

Intangible Cultural Heritage at the Smithsonian presents

Dr. Robert Albro



Applied Humanities Networks and the Social Life of Heritage in International Affairs

When: 12:30-2:00 on Thursday, Nov. 20th, 2014

Where: Conference room, Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, 600 Maryland Ave. SW, Suite 2001, Washington, D.C.

Please RSVP to WilliamsJ@si.edu to ensure event capacity.

Abstract:

Many U.S. cultural institutions, including museums, are increasingly global institutions. They have become critical spaces of encounter for local, national and global cultural flows and engage in a wide variety of cooperative cultural work. This work is often carried out via the coordination of networks, transnationally linking cultural producers and cultural professionals. Museums, in other words, are active nodes in distributed global networks composed of the circulation of heritage. In this talk, Dr. Albro considers the social life of heritage as part of the work of applied humanities networks, highlighting the role of these networks as sources of collaborative heritage-based traffic. He particularly focuses upon the relationship between what circulates through these networks – e.g. the exchange of scholarship, expertise, services, technologies and legal framings with respect to heritage – and the meanings of heritage, where such networked heritage work contributes meaningfully to its “intangible” value.

Bio:

Robert Albro received his Ph.D. in sociocultural anthropology from the University of Chicago. He has maintained long-term ethnographic research on popular and indigenous politics in Bolivia. Much of this work is presented in his book, *Roosters at Midnight: Indigenous Signs and Stigma in Local Bolivian Politics* (2010). His present research and writing is concerned with the intersections of culture with public policy in the contexts of human rights, national security, public diplomacy, science and technology. He is also currently the vice-president of the Public Diplomacy Council and co-chairs the Advisory Council for the University of Chicago’s Global Center for Arts and Culture Research. In 2009, Dr. Albro was given the AAA’s President’s Award in 2009 for outstanding contributions to the American Anthropological Association. Most recently he has taught at Wheaton College (MA) and at George Washington University. He is currently a research associate professor in American University’s Center for Latin American & Latino Studies.

Intangible Cultural Heritage at the Smithsonian is generously supported by the Smithsonian’s Consortium for World Cultures. For more information, please visit: www.folklife.si.edu/ICH.