

# Supporting the exhibition

*Incorporating and standardising mount making and installation to support the exhibition and loan preparation of the Nationaal Museum Van Wereldculturen*

Martijn de Ruijter, 2018

STICHTING NATIONAAL  
MUSEUM VAN WERELDCULTUREN

## Aim of this presentation

1. Collecting information on object level (conservator) about:
  - treatment, safe display, **mounting, installation** and transport.
  - feeding the collected information down into a database
  - accessibility of information
2. Standardized mounting and survey terminology

## National Museum van Wereldculturen + het Wereldmuseum

- 1 April 2014: merge between 3 ethnographic museums
- 1 may 2017: collaboration with the Wereldmuseum, (4 years period)
- 450,000 objects and almost 1million photographs (940.000 object records)



**TROPEEN  
MUSEUM**

Amsterdam



**AFFRIKA  
MUSEUM**

Berg en Dal



**MUSEUM  
VOLKENKUNDE**

Leiden



**WERELD  
MUSEUM**

Rotterdam

## Workload and organisation

2018

- 2 new permanent exhibitions,
- 11 temporary exhibitions, generally travel to 2 venues
- 40 outgoing loans
- Time for installation and de-installation has been cut down to two weeks.
- Decrease of permanent staff. 4 conservators (2,8FTE) 3 registrars (2,2 FTE)
- All former museums had their own systems, methods, terminology and reports.
  - > Need to develop a method that processes information in a uniform manner and makes the available information easily accessible for staff and freelancers

# The museum database

- A museum database contains all available information about the collection in one central place and is easily accessible.
- All ethnological museums already use the TMS database (The Museum System)

## The exhibition Proces

- An **'object package'** is made by a curator (exhibition) or registrar (loans)
- An **object list** with all basic information of the object including an image can be generate
- A printed object list is used by the storage technician to collect the objects
- A digital excel *object list* is used by the conservator to survey and plan their work.

### Example Object package list.

Location code, accession number and image

### Old Example exhibition list.

Theme, display case and conservation spec.

## A perfect museum database for exhibitions

- Facilitate all activities during the different phases of creating an exhibition or loan
- Access to the same information at the same time for all team-member.
- Managing the same level of understanding and various expectations.
- Generates suitable reports for its users and
- Establishes a good planning and work-flow between conservators, mount makers, installers and art handlers.
- Helps to see if the project is feasible and to stays within the financial objectives

## the challenge for Collection Management

- to develop a standardized terminology,
- to extend the scope of the surveys,
- to generate clear, uniform 'reports'
- the possibility to exchange information with a new interface from the TMS-database to Excel and back to the database.
  - Input entered on an Ipad or a laptop (storage/.
  - No endless amount of mouse clicks.
  - information can be easily transferred back and forth to an excel sheet.

## The standardized items on a conservation survey

five information components:

1. The administrative data,

3 Exhibition requirements & installation

5 Packing

2. Treatment aspects,

4. Mounting

Exhibition team

The database works with drop down lists (a set of specific terms) and free entry fields

## Example of spreadsheet with all survey aspects

- the administrative data – object information (metadata) generated from the TMS-database

1. The administrative data,

4. Mounting

inventory number,  
location code,  
object name,  
dimensions and  
weight,  
materials and  
techniques and  
CITES

Type  
Mountmaker  
hours

All information for the mountmaker to execute the mount in database and design drawing

id	Afmetingen & gewicht	Indeling	Heurige etensdrinks	Behoudingsmethode	Afbeelding
30	37cm	2	Stijpen - W2	DAG60C02	B
102	122 x 25,0cm	2	Stijpen - W2 - Sanitair	DH10	B, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z, aa - Passte partouf
103	122 x 25,0cm	2	Stijpen - W2 - Sanitair	DAG60B02	B, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z, aa - Passte partouf
104	26,8 cm x 37,5 cm	2	Stijpen - W2 - Houwelijke sierpen	JCAR, R002	B, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z, aa - Passte partouf
105	26,5 cm x 37,5 cm	2	Stijpen - W2 - Houwelijke sierpen wasser	JCAR, R002	B, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z, aa - Passte partouf
106	30 x 30cm (juchelring)	2	Stijpen - W4	DAG60C02	B
107	12,5 x 14cm	2	Stijpen - W4 - Games	DAG60B02	B, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z, aa - Passte partouf

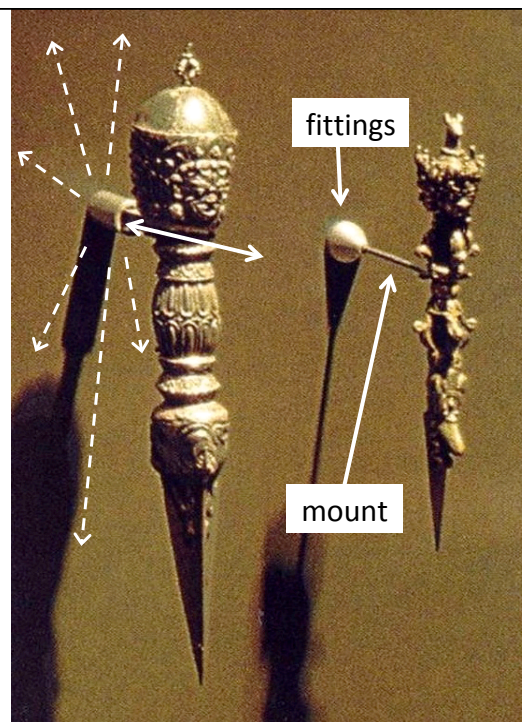
**Collectie Podium 2: Diversen**

Acateca	4880-476a ✓	Mixtaco	5946-616 ✓	Quechquemiti	5946-120 ✓
	4880-468		5946-621		5946-159 ✓
	4880-468				5946-760 ✓
Weefgetouw	5069-285	Amusgo	5946-178 ✓		5946-807 ✓
			5946-179 ✓		5946-863 ✓
		Tacuata	5946-201 ✓	Huipiles	5946-520 ✓
			5946-202 ✓		5946-528 ✓

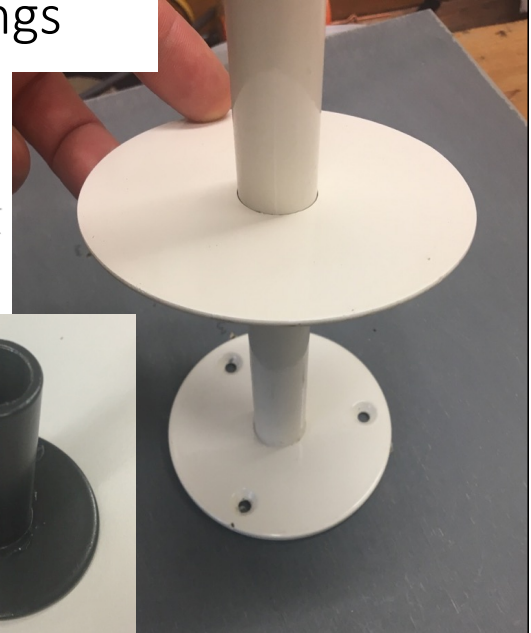
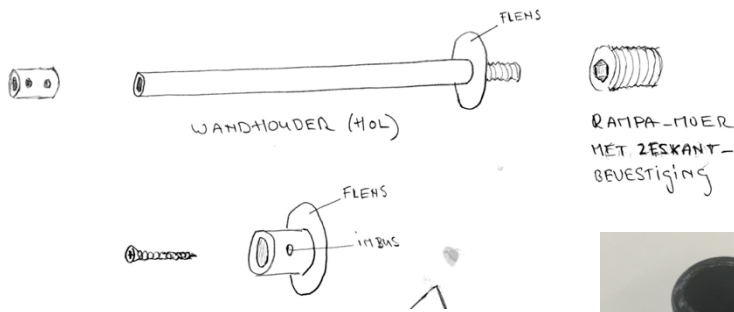
## Fittings and object mounts,

The type of mounting is based on:

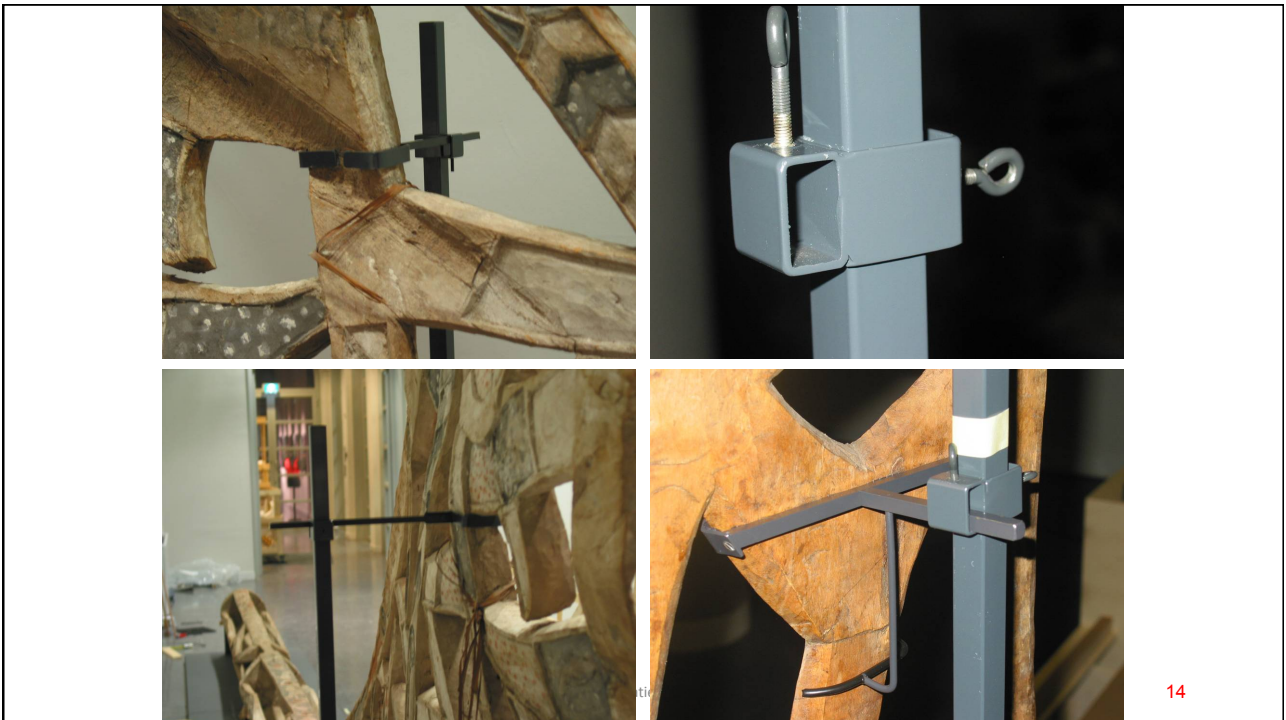
- Placement and fittings
- Workplace where the mount is made,
- Skills of the mount maker,
- Time required to fabricate the mount and
- Level of execution (from simple to complex)



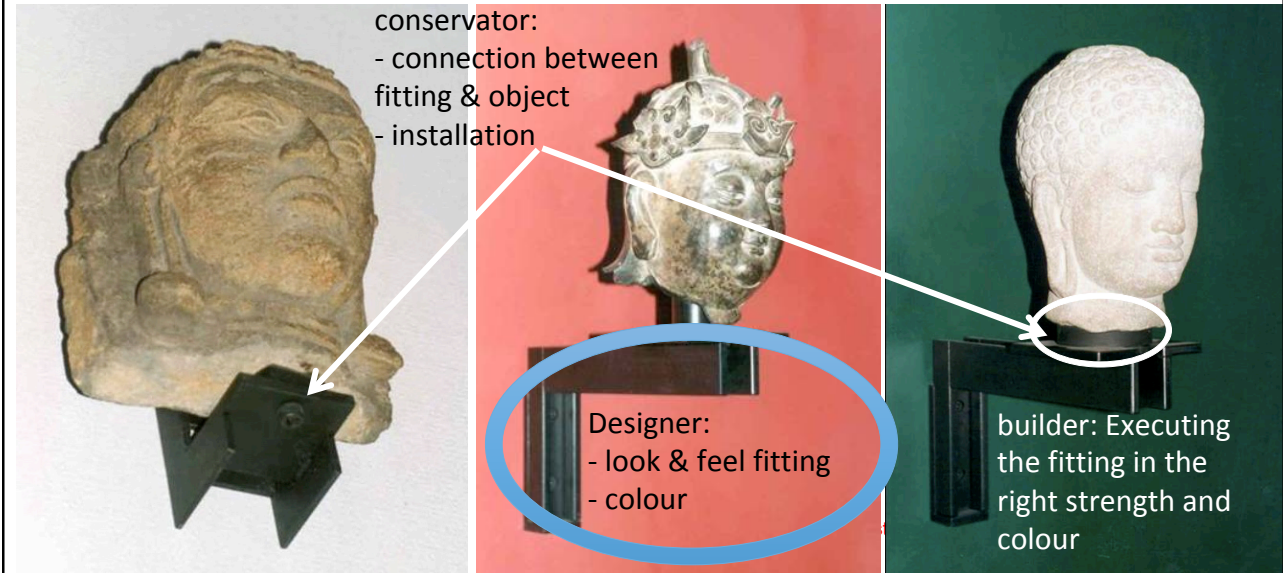
## Most essential part: the fittings



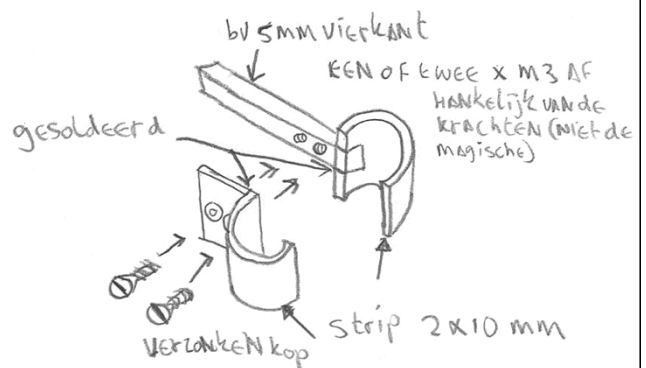
- Connection between mount & exhibition construction
- Flexibility during installation
- Fabricated by the designer & constructor



responsibility of the designer or of collection management?  
 What can be made by the constructor/builder



100% Mount mountmaking. Taylor made forms





## Object mounting

### Type 1

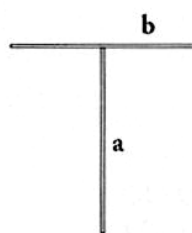
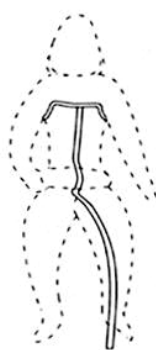
#### Small adjustments and simple mounts.

- Adjustments are executed on the exhibition floor.
- Examples are: an Ethafoam support, pinning on a board or the placements on L-shaped brackets.
- Fabrication does not take more than 15 minutes

1. Small adjustments and simple mounts.
2. Brass wire T and X-supports.
3. Brass Mounts.
4. Steel supports.
5. Paper, book and photo support.
6. Perspex or specific plastic (3d printing).
7. Textile supports.
8. Special displays
9. Hanging
10. other

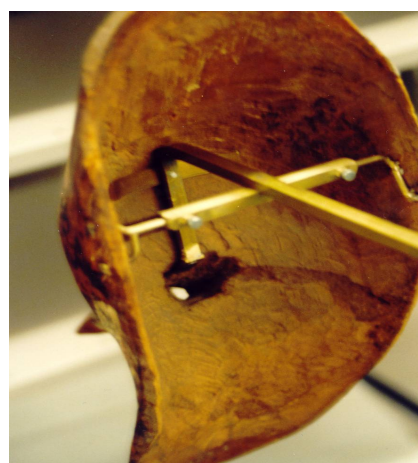
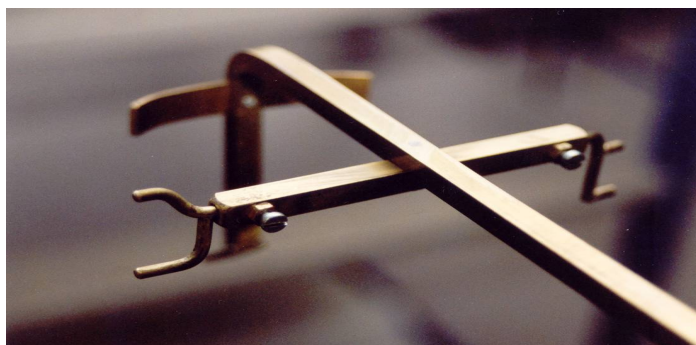
## Type 2 - Brass wire T and X-supports.

- The adjustments are executed on the exhibition floor.
- The support is drilled in the display cabinet and the brass wire is easily bent into shape & covered with a Teflon tube, PE-shrink tube, PE-foam or acrylic felt were it meets the object.
- max 15 minutes of work.



## Type 3 - Brass Mounts

- fabrication of more complex brass mounts requires specialist knowledge and tools, Most of the brass mounts are free-standing or placed in a fitting
- supports are executed in a workshop.
- Depending on complexity 4 to 8 hours
- by a specialist mountmaker

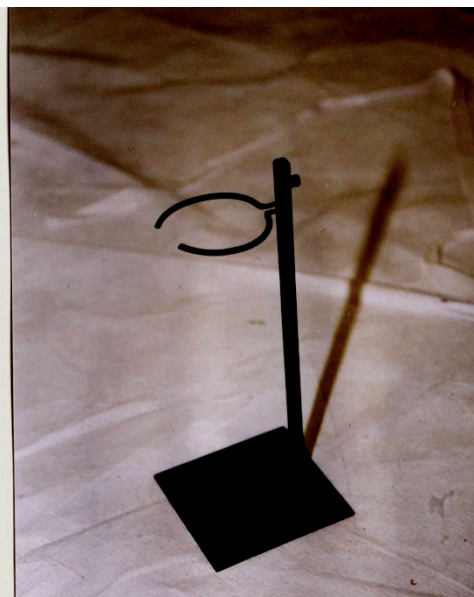
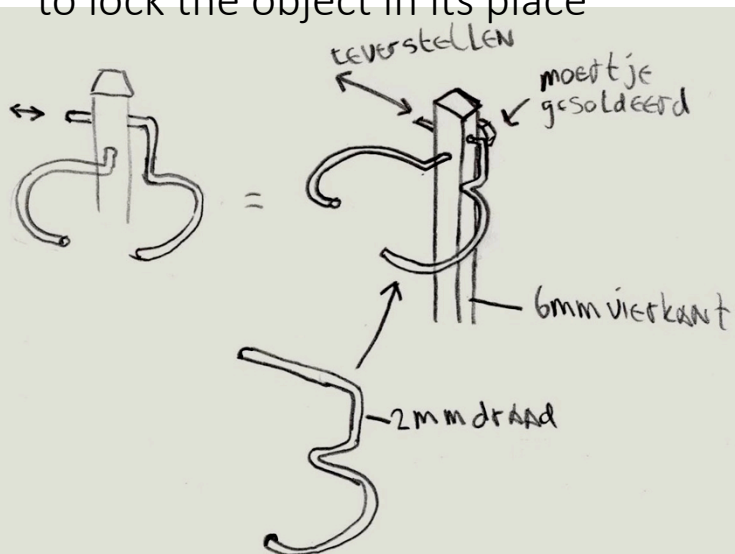


## Standardized mount terminology



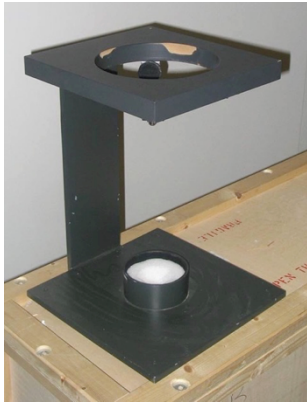
1998: the Katchina mount

Katchina mount = mount on a platform with adjustable arm to lock the object in its place

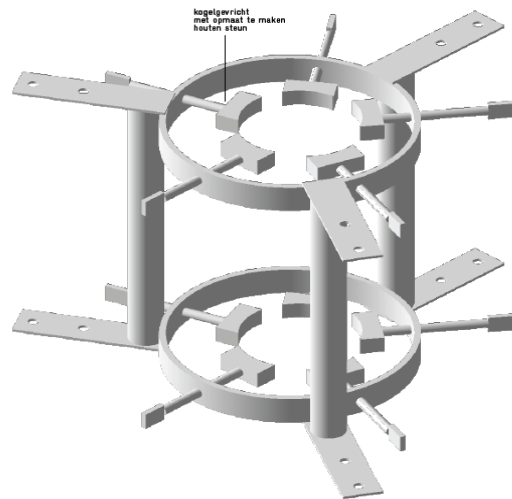
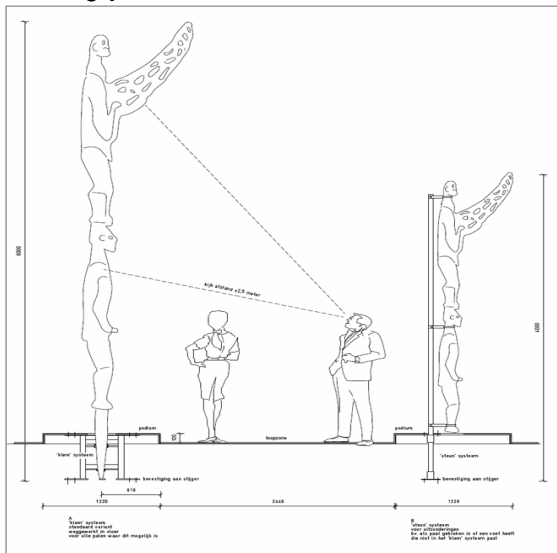


## Type 4- steel supports

- for large and heavier objects.
- Specialist knowledge and tools like welding equipment are necessary
- supports are executed in a workshop.
- Depending on complexity 4 to 8 hours



## Bisjpaal mount

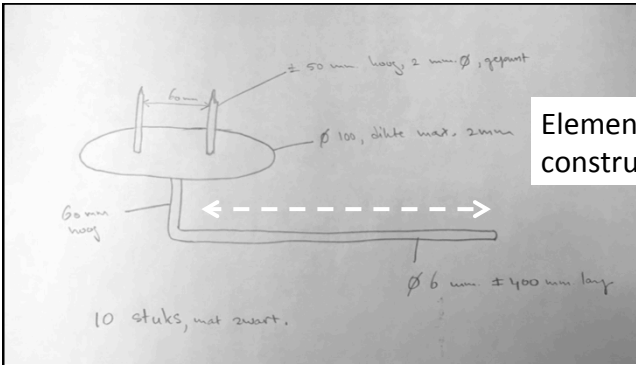


<b>KOSSMANN.DEJONG</b>	<b>TROPEN MUSEUM PAAL STEUNEN</b>	
De Rijnlaan 127 3011 AS Rotterdam T 020 4108933 www.kossmann.dejong.nl	door: Merlijn Sax	schaal: 1:20
teken in het werk voortzetten	teken in mm	formaat: A3
		datum: 12-07-07
		blad: 1/2

## object mounting requirements

- 1. Small adjustments & simple mounts.
  - 2. Brass wire T and X-supports.
  - 3. Brass Mounts
  - 4. Steel supports.
  - 5. Paper, book and photo support. passe-partout, book supports or floating mats. The fabrication of the support is executed by a paper conservator in a conservation laboratory
  - 6. Perspex or 3D printing. Specialist knowledge and tools like welding are necessary and are executed in a workshop.
  - 7. Textile supports. Hanging tunnels on flat textiles or placing a 3d costume on a doll, internal support or handling board. Mostly carried out by textile conservator in the conservation laboratory
  - 8. Mounted on a base. for example shape-retaining supports or objects mounted on a board or frame like tiles. Special displays
  - 9. Hanging painting, framed, filament, magnets,
  - 10. other
- Conservators needed
- Special preparation





Element made by constructor

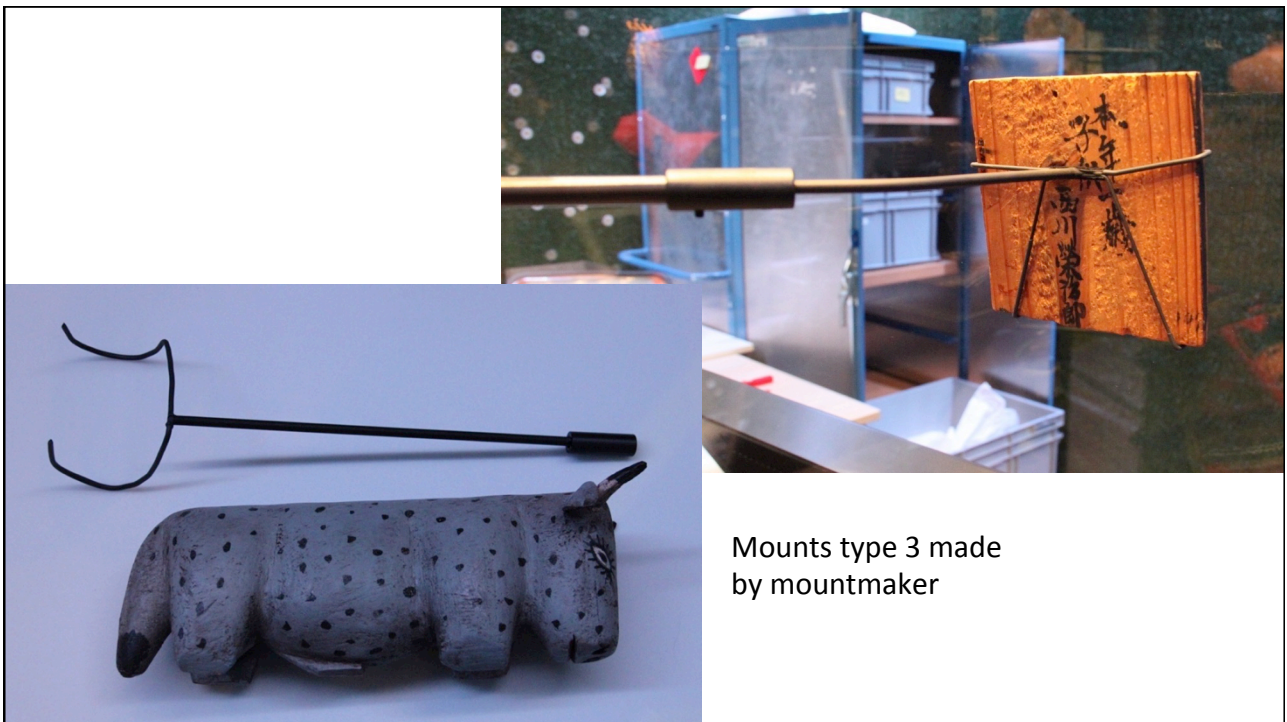
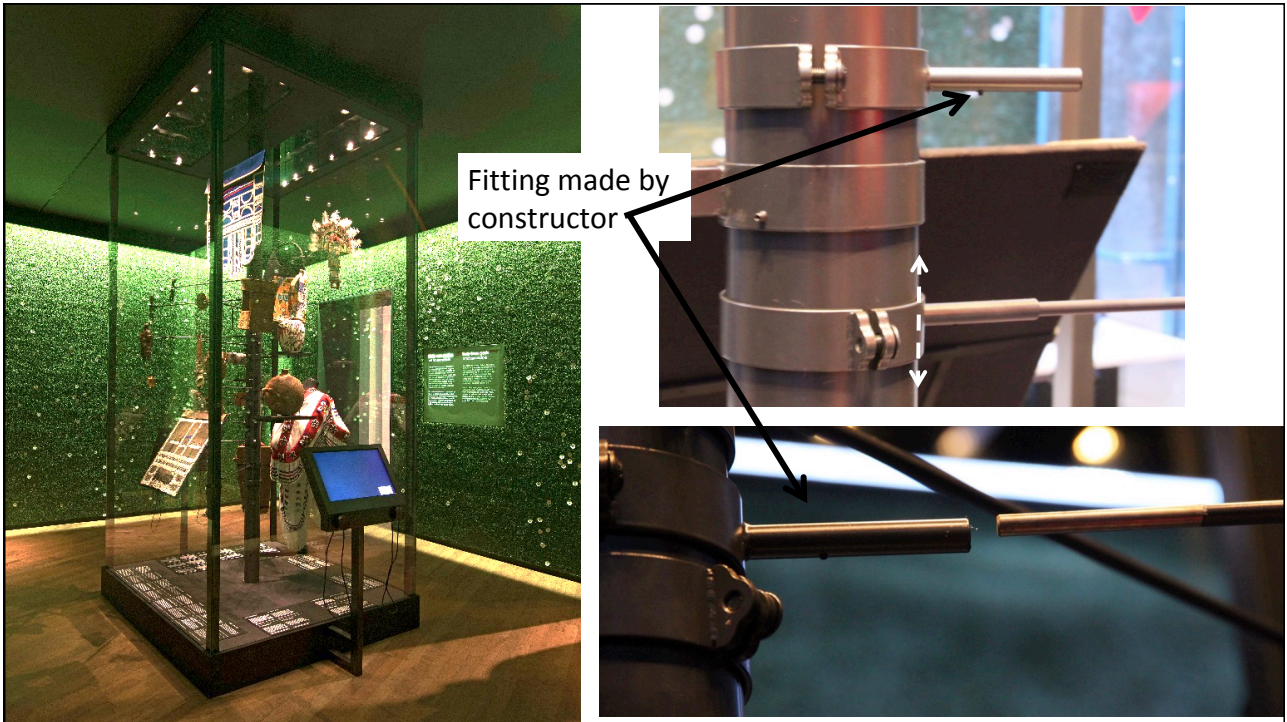


Mount made by conservator



Installation by conservator









Textile specialists



Standard mannequins modified by specialists



Measuring and Preparation by conservators



Installation by collection management



## Conclusion

- The conservation survey is extended with exhibition, mounting and transport information
- All information is accessible for all involved in the project (also the flexible workforce)  
>work can be dedicated to real specialists, organizing workflow and justifying costs
- An easy to use interface + standardization of terms is essential to feed, capture and retrieve the information.
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