch the performance. 'Blokker is a very little village in the north of Holland, there's even no train station. Especially for the concert, the trains stopped there. And you had to go out in the middle of nowhere and walk to the concert hall.'¹⁹ Still, he decided to go to the concert.

The fan club president saw a good opportunity at the concert to get more members for the new club. He brought with him 10,000 sheets of leaflets, which were confiscated by securities, but he managed to take them back and hand out at the break between two shows. The leaflet of 'Beatle Fanclub' is only a palm-sized, blue colour-process

¹⁷ Van Fulpen, Har. Personal interview, 13 February 2019.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

printed with a picture of the band, a survey, ‘ask for information!’ (*vraagt inlichtingen!*) in bold letterforms and the old mail address in Leiden.

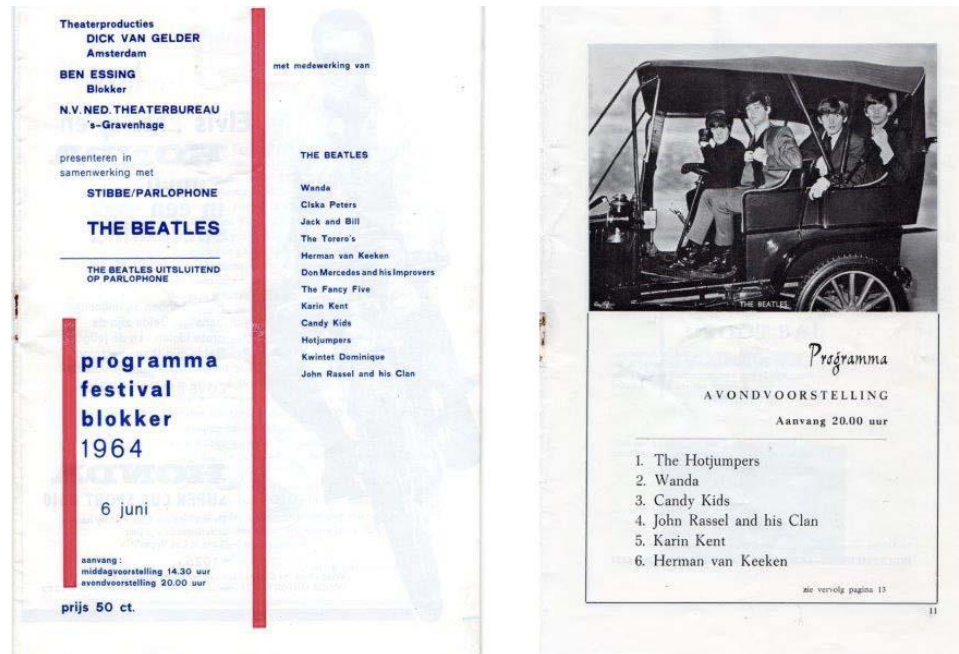


Leaflet of the Dutch Beatles fan club, 1964 / Van Fulpen Collection

Made for the same event, there's a programme book of the concert in private collector Hans Roosenbrand's Beatles collection. On 25 February 2019, I visited the collector's house in Waalwijk and was picked up by him from the train station Den Bosch. Due to his concern for criminals regarding the collection, he wouldn't give away his address. The collected items are kept in the attic and a small room on the first floor, explained by Roosenbrand, to stay separated from other living spaces. In the small room, 3 glass cabinets occupied the walls, left narrow space in the middle and a set of desk & chair by the closed window. Objects lie closely, sometimes overlapping with each other. In the attic there are larger-sizes of items and publications, stacking randomly. Apart from that, some well-framed photographs and posters are hanging on the walls in the house. An A5-sized page shows the title *programma festival blokker 1964*, and the name of the Beatles is written under the names of the producers Dirk van Gelder and Stibbe/Parlophone²⁰, the same who organized the canal cruise in

²⁰ M. Stibbe & Co. represented Parlophone label in Netherlands at the time.

Amsterdam. There are twelve other groups of musicians on the program; according to Van Fulpen's testimony, the fans waited from the planned starting time of 14:30 to around 17:00 for the Beatles. The groups who were scheduled before them came several times back on stage just to fill the time.

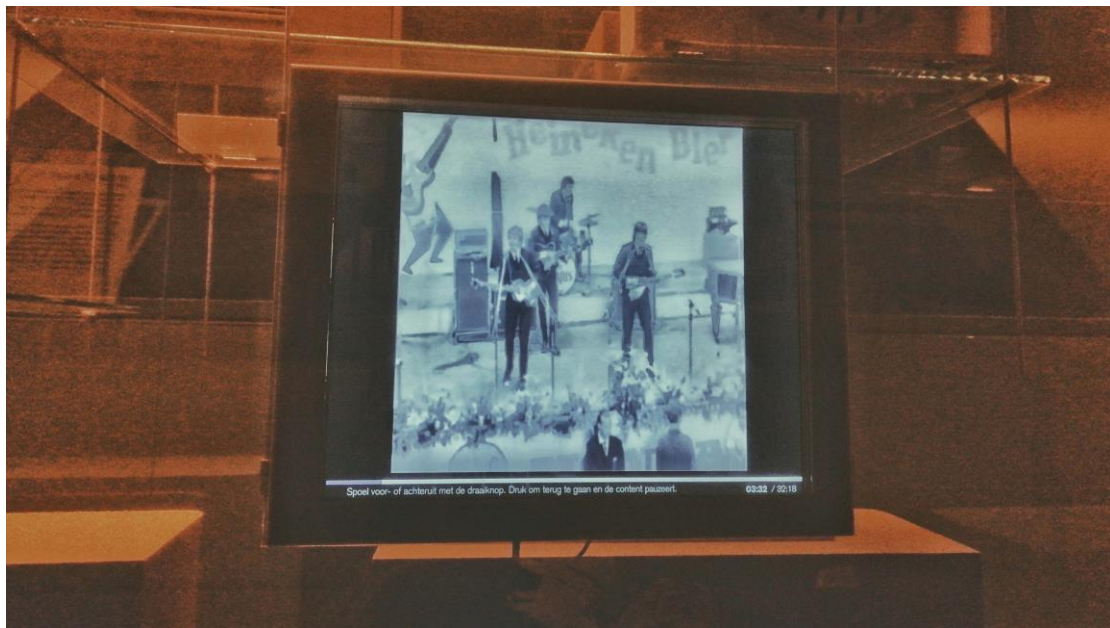


Programme of the concert in Blokker, 1964 / Roosenbrand Collection

A series of pictures took during the concert is now in the collection of Roosenbrand. He showed me the exclusive pictures which he once showed to George Harrison in person. The prints of them are kept in a file case in the small room, and an enlarged one with frame is sitting on one glass cabinet. They were photographed on the near right side towards the stage, involved all four members, but left further scene of the stage, parts of the Heineken signs, and peculiar design of four beer bottles wearing Beatle-style wigs. In 1988 during Harrison's visit to Amsterdam, Roosenbrand sent the pictures and gained an opportunity to talk to him. Recalled by Roosenbrand, the ex-Beatle was surprised to have the pictures that he has never seen before, and was willing to exchange the valuables by signing several records Roosenbrand brought. "The five minutes of me meeting George is the most valuable item in my collection", said the collector.²¹

²¹ Roosenbrand, Hans. Personal interview, 25 February 2019.

Over fifty years later, I sat in a box-size room on the top floor of exhibiting space in Beeld en Geluid (The Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision), and watched the recorded videos of the Blokker concert, with worrying quality of the film. And I was wondering, as a visitor, that how many people would climb all the way up the stairs, would sit inside one of these boxes, and would come up with the idea of searching for the Beatles' old concert in its archive. When I left and walked past the little rooms, nobody was there.



A Beatles performing video in the archive of Beeld en Geluid

After I had failed to reach the concert location due to the still bothersome transportations, another Beatles' fan-expert and a personal friend of mine chose to take the journey from Amsterdam to Blokker for me. She took an hour on train to Station Hoorn, twenty minutes on bus to the village, and fifteen minutes walking. The monument *the Beatles in Blokker* set in a circle space in the rural area. Seeing from the picture she took, it is a square shape of a vinyl package with a list of songs, and a music player model by the side. During our talk, she reviews that it was surprised to see that the four heads of portraits on it included the drummer in replacement Jimmie Nicol, instead of Ringo Starr from former records of witness online. Research shows that the foundation of the Beatles in Blokker decided to change the head portrait in

2013, and apparently received seldom attention on it in the past six years.²² Since it didn't appear on any mainstream media news, nor found in records of fans' discussions.



The monument in Blokker, 2018

After 1964 the four guys never came back to the Netherlands as the Beatles together. But the visit of John Lennon in 1969 left a special marking in Amsterdam. On 24 March of 1969, Lennon and his newly wedded wife Yoko Ono arrived at the Hilton Hotel of Amsterdam, inside the presidential suite 902 the couple conducted their Bed-in for Peace movement for seven days. They stayed in bed and openly invited the world's press into the room from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.²³

By coincidence, a new exhibition partly related to this event just opened when this research started, which is "Amsterdam, the Magic Centre: Art and Counterculture 1967-1970" in Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam from 7 Jul 2018 to 6 Jan 2019. Under the theme of the art and counterculture revolution in the late 1960s in the city of Amsterdam, several items of Bed-in for Peace were featured. With rich objects

²² Stichting the Beatles in Blokker. "Monument", 2018, <https://www.thebeatlesinblokker.nl/monument/>, accessed 2-6-2019.

²³ The Beatles Bible. "John and Yoko's first bed-in for peace: Amsterdam", <https://www.beatlesbible.com/1969/03/25/john-and-yokos-first-bed-in-for-peace/>, accessed 2-6-2019.

presenting on the ground floor of the museum, they are set by the wall in hall 1.6 with big colourful installations from artist Ferdi in the middle. These items include Wedding Album of the couple, with the contents laid out, five black and white photographs of the movement by the famous Dutch photographer Cor Jaring²⁴, all contained in one glass box; two screens playing videos of the couple speaking, also the eye-catching banner of “WAR IS OVER! If you want it / Happy Christmas from John & Yoko (Bag)”²⁵ hanging on the wall beside the box.



The section of the Bed-in for Peace
Amsterdam, the Magic Centre: Art and Counterculture 1967-1970
 Stedelijk Museum, 2018

The small section of the Bed-in for Peace movement in the exhibition was first found by curator Leontine Coelewijn. When researching objects made in years between 1967 and 1970, she discovered the photographs from Cor Jaring and the wedding album, that are donated to Stedelijk a couple of years ago, and the ‘war is over’ banner that is owned by the museum for a long time. She also included the short film in which Yoko Ono explained why she chose Amsterdam as an important location for both of them to spend their honeymoon; the main interest was not on the Beatles as a whole but very much about that specific act the couple did in the city, which in a way was like the

²⁴ Object number 2013.2.0234(1-6), production date 1969, collection of photos, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam.

²⁵ Object number KNA 6321, production date 1969, collection of graphics, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam.

intersection of popular culture modern art all got together at that moment, and the idealism in the movement of making a new society.

The exhibition linked the event to the city of Amsterdam, and the fans linked it to the people. On 6 February 2019 during my interview with Piet Schreuders in his Amsterdam apartment, he showed his publications and stacks of documents, drafts and paper copies that were materials for those researches, some organized in the closet and more piled up around his office. When I asked him to show more of his Beatles collections, he led the way to the upper floor to a smaller study room, with most of his early collected items on the bookshelf facing his desk. He took out some small size pictures clamped under a document in the corner of his desk drawer, with different measurements around a palm's size, and one of them is of John Lennon wearing the famous pajama with his legs crossed and signing a thin brochure in bed. The interviewee was getting a bit shy while explaining it, that one of the fans brought a few magazines published by the fan club and had the couple signed, with the covers designed by him. "I feel quite proud of it"²⁶, this later awarded designer said. According to his profile online, he won the H.N. Werkman Prize in 1997 for his book design on *Lay In, Lay Out*, and the Mercur Award in 2003 for best art director for his work in the magazine *VPRO Gids*; through interviews with him and his colleagues from the Beatles fan club, his design career started on covers and illustrations for the fan club's magazine.

It took me by surprise to find out that the fan with the signed magazines that Piet Schreuders mentioned is the "Voorzitter Beatle-fanclub" Har van Fulpen. And in his collection, there is the same photograph of Lennon, and the signed magazine *Chain* together, with Lennon's single picture and the designed title on its cover. Van Fulpen revealed that the security of the hotel was not too strict; therefore a reasonable number of fans were able to get into the room.

²⁶ Schreuders, Piet. Personal interview, 6 February 2019.



Picture copies of John Lennon and the signed fan magazine, 1969
/ Schreuders Collection; Van Fulpen Collection

Luckily I was able to walk into the suite due to the 50 years Bed-in for Peace anniversary celebration by Hilton on 25 March 2019. After 50 years at the same date when the couple checked-in, the room number has renewed to 702, doodles of the two cuddling figures are paved everywhere, lyrics of *the Ballad of John and Yoko* painted on the ceiling, and posters of “hair peace” and “bed peace” are printed on the same place on the glass. According to the hotel’s guide, Hilton has widened some squares to the room, but it is still considerably small for a suite: it was already getting crowded when five people in the group tour staying inside. Back to the ground floor, there was a photography exhibition curated by the hotel’s own team in the hall, and on this exhibition I saw names of Cor Jaring and Har van Fulpen standing side by side.

Unlike the two events in 1964 that are mentioned above, Bed-in has considered in multiple layers of aspects. It is not only about historical meanings in music, but more of politics, culture and a broader sense of art. Several records of protests in different themes recalled the idea of “Bed-in” by artists and activists around the world, such as the installation about Bed-in by Dutch artist Marijke van Warmerdam in 1994, for an art fair held in Hilton hotel, or the imagery adaptation in the lyrics of *Don’t Look Back*

in Anger, a song by the Britpop band Oasis in 1995, shown as “So I start a revolution from my bed, cause you said the brains I had went to my head”. Because of these many added values, it is introduced to the general audience by mass media, interpreted in varied perspectives, and finally separated the memories of fans from what the mainstream institutions took for history. Mass reports drew the themes on anti-war movement and performance art by two celebrities, while the fans saw a rare chance to meet the Beatles’ member and his family in Holland. I found the line was drawn delicately between individual memories and the capital History, but still the elements inevitably intertwined. In the band’s documentary *the Beatles Anthology*, fans told on camera that the influence of the Beatles is in the process of growing up. It is confidently said that the Beatles took part in raising the Baby Boom generation, not just for enriched their art entertainment, but also for provided a fresh vitality of the music market and a series of neighbouring economic developments.

Chapter 2

Heritages veiled in private houses of fans and heritages displayed in public museum exhibitions

In this chapter three sets of heritage objects, with each set in the same form but one from the institutional collection and the other not, are put in mutual comparisons to see their conditions and presentations in practices. Similarities can be observed in the physical forms and appearances of these specific objects, while they show varied values and serve different contexts in the ways they are collected or presented by institutions or fans. The data of these objects are collected in this research with the same interviews. Compared to the group in the previous chapter being placed in time, this group of objects is placed in locations.

The first set consists of two portraits of the member of the Beatles: George Harrison. One portrait is the lithography by the famous artist Richard Avedon, and exhibited by Tropenmuseum; another one is a photograph by local photographer Rob Verhorst in Amsterdam and the print of it is collected by the fan-collector Hans Roosenbrand. The set is in order to show the range of given values from the worldwide aesthetic to personal memory.



Portraits of George Harrison by Avedon and Verhorst

On the exhibition *The Sixties: a Worldwide Happening* in Tropenmuseum in 2015 to 2016, leading curated by Mirjam Shatanawi, the Beatles' section contains the special lithography of George Harrison by artist Richard Avedon in 1967, originally credit to the Richard Avedon Foundation. It is a photograph overlaid green and orange colours, with sketches of oriented patterns like an eye on Harrison's palm and lotus on his chest and shoulders. Explained by the exhibition's participated curator Titia Zoeter, the artwork was to show the influences of Indian art and philosophy in the Beatles' music, and with George Harrison as the member who's most obsessed in.²⁷ Although I missed the chance to actually visit the exhibition, I received some pictures and a review from the museum during my interview with Titia Zoeter on 11 March 2019. She demonstrated with the pictures that this specific image of George Harrison formed the chapter of the Beatles with other objects in the exhibition, to present the band as one well-known example of musicians in western society adapting eastern art and philosophy, and the chapter formed the exhibition with other parts to show the theme of a cultural revolution happening worldwide in the sixties.

In the attic of the fan-collector Hans Roosenbrand at the time of my visit, there is another picture of George Harrison, which is a black-and-white photograph of him in 1988, wearing a dark suit and a round pin said 'FAB', took by Dutch photographer Rob Verhorst. The collector keeps the photograph to memorize his witness to the picture-shooting and the moment he met Harrison in Amstel Hotel. But the photograph is rarely shown. Even the print is well framed, and the photograph itself has the value of documenting Harrison's another visit in Amsterdam after the Beatles disbanded. The absolutely personal meaning of it for the collector makes it be kept in the attic in his private collections, but on the opposite of the Avedon lithography being exhibited in the open museum for a global topic and global reactions, it is resonance-limited. The Avedon lithography, with its oriental sketches and its bright colours, naturally recalls the psychedelic age of hippies. Viewers whoever experienced that time period or just yearn for its idea can share a basic interpretation.

²⁷ Zoeter, Titia. Personal interview, 11 March 2019.

While the Verhorst photograph shows a private sense, that detaches viewers from the few who were actually in the hotel space on the certain moment. Even now the series of works in the same situation can be viewed on the website of Getty Images, the accessibility couldn't relate or alter the preciousness for Roosenbrand.

The same situation happened on two fabric posters, one of which is in the collections of Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, and one in my own possession. After visiting Hans Roosenbrand's collection and talking about his collaboration with Textile Museum Tilburg in 1995, he generously sent me the original poster of the 1995 exhibition *the Beatles, Populaire Stof* (the Beatles, popular fabric), which is also made in a piece of cloth. It is printed in blue and white polka dots patterns with sketches of the Beatles' four heads and one guitar shape with the autographs, as same as the fabric for "the Beatles dress" in Enschede 1964. Most people who remember this exhibition have one, he told me. So this poster has become a key for me to the local fan communities, I feel like I was permitted to share the memories and heritage with the certain group of people.



Poster of *the Beatles, Populaire Stof*, 1995
Banner, 1969 / Stedelijk Museum Collection

I also feel the emotions and senses of history by the infamous banner of Lennon and Yoko Ono's "war is over if you want it"; when I saw the thick cotton hanging on the wall of Stedelijk Museum, I see the wind of turmoil plumping it like a sail in 1969. In the exhibition, it takes part in creating an image of the art and counterculture revolution in the late 1960s' Amsterdam, that was navigating by the ideas of Lennon and Ono. The left objects and stories weave the space of history back in our imaginary head when the real space ceased to exist. Or what if we (re)built the space to exhibit?

There is a scene of one room that was created to be frozen in time. In the Beatles museum Alkmaar, a corner with a shelf, a desk, typewriter, pictures on the wall and many office items reproduced the working space of Har van Fulpen as the chairman of the Dutch Beatles fan club. In this small office, he worked on mails and the magazine of the fan club. There is no information by the museum in this office room; I only know the meaning of the design after Van Fulpen revealed it to me. After the collections of the museum moved from a shop-size space to a much grander venue, the owner Azing Moltmaker asked him about rearranging. Inspired by the section of the Beatles fangirl's room in the museum and the rebuilt "Cavern Club" at the Beatles Story in Liverpool, he gave the idea of putting his old office in exhibiting.

When the scene is here, the audiences turn to narratives for interpretation, rather than imagination. I started to think why objects can be out of context or into another context, and stories can be independent from a longer timeline but eventually encountered history. I see them as different ways to make heritage.

It took one picture of young Har van Fulpen working in the office to make me understand the display in the Beatles Museum Alkmaar, also it took the pictures of the Bed-in to make people understand room 702 in Hilton Amsterdam. During the tour to the suite in Hilton Amsterdam, I was informed that the room is not keeping in the glass jar. It is priced to the public as a honeymoon suite, and quite a popular one actually; and Yoko Ono comes to check its condition regularly. After the Bed-in many

basic elements have changed already, which includes the floor, the curtain, and displays in the added area. According to the hotel, it still stays with the original idea and design style by Yoko Ono.



The Office of Har van Fulpen



The Hilton Hotel Amsterdam, 2019

The hotel room is much more special, for both contexts from fan communities and historian professionals layered on it together. On the photography exhibition in the hall of Hilton, people see pictures in views of fans, journalists and professional photographers. In the Stedelijk Museum there is Cor Jaring and public history. In Piet Schreuders's drawer and Van Fulpen's shelf there is the connection in memories between two fans. I take the privilege and fun to observe these layers, as both a fan of the Beatles and a researcher in this museological academic project. I can be related to

different perspectives, and I can try to imagine when any specific group cannot be related to any specific narratives. For example, when the Stedelijk Museum didn't include the story of the hotel room in Cor Jaring's photographs as the Hilton did, or when the Hilton didn't talk about the fan magazines in Van Fulpen's photographs.

In this research, I look on the role that museums play to contain the different layers of values that make heritage and to communicate with cultural heritage institutions and fan communities. Objects collected by fans are out of the establishment, as consequences they stand outside of institutional exhibiting, take part in, or find other ways to present. Institutions to exhibit their objects face to involve memories and meanings from fans, or they could choose to ignore and stick to a single authority narrative, but cultural diversity is making it a poor choice.

Chapter 3

What does the song mean to you: the music of the Beatles in individual stories and exhibition narrations

In this chapter, music stands between themes of tangible (objects) and intangible (stories) heritage. It is shown based on the stories, and compared with forms or functions, like how the music is played or collected, and how they are used in the narratives. During the interviews with heritage institutions, there are questions on music if their events included videos or audios, focusing on the forms and effects for display. With fans, the data of music is only collected when any songs were mentioned in their stories or occurred events. It is for keeping its activity or purpose natural to the fans, against the programmed musical situations with museums to the visitors. The aim of this approach is to demonstrate the proportions of intangible heritage and the values of it in collecting and exhibiting the Beatles, to which the music is the original core.

Music is well considered an art of time, and by the argument of philosophy scholar Philip Alperson, “one obvious and significant fact about musical perception is that the objects of musical perception – tones and tonal relations – are presented to the listener progressively in time: they have a temporal order”²⁸. The music of the Beatles is often a key to the memories of fans. At the beginning, it plays the role of opening the gate of a new world, which might also mean to influence one’s life experience into a different phase. Therefore one often says finding new music is life-changing. And then music is the container of the stories. A certain piece of time was stored in every listener’s experiences respectively. Therefore one says revising old music triggers nostalgia. The historian F. R. Ankersmit describes nostalgia as acknowledging the split distance from the past, and suffering came from such experience.²⁹ But music as

²⁸ Alperson, Philip. “‘Musical Time’ and Music as an ‘Art of Time’”. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 38, No. 4, summer 1980. pp. 407.

²⁹ Ankersmit, F.R. *History and Tropology: The Rise and Fall of Metaphor*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 1994.

the trigger, unlike the symbolism of physical objects that remember the unbridgeable difference to the past, it summons the illusion of the bridge.

Hans Roosenbrand recalled his first experience with the Beatles' music when he was 16 years old in 1964. Every time he came to the local chip shop, Roosenbrand threw a quarter in the jukebox to hear the single *She Loves You*. "Till the gripe of the shop owner," he says. Later he discovered the band of the special song and started collecting memorabilia and souvenirs through a lifetime. Over half a century later, in 2019, I visited his collections and he didn't keep any items about or for the part of memory when he heard the music for the first time.

Seven years ago I was in the boarding school back in China, and went to my cousins for the weekend. In one commonly boring Sunday afternoon, a fragment of Hey Jude came into my head and earworming me until I had to search for it on the internet. Today I write a thesis about the Beatles to graduate from a master's program. Same as Roosenbrand, there is not a specific object in my possession to commemorate that moment. Objects of such extremely personal value, even if they existed, rarely get acknowledged and admitted by museums or heritage institutions, left to mention if they got put into practice to test how extensively "heritage" can be defined. The tragedy of nostalgia is beautifully harsh. It is totally possible to be irrelevant to any other individuals, and it could never reenact to make it relevant again. But in reality, museums will inevitably encounter these personal objects, if they reached out for more than institutional collections. Therefore approaching social relevance through the model of community involvement is attractive for museums "because it provides them with a ready-made concept and a seemingly clearly defined target group",³⁰ as Tropenmuseum's curator Mirjam Shatanawi remarked.

Nevertheless, music is something that many people can broadly relate to.

³⁰ Shatanawi, Mirjam. "Engaging Islam: Working with Muslim Communities in a Multicultural Society". *Curator the museum journal*, Volume 55 Number 1, January 2012, 65-79. pp. 66.

Tropenmuseum provides another idea to connecting the visitors' senses. Regarding the Beatles' music playing on the exhibitions, curator Titia Zoeter argued, "You can show things that make impressions with music, when people hear it they already feel something. So when you have a story to tell with it, it really helps when someone is already touched. It's one of the five senses and it's always good to explore the sense when you're making an exhibition."³¹ And they also do this while making exhibitions that are not mainly related to music, but in different topics of ethnography that they focus on.

So eventually a piece of music can bear myriad of interpretations. Multi-interpretable exhibitions are curated to accommodate more diverse audiences, so they include the variation, or the possibilities of variation, to different interpretations; and for taking fewer risks to reinforce the differences in what constructed the communities, but to state an inclusive environment of these differences, museums turn to become a platform to let in diverse interpretations thus to build dialogues. It is a virtue of music to inspire, and to museums it can be an inspiring medium to engage people.

Despite music being an auditory medium, it has an intimate relationship with the visual. Media researcher Evan Puschak discusses album covers as a kind of visual statement and supplement of music, when he analyses the iconic *Sgt. Pepper's lonely hearts club band* by the Beatles.³² The cover art explicitly engages the audiences in layered ways, also symbolizes the renewing role popular music plays in contemporary culture. It is confirmed in *Amsterdam the magic center* in Stedelijk Museum, a museum that positions itself on the visual art of modern age, by choosing to exhibit the objects of the wedding album instead of songs. And Piet Schreuders purchased the original films from part of the photomontage of *Revolver*,³³ and researched the detailed construction of the cover.³⁴

³¹ Zoeter, Titia. Personal interview, 11 March 2019.

³² Nerdwriter1 (Evan Puschak). "How The Beatles Changed Album Covers", 12 August 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_st4diqjpis, accessed 5-6-2019.

³³ Schreuders, Piet. Personal interview, 6 February 2019.

³⁴ Schreuders, Piet. & Orth, Ken. "The Beatles Revolver: The collage". *Furore* 22, Jan 2017, 20-23.



How The Beatles Changed Album Covers

1,078,702 views

42K 709 SHARE SAVE ...



Nerdwriter1

Published on 12 Aug 2015

SUBSCRIBE 2.6M

It can also cause contrasted ideas in collecting. While Azing Moltmaker from the Beatles museum in Alkmaar proudly showed walls of album covers with different varieties, and member of the Beatles fan club Ron Bulters secretly took out a vinyl of *Help!* from storage of his music store because he was unwilling to sell this wrong cover version, Hans Roosenbrand argues that he has seldom interest in collecting different version of covers to one album, for that they all represent the same piece of music. Puschak notes outstandingly in his online video essay: “In the end, this photograph of photographs levels a critique on representation itself. To show how music is mediated by the visual, the Beatles put themselves on this cover three times: once as the wax figure of the mop-top Beatles that they were, once as the fake Pepper band in its bright and eye-catching glory, and finally, as themselves, pictured not on the cover of their album, but by the effects of that cover, in the minds of everyone who looked at it. The cover of *Sgt. Pepper's lonely hearts club band* points to the truth, what the Beatles themselves knew: that all music is invisible.”³⁵

³⁵ Nerdwriter1 (Evan Puschak). “How The Beatles Changed Album Covers”, 12 August 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_st4diqjpis, accessed 5-6-2019.

Section 2: Recordings of communication in communications

Chapter 4

This chapter presents stories categorized in cultural heritage institutions. Stories of making the exhibitions or public events are the axes with stories involved fans building around. With the stories from the views of the institutions, their communications with fan communities in collecting and presenting the Beatles in practices are revealed and analyzed.

Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and the Bed-in for Peace movement in *Amsterdam the Magic Centre*

The online collections catalogue of Rijksmuseum holds a series of photographs by artist Raimond Wouda, named *Fans: Raimond Wouda photographs the passionate Netherlands* (Fans: Raimond Wouda fotografeert gepassioneerend Nederland, 2006 - 2007). In the series, there is one photograph of Bertus Elzenaar, who took over the Dutch Beatles fan club for some years after Har van Fulpen. But in my journey of dialoguing with the two close partners: Rijksmuseum and Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, it is a course of understanding why this photograph is neglected.

From Stephanie Archangel, Rijksmuseum's curator for history, in the talk on 19 December 2018, I acknowledged how Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and Rijksmuseum position themselves in their long-term copartnership. The collections in both possessions are flexible to share, based on the demands of exhibitions. And the exhibitions distinguish the classics to Rijksmuseum, and the modern arts to Stedelijk Museum, with generally a chronological line of the nineteenth century.³⁶ Therefore *Amsterdam the Magic Centre*, an exhibition presenting the city in the late 1960s, was held in Stedelijk.

³⁶ Archangel, Stephanie. Personal interview, 19 December 2018.

“This is a collection-based exhibition”, the curator Leontine Coelewij emphasized several times.³⁷ It was about what is in the Stedelijk museum’s collection and it appeared to be the limit of selecting materials for the curating team in this exhibition. They are aware or able to imagine that there are many more related materials, only they didn’t choose to consider it. Even with a theme of anti-establishment movements like art and countercultures in the late 1960s, which is meant to break a single authority and to embrace free diversity, a museum can keep its power to choose inclusion or exclusion in presenting. But heritage is flexible in different narratives, especially the heritage came from collective narratives originally. The late 60s pop music, or more generally 60s art and counterculture, is built with anti-authoritarian ideas, and the ideas varied in works by the artists and revolutionaries. It is rather ironic that now their heritages are being collected, selected, and then presented by the authorized institution.

The process of how the heritage is transformed by collective narratives, as cultural sociologists Andy Bennett and Susanne Janssen’s discussions in popular music studies described, is ‘the vast array of music-related objects, images, texts, and places that become inscribed with memory by music fans and members of specific music scenes.’³⁸ In the discourse of museology, it is when the transforming happened. It is the moment when the vast array of once insignificant things and encounters became heritages. It is when they touched emotions. And in the end if museum is not involved in the crucial part of the transforming process, I believe it would be crucial for the museums to think about working on a mutually beneficial relationship which those involved, to put the puzzle pieces (stories, objects, emotions, knowledge, technology, ideas...) together in collecting and exhibiting this kind of heritage; and in this case, the Beatles.

So back to the photograph of Bertus Elzenaar; even though it belongs to the collection

³⁷ Coelewij, Leontine. Telephone interview, 7 March 2019.

³⁸ Bennett, Andy. & Janssen, Susanne. “Popular Music, Cultural Memory, and Heritage”, *Popular Music and Society*, 39:1, 2016, 1-7.

of Rijksmuseum and holds certain values in photography, a suitable narrative is lost to make it heritage as people outside the museum expecting to provide. For the artwork originally the photograph shows an icon in forming an image of the fan culture in the country (“the passionate Netherlands”). It is also a portrait of a person, who has more than an identification in cultural history. Naturally the narratives of one’s stories and memories will occur to the viewers in looking for emotional connections, therefore to transform the artwork to heritage. And with the photograph of Elzenaar, Rijksmuseum couldn’t present the stories and memories of him without people outside the museum who involved or remembered, such as the fellow fans, and himself. It has no viewers therefore it has no presenters.

Tropenmuseum and the searching for George Harrison’s sitar in *the Sixties*

In the interview with the current chairman of Dutch Beatles fan club Ron Bulters on 1 February 2019 in his music store in Alkmaar, he revealed that several years ago he was contacted by Tropenmuseum about George Harrison’s sitar for an exhibition. It was the first time during this research some communications are found between fan groups and museums. And the exhibition was once believed as *Rhythm & Roots*, an exhibition about internationally influential music and musicians in times around the fifties and sixties in the twentieth century. In 2017 it showed a leather jacket of Elvis Presley and a guitar of Jimi Hendrix in display, but nothing about the Beatles or George Harrison’s instrument. The museum eventually failed to get the sitar, Bulters answered.³⁹

In this case, the museum actively approached the fan community and saw them as the source of information to an object. In order to see this kind of relationship between the fans and museums, I traced the story of the sitar, and first talked to the curator responsible, Titia Zoeter. In the interview she recollected the whole process. In the

³⁹ Bulters, Ron. Personal interview, 1 February 2019.

beginning, the museum contacted Shambhu Das, who was George Harrison's sitar teacher. The museum's team negotiated and tried to get the instrument, but failed to reach a consensus on loan conditions. They consulted the fan club to get more information and find other approaches, in the end it didn't lead to anywhere further. Thus they decided to tell the story on George Harrison having music lessons and buying the instrument in India with the famous sitar teacher Ravi Shankar, and show another sitar in their own collections that's not from Harrison.⁴⁰ It indicates that the emphasis of this object in the exhibition is not about its authenticity, but more about narrating a story by it.

It had been the idea of curator Mirjam Shatanawi to contact local fan clubs and to ask whether they would know if a sitar by Harrison still exists and where to look for. Shatanawi explained that the curators were looking for objects related to the Beatles in private collections and for a lower price, as museum loans are hard to get and are usually expensive. But the information about objects in private collections is hard to obtain, because it is not publically available. Usually, private collectors do not want to have this information widely shared, because it attracts criminals.⁴¹ This concern is also proved by Hans Roosenbrand claiming that information to locate or expose his collection is never permitted, and getting in touch with Roosenbrand for this research was on account of personal contacts with the fan club.

Talking about executing the idea to contact fan clubs, co-curator Liza Swaving mentioned the importance in the role of a curator to establish personal contacts, especially when the museum doesn't have much reputation in the target field. The "reputation" in her own words can be considered the authority a museum has in the relationship with the communities in presenting heritages. In this aspect, Tropenmuseum chose to be a narrator:

⁴⁰ Zoeter, Titia. Personal interview, 11 March 2019.

⁴¹ Shatanawi, Mirjam. Personal conversation, 29 May 2019.

Even though we were looking for alternative histories, I would say that they were mostly represented in art and cultural objects, and not so much in the voices of people themselves, like really personal voices. So we represented the cultural heritage that was left, and not necessarily the voices of the people, literally. Through these objects the voices speak, but not the actual voices.⁴²

When the fan communities are the actual voice to narrate the object, also are the rare ways to reach the object, they become indispensable to the museums. To narrate the object there could be as many interpretations as possible, but the actual voice to speak is the original story only. Or as the philosopher Leo Strauss argued about a historical understanding, “for the infinite variety of ways in which a given text can be understood, does not do away with the fact that the author of the text, when writing it, understood it in one way only.”⁴³ It can also apply to the people of the objects; and even with the authority, the museums can not ensure that they have a better way in the variety of ways to understanding and presenting.

Museum het Grachtenhuis and the display of the Beatles’ canal cruise

In the interview with the editor of the special Beatles issue of *Furore* Piet Schreuders, professional graphic designer and freelance Beatles researcher, he was totally unaware of the Beatles-related exhibiting in Museum het Grachtenhuis, spotted out the misplaced ‘yellow submarine’ before it is questioned, but willing to offer the developed research results of the canal event to the museum. On the other hand after the museum dodged its responsibilities on the problematic display chapter, they didn’t show any interests in further developments.

I simply found this situation remarkable, that the objects related to the Beatles’ first

⁴² Swaving, Liza. Personal interview, 25 March 2019.

⁴³ Strauss, Leo. “How To Study Medieval Philosophy”, *Interpretation*, Vol. 23, No. 3, Spring 1996, 321-338. pp. 323.

encounter with the Netherlands are already considered heritage by museums in their former exhibitions, which means they contain a certain level of historical or cultural importance, yet the event itself is still in process of becoming history. It almost looks like the museum gives the narratives to its display to pursue what British historian John Hale (1968) called ‘sense of history’, rather than history; ‘when we go back beyond contact with living memories, where no reminiscence is stirred to evoke the emotional significance of objects and their importance in the society of the period, we are in the zone not of history but of the sentimental peep show.’⁴⁴ In this case the fan-experts outside museums connected living memories, named them and wrote them down to create history from those artifacts.

‘Unfortunately contexts in museums and books bring different reading experiences, so we cannot share the ways of having fun between them sometimes.’ I quote myself, from one early paper ‘*what’s more than meets the eye of Museum Het Grachtenhuis?*’⁴⁵, and the younger me suggested, ‘I will take off the professional newspaper photographer’s documentary video of the Beatles cruise, which is less specific for audiences who know the band and much specific for those who don’t know, and replace by a story telling by a mere fangirl who was there when the event happened, on what route she traced the band’s ship by the canals, how she chose the best spot on which bridge to wave at them, did she remember what street or which part of the Amstel she walked on that day, and on that day she may shared a precious memory with the city. Individual stories could be more emotionally related, what’s more, they make a more accurate perspective of narrative on what makes the creation of the Amsterdam canals still being special today, that is with, phrased by Hale, a contact with living memories⁴⁶.’

⁴⁴ Hale, John. “Museums and the teaching of history”, *Museums and education, Museum*, Vol. XXI, No.1, 1968, 67-78. pp. 67.

⁴⁵ Chen, Zhixi. “What’s more than meets the eye of Museum Het Grachtenhuis?” Master of Museology, Reinwardt Academy, 2017.

⁴⁶ Hale, John. “Museums and the teaching of history”, *Museums and education, Museum*, Vol. XXI, No.1, 1968, 67-78. pp. 67.

Textile Museum Tilburg and *the Beatles, Populaire Stof*

There aren't many reports on *the Beatles, Populaire Stof*, but the participated fan-collector Hans Roosenbrand provided a local newspaper with 6 pages of articles publicizing the exhibition in 1995. Without any responding from the Textile Museum in Tilburg today, the information from the newspaper is the only source to picture the communications between the museum and the collector:

Roosenbrand has set aside a room for his Beatles collection on the first floor of his terraced house. In a cupboard that covers an entire wall, hundreds of souvenirs and books stand together. There is no room on the walls anymore; so many neatly framed posters have to wait on the floor in a row. The collection of Beatles souvenirs has become "big business" in recent years. At auctions at Sotheby's in London, among other things, original guitars and jackets do thousands of guilders. But Roosenbrand got or bought most of the stuff through. He advertises in door-to-door papers, and at collectors' fairs he hands out cards with his telephone number. He mainly ends up with exchanges for contacts with other Beatles collectors.



Beatles collectors' annual market in Leiden, 2018

“Actually, I should have at least a space that is five times as large,” says Roosenbrand. This gave him the idea of looking for an exhibition space where he could present his collection in a proper way. He ended up at the Textile Museum in Tilburg on his quest for a suitable space. This laid the foundation for the exhibition.



Fabrics of the Beatles patterns / Roosenbrand Collection

Roosenbrand is not surprised that the Textile Museum saw opportunities in an exhibition about the Beatles. “The interest has only been increasing in recent years. It is also wonderful to see that more and more young people are joining. That is the generation that has not even experienced the end of the Beatles.”⁴⁷

That was Hans Roosenbrand on Brabant’s Dailypaper (Brabants dagblad), 23 May 1995. In the same year, “museum and community” was chosen as the theme for the ICOM triennial conference. “For museums this would mean - among others - exceeding the ‘ivory tower’ mentality and the assumption that the expertise of museum scholars and professionals is the only parameter to define what should be

⁴⁷ ““I am proud of my collection”” (“Ik ben trots op mijn verzameling”). *Brabants Dagblad*, 23 May 1995, 5.

included in museums, or what the audiences should know; it would also demand the sharing of ‘power’ with segments of a larger civic whole”⁴⁸, Dr. Eurydice Antzoulatou-Retsila wrote. Twenty four years after that, Roosenbrand keeps the exhibited fabrics in a plastic box in the attic of his house, goes to collectors’ fairs annually in Leiden, but he is less optimistic about collecting the Beatles’ items. He now believes that the market is ebbing and few younger collectors are interested in collecting physical objects. At the same time at a newer exhibition in Textile Museum Tilburg, a participation project is developed with groups of young newcomers in the city, but the space for presenting artworks of the community was constantly crowded by the institution.

Rock music is now “embedded firmly in the cultural memory of the aging baby-boomer generation”, as Andy Bennett noted, the heritage rock discourse is “very much part of the aging rock audience’s reassessment of rock, not merely as something particular to their youth, but rather as a key element in their collective cultural awareness and a major contributor to their generational identity”.⁴⁹ To museums and to broader audiences, collective narratives can be the chance to engage the identity-authorized heritage. Items of heritage related to the Beatles have the potential to stay dynamic through generations. Whether it is institutions, professionals or an individual fan of the Beatles, one can have a considerable collection of the band with one’s own-valued objects.

The idea of self-valued heritage was developed by media theorist Stephanie Fremaux in her writing, *Coming Together: DIY Heritage and the Beatles*, in 2015: ‘50 years on from that first Ed Sullivan Show performance that would herald the beginnings of Beatlemania, people are still engaged in precisely that same activity of inserting their own meaning through these cultural experiences. DIY heritage practices enable

⁴⁸ Antzoulatou-Retsila, Eurydice. “Museums and Communities: Coping with dilemmas, or between museomania and museotherapy”. In Martin R. Schärer (ed.), *Museum and Communities, ICOM 1995*. Norsk ICOM. ca 1997, 21-28. pp. 22.

⁴⁹ Bennett, A. “‘Heritage rock’: Rock music, representation and heritage discourse”. *Poetics*, 37, 2009, 474–489. pp. 478.

participants to create lasting experiences for communities and individuals despite changes to agendas and policies within an authorized heritage.⁵⁰ However other researchers believe that such practices are vulnerable, for relying on the efforts of seldom key figures and their leading interests in the communities.⁵¹ In more positive thinking, it means they need the institutions back, to obtain presenting space and access to extensive audiences.

Hilton Amsterdam and its 50th anniversary events for the Bed-in for Peace

The series of celebration events held by Hilton hotel include: photograph exhibition in the lobby and guided tour to the John & Yoko Suite from 22 till 30 of March, viewing Jan van Galen's documentary in the ballroom on the 30th, and Beatles' leading researcher Mark Lewisohn interviewed by the Dutch journalist Gijs Groenteman on the 31st of March.



Mark Lewisohn surrounded by Dutch Beatles fans in Hilton Amsterdam, 2019

⁵⁰ Fremaux, Stephanie, "Coming Together: DIY Heritage and the Beatles", In: Baker, S. (ed.) *Preserving Popular Music Heritage: Do-it-Yourself, Do-it-Together*, London: Routledge, 2015, 139-150. pp. 140.

⁵¹ Baker, S. and Huber, A. "Notes towards a typology of the DIY institution: identifying do-it-yourself places of popular music preservation". *European journal of cultural studies*, 16(5), 2013, 513-530.

For the special figures involved, the hotel indicates that they keep direct and private connections, instead of asking for agencies in museums. The focal point is emphasized on Hilton hotel as the location of the historical event, therefore names of the photographers were shown indifferently at the exhibition. Well-known professional artists like Cor Jaring, Nico Koster, and Laurens van Houten are included, Har van Fulpen in perspective of the fans, and a piece of the particular story of the fan-became-professional photographer Govert de Roos:

Already at a very young age, Govert de Roos has been developing his passion for photography. It started with his love for pop music and challenge to record it during live concerts. At the age of fifteen, he managed to get into the room of 'Bed-in for Peace' with a falsified press pass. This turned out to be the start of his exciting career full of different requests and free work. Govert works for countless journals and is often hired for music, film and theatre work. He developed his talent to capture people from their best sides, which brought him a nickname, 'The Human' photographer.⁵²

This text card illustrates the theme and attitude of the exhibition. Unlike museums looking for developed subject and representations in objects or historical events, the hotel is content with being the container. As such, the link to the historical events is already complete, and what is more attached to that, it could be as open as the hotel door.

On popular music in producing heritage places, Timothy Darvill pointed out again the different interpretations in individuals' lives and how they are linked to places: "For many people, popular music has a lot to answer for as the ultimate ephemeral, disposable, transitory, cultural phenomenon, and that is how it is sometimes used. But it is also something that people cling to for years. It can define personality and in its

⁵² Wall text. "John Lennon & Yoko Ono's 50 Jaar 'Bed-in for Peace'", 21-31 March. Hilton Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

almost tribal structure certainly identifies sub-cultures, countercultures, and alternative scenes. For many it is the soundtrack of a life made real at key life-changing events such as parties, anniversaries, weddings and funerals. It is the ultimate intangible heritage with a global reach made tangible at a local level and brought to life through events, places, and artifacts with lasting characteristics. In this way the consumption of place implicitly requires high-involvement emotionally charged activities.”⁵³

Both music and people’s musical memories are indeed intangible, as Les Roberts emphasized, but they do not exist in an ontological vacuum.⁵⁴ They must be enacted, mediated and embodied to objects and places. In these processes, there can be innumerable ways through differed perspectives and purposes. Hilton Amsterdam for the historical event ‘Bed-in for Peace’ happened to stand in an exceptional position; it faces little conflicts to its interest and functions being a business organization prior to a cultural heritage institution. Compared to the museums struggling with challenged authority issues, it can be seen as an odd fortune, and from the series of exhibitions and events, we learned that Hilton Amsterdam has seen it.

⁵³ Darvill, Timothy. “Rock and soul: humanizing heritage, memorializing music and producing places”. *World Archaeology*, 46:3, 2014, 462-476. pp. 472-473.

⁵⁴ Roberts, Les. “Talkin bout my generation: popular music and the culture of heritage”. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 2012, 1-19. pp. 10.

Section 3: We can work it out

This section presents stories of fan communities outside the museums. The first chapter is for histories and long existed issues within the communities, and the second one is for recent changes. In the stories from fans and fan communities' perspectives, it can be seen the process of forming the discourse of music heritage towards the Beatles by their fans, the Dutch fans' relationships with heritage institutions, and the increasing issue of digital collective archives.

Chapter 5

Narratives of the Beatles as a heritage from museums and fan experts, and the environment of them

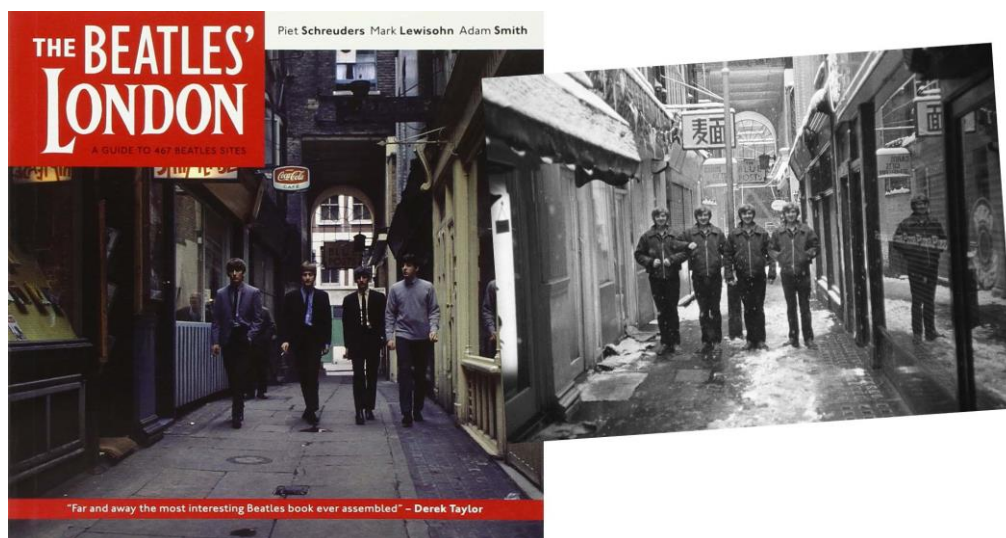
For many Beatles' fans worldwide, including the Dutch ones, the authority to narrate the story of the Beatles is given to Liverpool, where authentically the band started. Looking back to the place where the band was born and raised, two institutions in Liverpool play important roles in exhibiting the Beatles: Museum of Liverpool and the Beatles Story.

The Museum of Liverpool, as a new addition to the National Museums Liverpool group, having opened in 2011 replacing the former Museum of Liverpool Life. It was supposed that preferably closed to communicating with general audiences. Although it claims that "the Museum of Liverpool is everyone's museum and has a continuing programme of partnership projects and displays involving the local community"⁵⁵, the two channels to contact them, apart from literally visiting the museum in physical, are telephone and online enquiry forms; with the latter approach, one never receive replies. And the Beatles Story, now owned by the region's transport executive Merseytravel, defines itself as a permanent exhibition instead of a museum. Its online

⁵⁵ Museum of Liverpool. "Get involved", <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/mol/get-involved>, accessed 4-6-2019.

enquiries are also a postbox to the black hole, but “ambassadors” in varied nations are appointed for contacts. Through one of their Dutch ambassadors Wibo Dijkma, who is also conducting the podcast channel Fab4Cast in partnership with the Dutch Beatles fan club, it is learned that the ambassadors are contacted in needed by the general information email address (which is even kept unknown to the public), and hardly get a way to speak in the opposite direction.

In this aspect, while the Dutch fans make their heritage of the Beatles in their home country and outside the city of Liverpool, they might scarcely have contacts to the museums in there, neither the Dutch museums involved in this research share any items and information in exhibitions. On the other hand personal connections of the key individuals are essentially close. With a long-time relationship with the management of the Beatles Story, Hans Roosenbrand has stated that the institution will inherit his collections in the future. And Piet Schreuders has made friends with the British historian Mark Lewisohn, who is regarded as one of the world’s leading authorities on the Beatles, and has co-written several works with him over decades. In one of the published books *the Beatles’ London: The Ultimate Guide to Over 400 Beatles Sites in and Around London*, Har van Fulpen also helped in fieldwork with the two. In the event of Hilton in Amsterdam, Van Fulpen made the introduction before Lewisohn to engage the present Dutch audiences.



The Beatles' London and the cover picture recreated by Van Fulpen

Beatles fan communities certainly attach more emotional values to Liverpool than museums do. Taking the Mersey-side region as the place of authenticity, fans around the world visit there like a pilgrimage. The fundamental reason for Hans Roosenbrand to give the Beatles Story inherited his collections is to send them back to Liverpool, even though in which many objects are produced in the Netherlands and contain specific heritage meanings to Dutch communities.

The devotion and craving for the center of authenticity are with the fans since the beginning. Since Har van Fulpen took the advantaged step to get him authorized by the official British Beatles fan club, contrasting arguments even fights have occurred among different Dutch Beatles fan groups over decades. “The second generation of the Beatles fan”, in the terminology of fan communities, refers to the fans mainly active in the 1970s after the band broke up. In the period Rene van Haarlem formed his own group for the Beatles, and Azing Moltmaker just started his collection, too. It is known that both as members in the official Dutch fan club the two fans disputed strongly thence held in stalemate for years.

The workgroup of Beatles Unlimited was created by Van Haarlem derived from the official fan club. It aimed to research deeply on the Beatles’ music, with the publication *Beatles Unlimited* magazine and later a website. In words of the organization’s takeover manager Max Bokking, he re-pictured the antagonistic occasion between them and Moltmaker,

When the guy from the museum [Moltmaker] was in the neighborhood of a convention, which we did in Utrecht, Nieuwegein or wherever the places, he [Van Haarlem] always asked us to send him away. Because he [Moltmaker] always wanted to give flyers to the people outside the door to visit his own museum.⁵⁶

In another aspect, Moltmaker insisted that he was discriminated against for not having

⁵⁶ Bokking, Max. Personal interview, 19 March 2019.

a college education. And this is illustrated as the initial cause of him establishing the Beatles Museum. Written on the profile page of the museum's website, "he specialized in this field [Beatles' music] and offered his help in 1977 at a fan club from Nieuwegein. However, they rejected him, for he had not 'educated' and therefore could not make a contribution. People did not even bother to read his articles. Being furious about this reaction, he decided to start a Beatles fan club, which eventually turned into a museum, the Beatles Museum Alkmaar."⁵⁷

In Andy Bennett's studies of popular music audiences, especially of the older generation of fans, he points out how they interpret music and musical memories of communities in heritage-making practices, as "those who invest in popular music as an aspect of cultural heritage are equally apt to articulate this in trans-local, generationally based terms. They view popular music as something that bonds and shapes individuals through specific instances of cultural memory tied to their collective associations with particular music scenes and associated cultural groups as these manifest themselves at a global level."⁵⁸

These practices in older generations of fans often have more sophisticated manifestations such as researching and publishing. All six interviewees from fan communities involved in this research are engaged or experienced in writing, editing or book publishing work. Freelance writers and independent researchers have made a significant contribution in narrating the Beatles in cultural heritage discourse. In recent research on popular music heritage in Dutch museums and archives, one archivist from Music Center the Netherlands expressed that, in one's own words, the only interesting book on the Beatles in their collection is *the Beatles in Holland*, and it is "a very specific Dutch view on foreign artists".⁵⁹ *The Beatles in Holland: Het bezoek van John, Paul, George en Jimmie aan Nederland* (The visit of John, Paul,

⁵⁷ Beatles Museum Alkmaar. "Historie", <https://www.beatlesmuseum.nl/historie/>, accessed 4-6-2019.

⁵⁸ Bennett, A. "Punk's not dead: The continuing significance of punk rock for an older generation of fans". *Sociology*, 40(2), 2006, 219–235.

⁵⁹ Van der Hoeven, A. & Brandellero, A. "Places of popular music heritage: The local framing of a global cultural form in Dutch museums and archives". *Poetics*, 51, 2015, 37–53.

George and Jimmie to the Netherlands) is also a book written by fan-experts from fields other than museum and heritage. One of the authors is Piet Schreuders, and the professional designer/freelance Beatles researcher indicates that he never has experience in collaborating with museums.



The Beatles in Holland and Furore the Beatles Issue by Schreuders

However, in the research article mentioned above, the authors observed “frequent level of collaboration between amateurs and professional institutions”, which in this research it shows differently. It is safely said that professional institutions never acknowledge the narrative environment of fan communities or “amateurs institutions” that showed in this paper, let alone to see interests in it. Collective narratives are constructed in diversity, and museums know that. But they must face challenges in taking more time, involving more people and possibly changing the current operating manners. Conceptually they are required to show a more intricate reality, with the alternatives, contradictions, and randomness of incidents in history.

The importance and broad knowledge created by fans became, for example, visible and acknowledged when on 13th September this year, American press *Wired* uploaded a new video of their auto-complete interviews on YouTube, with Sir Paul McCartney answering the internet’s most searched questions about himself. The questions are based on the auto-complete feature on Google, which shows the most popular and relevant questions users are searching in the system. When being asked questions on

“when did Paul McCartney...”, our interviewee couldn’t tell any accurate numbers of dates, and said, “the trouble is I’m too busy doing stuff to remember all the dates. Just ask a fan, they know the dates. There are loads of people that actually know stuff.”⁶⁰

These users on Google represent the idea of “the crowds” without single subjectivity or authority. The collected data of widely varied interests of crowds, and then the calculated communities of it, made the priorities of auto-complete recommendations in the searching bar. A group of fans is part of the crowds whose favour happened to intersect on one subject. They could be anyone who does not belong to any authorities but one’s own interests. For museums the question is not about who the fans are, but what they are. At least in this interview to even Paul McCartney himself, fans are the authority of history and knowledge in the category before museums. Fans are becoming a dominant cultural force, the unavoidable voices re-telling the stories. They are inserting themselves into the story to make a different history thus different heritage; and as some former researches implied, it is the new light.

⁶⁰ Wired, “Paul McCartney Answers the Web’s Most Searched Questions”, September 13 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Pf19jV1NYw>, accessed 19-12-2018.

Chapter 6

The issue of growing digital archives

The generation of fans that grew up together with the internet is mature now and starts the new form of archiving and publishing. On the blogging and social networking website Tumblr, considerable flow of pictures posting by users under the tag of the Beatles; on the news discussion website Reddit, over 73 thousands of members are in the Beatles' "sub-reddit", which is a user-made board organized by subjects and commonly considered a form of community; with Facebook the representation is rather reserved, many groups of fan communities need access from the administrators by invitation or fan-identification test, and exclusive information is only shared within each group. And naturally there are independent websites about the band, for example the well-known "the Beatles Bible", which is described by the organizer as an online repository of original research and fact-based information on the Beatles from a range of sources.⁶¹ On the other hand, traditional styles of fan clubs are catching up on the trend. Learned from the official website of the Dutch Beatles Fan Club, On October 1999, Bertus Elzenaar started a website that provides daily news about the Beatles and their individual members, and on November 2003 after forty years since the fan club was found, it received a gift from Har van Fulpen, that is the domain name beatlesfanclub.nl, which means to them "the step to a professional approach with an organization that consists entirely of volunteers".⁶²

Community archives are, by Andrew Flinn, the "grassroots activities of documenting, recording and exploring community heritage in which community participation, control and ownership of the project are essential".⁶³ It is fan communities as the conducting subject that stands out, rather than the different patterns on how they provide or interpret the information. The process of their memories and experiences

⁶¹ The Beatles Bible. "About this site", <https://www.beatlesbible.com/about/>, accessed 5-6-2019.

⁶² Beatles Fan Club, "Who are we?", <https://beatlesfanclub.nl/wie-zijn-wij/>, accessed 4-6-2019.

⁶³ Flinn, A. "Community Histories, Community Archives: Some Opportunities and Challenges". *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 28 (2), 2007, 151–176. pp. 53.

projecting on is thus loose. In 1989 Pierre Nora believed that “modern memory is, above all, archival. It relies entirely on the materiality of the trace, the immediacy of the recording and the visibility of the image.”⁶⁴ Entered the Internet age it can be seen more obviously. Memories are digitized into data and files, which became possible and so easy to be erased. And when that happened, being out of interpretation feels like lost in amnesia.

Even the old issues of the magazines are still seen in collections of Dutch fans, the Beatles Unlimited is crumbled since one day the leader Rene van Haarlem dramatically disappeared. The merely existing Beatles Unlimited Facebook group was once an attached window of the fan club, now became the remained evidence online for their presence. “He never told me to stop so I carry on”, answered the manager Max Bokking, who still select and repost news about the Beatles on the group page frequently.



Beatles Unlimited magazines in collections of Moltmaker, Schreuders, Roosenbrand

Collective archives to the communities are almost functioning like monuments: people commemorate it to forget it. Like Les Roberts pointed out, “in the digital age, the paradox of archival remembering is that in many respects it obviates the very necessity to recall, in that the more the past is anchored in a virtual domain the less the past is correspondingly lived as an embodied temporal praxis. The archive, in other words, does the remembering on our behalf.”⁶⁵ It still doesn’t catch much

⁶⁴ Nora, P. “Between memory and history: Les Lieux de Mémoire”. *Representations*, 26, 1989, 7–25. pp. 13.

⁶⁵ Roberts, Les. “Talkin bout my generation: popular music and the culture of heritage”. *International Journal of*

attention that the “wish list” system is de-motivating people to experience. On the internet one can mark and repost the interested information to one’s own archive, but instead of really getting to know and experience it. And without experiences there won’t be memories.

As expressed by Barbara Craig, “the usefulness of the memory recalled by archives is affected by two conditions: the qualities of the documents as credible evidence and the transparency of the contextual envelope that encloses them. Together, these work to transmit clear intent that provides a stable foundation on which users can begin to create their own meanings.”⁶⁶ Based on this fundamental ideal, one believes, Rijksmuseum published the online collection catalogue and opened the information of its objects to the internet public. By this condition, the photograph of Bertus Elzenaar can be searched to view. And because of the detachment of rich interpretations, that is what “users can begin to create their own meanings” for, the memories couldn’t be considered “useful” to the collection catalogue therefore the item is in the end, meaningless.

The Internet was once believed by Steven G. Jones “to result in a community free of the constraints of space and time, and so free us to engage with fellow humans irrespective of geographic proximity and the clock, and it would construct that community from communication, rather than inhabitation and being, which do not guarantee communication.”⁶⁷ Now we see that accessibility to communication does not guarantee communication, either. The isolation in this age of massive data flow is the isolation of meaning. A fan community is a natural forum, a ground for interacting memories to create meanings, and the meeting places do not rely on elements by birth but by choice.

Heritage Studies, 2012, 1-19. pp. 13.

⁶⁶ Craig, B.L. “Selected themes in the literature on memory and their pertinence to archives”. *American Archivist*, 63, 2002, 276–289. pp. 287.

⁶⁷ Jones, Steven G. “The Internet and its social landscape”. In Steven G. Jones (ed.), *Virtual culture: Identity and communication in cybersociety*. London: SAGE Publications, 1997, 7-35.

Conclusions

The aim of this thesis has been to examine how the institutional and non-institutional ways of heritage making relate to each other, and what one can learn from this comparison in terms of professional practice. It is explored in a case study focusing on the English rock/pop band the Beatles and happenings about them in the Netherlands. The study follows on two different but intertwined paths of making the Beatles heritage by institutions and fan communities. Since this research is with intimate emotions and sensitiveness all along, materials collecting are conducted in face-to-face interviews in workplaces with relevant museum professionals and in personal residences with the fans.

First, to see the process of collecting and preserving in the discourse of the Beatles in the Netherlands, objects from both museums and fans collections are categorized by related historical events. In 1963 Har van Fulpen founded the Beatles Dutch fan club; about the near time, managing director of the Dutch record company M. Stibbe & Co. Robbert S. van Santen started promotion for the Beatles in the country, thus the band's tour in Holland was planned. On 6 June 1964, the Beatles took a canal cruise in Amsterdam. Documents on the fan club are shown in Van Fulpen's collection, and documents on the publicity event can be seen on articles of fan researchers Lucas Ligtenberg and Piet Schreuders on magazine *Furore*. Museum het Grachtenhuis has a simple remark on the event in its permanent exhibition of a canals model. Later on the same day of the cruise, the Beatles performed in Blokker. Souvenirs at the concert are seen from Van Fulpen and private collector Hans Roosenbrand. Videos of the concert are in the archive of the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision. On 24 March 1969, John Lennon and Yoko Ono conducted their Bed-in for Peace movement for seven days in the Hilton Hotel of Amsterdam. Related items are featured in an exhibition in Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam 2018 – 2019, under the theme of the art and counterculture revolution in the late 1960s; while several fans hold exclusive items in their collections. And the Hilton hotel in Amsterdam opened the 50 years

Bed-in for Peace anniversary celebration in March 2019, which contained photographs from both fans and professionals.

Objects in the institutions are mostly used in broader themes, and fans collect for their memories on the historical events on the Beatles. Following on 3 sets of heritage, with each pair in the same form but one from the institutional collection and the other not, are put in mutual comparisons to see their conditions and presentations in practices. Two pictures of the band member George Harrison which one from an exhibition in Tropenmuseum in 2015 – 2016 to show the influences of Indian art and philosophy in the Beatles' music, and one from Hans Roosenbrand to commemorate his personal meeting with Harrison. Two fabric posters, which one of Lennon and Ono's anti-war movement from the collection of Stedelijk Museum, and one from Roosenbrand of his collaboration with Textile Museum Tilburg for a Beatles theme exhibition in 1995. Two rooms which one is the suite for Bed-in for Peace in 1965 in Hilton Amsterdam, and one is the office of Har van Fulpen as the chairman of the fan club reconstructed in the Beatles Museum Alkmaar. This part emphasized different values institutions and fans see in similar forms of objects, thus they bring different interpretations.

Music and heritage directly related to music are presented in individual stories of fans and in narratives of Tropenmuseum's exhibitions. It shows music as the core has the nature to bear multiple interpretations, and radiate it to the tangible objects attached to it to make heritage.

In the second section, institutions' communications with fan communities in collecting and presenting the Beatles in practices are revealed. Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam during its exhibition is limited from talking to fan communities to approach more materials for its presentation on Bed-in for Peace movement. Tropenmuseum reached the fan club to find alternatives in searching for an instrument of George Harrison for its exhibition. Museum het Grachtenhuis threw out its responsibilities on the problematic display chapter of the Beatles' canal cruise, and

didn't show any interest in further developments from fans' research. Textile Museum in Tilburg collaborated with fan-collector on its exhibition in 1995. And Hilton Amsterdam involved fans' collections and stories in its 50 years anniversary events for the Bed-in for Peace. The relationships between established institutions and fans are shown in specific cases, in which fans are involved, or not, in institutions mainly as the source to information or materials.

To see in the fans' perspectives in section 3, the discourse of music heritage towards the Beatles was formed also outside museum. The Dutch fan-experts keep close connections with Liverpool and London in collection and research to find their authorities. In the Netherlands, Beatles fan communities have complex histories in balancing different narratives on the Beatles heritage. Older generations of fans have the practices in researching and publishing, and the new generation turns to a new approach of archiving online. It presents that the fans are in their own ways to make heritage, and already have a background environment on it.

Seldom communications happened between museums and the Beatles' fans in the Netherlands, as this research shows. Museums have abilities and possibilities to involve fan communities in their collecting and presenting practices, but they stand in limited conditions. Fans are holding their values towards the heritage, but still relying on the power of institutions to authority.

Discussions

The discussions focus on approaches to build a long term relationship between museums and fan communities. The first part is from the leading view of museum rethinking the roles both sides play in future practices, to achieve more mutual understandings. And the second part is from the view of the fan community, with an idea of making a Beatles museum in Amsterdam mainly by the local fans.

Chapter 7

How can museums build a long term relationship with fan communities?

To keep a sustainable relationship with fan communities means to involve them more than in temporary exhibitions representing cultural diversity for museums. By that museums need to consider positioning communities on different levels of institutional practices.

As this research showed, fan communities are mostly a source to museums. Museums provide soundboards or review channels to take in alternative interpretations, objects and additional information as supplements attached to the certain existed process, but not see the communities as the fundamental source and build on it. In my view there is no restriction in centering minor histories and supplementing general acknowledgement; the representation of diversity can land equivalently. And museum being the platform for dialogues is responsible for mediating different interpretations. When other perspectives and interpretations are unveiled, crisis arise to what Mirjam Shatanawi remarked “the limited agency of the museum to promote cross-cultural understanding”⁶⁸. It is a further issue for museums to prevent a mass percentage of visitors from feeling challenged even threatened to their worldview.

⁶⁸ Shatanawi, Mirjam. “Engaging Islam: Working with Muslim Communities in a Multicultural Society”. *Curator the museum journal*, Volume 55 Number 1, January 2012, 65-79. pp. 75.

And when a specific community is the subject matter in museums' exhibitions and researches, museum is a stage for presenting. It is one part of the authority museum has, that fan communities are longing to obtain. In museum building in the exhibiting space, the entity of a community is made physical, and its ideas and history are represented by physical objects. If any museum saw the Beatles Unlimited in such position, maybe the fan group wouldn't vanish so drastically.

Museums are also one part of social life, and fan communities are social practices and memories to their members. Nowadays religions in many regions are ceased to function in gathering people together, thus the business of providing opportunities and space for people to socializing is partly assigned to museum. Collaborating in fan communities' activities, such as conventions, trades, and celebrations, could be beneficial for both sides, even just shared the experiences.

In the last basis fan communities are audiences for museums. Museum still has the power from its authority to choose whether fan communities are included in its target groups. Two interviewees from the Beatles fan club in this research shared their reviews on Amsterdam the Magic Centre in Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, that the resonance is layered in their identities as Beatles fans and as youngsters from the represented generation. Still the museum chose to present a more subjective narrative of history. And as Liza Swaving remarked in the interview, museum also chooses the representations of communities more than the communities literally. To present and represent communities in considerate manners is basically to maintain visitor count.

Think of every individual as a constructing identity, and being a fan is one part attached to the work. Writer J.B. Jackson illustrated communication as "a kind of search for some place or person to help reinforce your identity"⁶⁹. In the communication in fan communities, the search to identity meets on interests or

⁶⁹ Jackson, J.B. "The social landscape". In S. Yates (ed.), *The essential landscape*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. pp. 45-48

passion to the same subject. It is a potential for museum to discover narratives freely from communities which are identified by restricted elements like religion, race, sexuality or geography. The identification of a fan community can run through these elements. As Anderson noted in *Imagined Communities*, “communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity or genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined.”⁷⁰ And the imagination of fan communities to museum, I hope, must be free, complex, and interesting for staying complex.

Thought of a new Beatles museum in Amsterdam curated by fans and museum professionals

This chapter is for the question, “what if letting the fans design a museum of the Beatles?” And to answer it with a conception that is free from practical examinations. This was originally a spontaneous idea from Max Bokking during the interview. Through it, the expectation of presenting the Beatles’ heritage in the Netherlands is shown in a fan’s aspects. Here I stand in considerations as a fan but utilizing my skills in professional museum practices.

The location is selected in Amsterdam for commemorating the canal cruise in 1964, and of course in considering of attracting more visitors with convenient transportation. Positioning as a city museum, its mission would be: connecting fans near and far by preserving and presenting the Beatles heritage in the Netherlands, and showing a special view of the city with memories of the Beatles. The collection should be hopeful to get enriched soon with an established platform as a museum, and reputations from key figures in the management team:

Director: Har van Fulpen.

The founder and first president of the Dutch Beatles Fan Club Har van Fulpen to be

⁷⁰ Anderson, B. *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London: Verso, 1983.

the director will mean a great deal to Dutch Beatles fans, and with his experiences in organizing, it makes the leadership.

Executive Secretariat: Ron Bulters.

The current chairman of the Dutch Beatles Fan Club.

Department of collections: Hans Roosenbrand.

As a private collector with over 5 decades of experience in collecting Beatles souvenirs and with wide networking among local collectors.

Communication and marketing: Azing Moltmaker.

The private museum owner is known for engaging the audiences and finding new opportunities in marketing.

Media and information: Max Bokking.

With his experience in the music industry and perseverance.

Department of history: Rene van Haarlem.

As the founder of the Beatles Unlimited, the group led by Van Haarlem was known for deep thinking and providing inspiring topics.

Research service and education: Piet Schreuders.

It is a waste for Schreuders's design talent, but he devotes mainly to researching work in the field of the Beatles.

Permanent exhibitions:

- the Beatles in the Netherlands 1964
- John Lennon and Yoko Ono's Bed-in for Peace in Amsterdam 1969
- the story of the Dutch Beatles Fan Club

The exhibits will mainly be objects from private collections of local fans. Through these objects, the stories of the Beatles in the Netherlands are told with the events about the band or its members in the country in the perspectives of fans. Based on the thorough research by Piet Schreuders, there is rich information to re-build the experience of the canal cruise in 1964. Projecting pictures from professional and amateur photographers with audio can make a vivid representation. For the Bed-in, stories from views of fans and mass media overlap. And showing the Dutch Beatles Fan Club, with the history of the organization and values for local fans. An installation like the office of Har van Fulpen will have a better chance for more thorough narratives.

In reality, most people mentioned on the list are in retirement age; also it is rarely possible to get two contrasting figures like Moltmaker and Van Haarlem to work in the same organization again. This imagination of a Beatles museum built by Beatles fans only tries to examine how much professional skills would be needed in presenting the heritage in an institutional way. In this imagination it seems merely about two fields, conservation and legal aspect, must involve professional knowledge. And back to reality, the increasingly participatory environment for heritage will inevitably bring a more fundamental involvement of audiences and communities into museums.

Bibliography

Alperson, Philip. "'Musical Time' and Music as an 'Art of Time'". *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 38, No. 4, summer 1980. pp. 407-417.

Anderson, B. *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London: Verso, 1983.

Ankersmit, F.R. *History and Tropology: The Rise and Fall of Metaphor*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 1994.

Antzoulitou-Retsila, Eurydice. "Museums and Communities: Coping with dilemmas, or between museomania and museotherapy". In Martin R. Schärer (ed.), *Museum and Communities, ICOM 1995*. Norsk ICOM. ca 1997, 21-28.

Baker, S. and Huber, A. "Notes towards a typology of the DIY institution: identifying do-it-yourself places of popular music preservation". *European journal of cultural studies*, 16(5), 2013, 513-530.

Bennett, A. "Punk's not dead: The continuing significance of punk rock for an older generation of fans". *Sociology*, 40(2), 2006, 219–235.

Bennett, A. "'Heritage rock': Rock music, representation and heritage discourse". *Poetics*, 37, 2009, 474–489.

Bennett, Andy. & Janssen, Susanne. "Popular Music, Cultural Memory, and Heritage", *Popular Music and Society*, 39:1, 2016, 1-7.

Craig, B.L. "Selected themes in the literature on memory and their pertinence to archives". *American Archivist*, 63, 2002, 276–289.

Darvill, Timothy. "Rock and soul: humanizing heritage, memorializing music and producing places". *World Archaeology*, 46:3, 2014, 462-476.

Flinn, A. "Community Histories, Community Archives: Some Opportunities and Challenges". *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 28 (2), 2007, 151–176.

Fremaux, Stephanie, "Coming Together: DIY Heritage and the Beatles", In: Baker, S. (ed.) *Preserving Popular Music Heritage: Do-it-Yourself, Do-it-Together*, London: Routledge, 2015, 139-150.

Hale, John. "Museums and the teaching of history", *Museums and education, Museum*, Vol. XXI, No.1, 1968, 67-78.

Jackson, J.B. "The social landscape". In S. Yates (ed.), *The essential landscape*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. 45-48

Jones, Steven G. "The Internet and its social landscape". In Steven G. Jones (ed.), *Virtual culture: Identity and communication in cybersociety*. London: SAGE Publications, 1997, 7-35.

Ligtenberg, Lucas. & Schreuders, Piet. "'So they can see us,' June 6 1964 – the Beatles got a taste of Amsterdam". *Furore* 24, Jan 2019, 86-108.

Miller, Daniel. "Behind Closed Doors". In Daniel Miller (Ed.), *Home possessions: material culture behind closed doors*. UK: Berg Publishers. 2001, 1-19.

Nora, P. "Between memory and history: Les Lieux de Mémoire". *Representations*, 26, 1989, 7–25.

Pearce, Susan M. "Museum objects", and "Objects as meaning; or narrating the past". In Susan M. Pearce, *Interpreting Objects and Collections*. London: Routledge. 1994, 9-11, 19-29.

Pearce, Susan M. "Thinking about things". In Susan M. Pearce, *Interpreting Objects and Collections*. London: Routledge. 1994, 125-132.

Roberts, Les. "Talkin bout my generation: popular music and the culture of heritage". *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 2012, 1-19.

Schreuders, Piet. & Orth, Ken. "The Beatles Revolver: The collage". *Furore* 22, Jan 2017, 20-23.

Shatanawi, Mirjam. "Engaging Islam: Working with Muslim Communities in a Multicultural Society". *Curator the museum journal*, Volume 55 Number 1, January 2012, 65-79.

Strauss, Leo. "How To Study Medieval Philosophy", *Interpretation*, Vol. 23, No. 3, Spring 1996, 321-338.

Van der Hoeven, A. & Brandellero, A. "Places of popular music heritage: The local framing of a global cultural form in Dutch museums and archives". *Poetics*, 51, 2015, 37-53.

Wilde, Oscar. *The picture of Dorian Gray*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2006.

"Youth Zips Up Dutch Firm". *Billboard*, 28 December 1963.

Beatles Fan Club, “Who are we?”, <https://beatlesfanclub.nl/wie-zijn-wij/>, accessed 4-6-2019.

Beatles Museum Alkmaar. “Historie”, <https://www.beatlesmuseum.nl/historie/>, accessed 4-6-2019.

Museum of Liverpool. “Get involved”,
<http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/mol/get-involved>, accessed 4-6-2019.

Nerdwriter1 (Evan Puschak). “How The Beatles Changed Album Covers”, 12 August 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_st4diqjpis, accessed 5-6-2019.

Stichting the Beatles in Blokker. “Monument”, 2018,
<https://www.thebeatlesinblokker.nl/monument/>, accessed 2-6-2019.

The Beatles Bible. “About this site”, <https://www.beatlesbible.com/about/>, accessed 5-6-2019.

The Beatles Bible. “John and Yoko’s first bed-in for peace: Amsterdam”,
<https://www.beatlesbible.com/1969/03/25/john-and-yokos-first-bed-in-for-peace/>,
accessed 2-6-2019.

Wired, “Paul McCartney Answers the Web’s Most Searched Questions”,
13 September 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Pf19jV1NYw>, accessed 19-12-2018.