

Report on an exchange visit to the library at Konstfack University College of Arts, Crafts and Design, Stockholm, Sweden, 9-15 May 2009

1. Background information

In May 2008, Liselotte Winka, librarian at Konstfack University College of Arts, Crafts and Design, Stockholm, Sweden visited Chelsea College of Art and Design (CCAD) Library in London for a week to observe and work with the staff to gain a different perspective of art librarianship and the working practices of a similar institution based in a different country. Another part of the visit was a pre-arranged programme of visits to other art libraries, galleries and museums to provide a view of art libraries in other sectors and a general overview of arts activities in a European capital city. The visit was funded by the Erasmus exchange program based at Konstfack and was intended to work as an exchange with a member of staff from Chelsea Library to return the visit in 2009.

During the week beginning 11 May 2009 Emily Glancy, Assistant Collection Development Librarian at CCAD Library visited the library Konstfack and made study visits to other libraries and arts institutions in Stockholm, Sweden. This second leg of the exchange was funded by the University of the Arts London (UAL) Erasmus program and an ARLIS Travel and Study Award.

2. The exchange work plan

The exchange was planned in advanced via e-mail, with Liselotte organising a schedule of visits to libraries and galleries to accompany staff shadowing sessions each morning with the Konstfack librarians, covering aspects of daily work such as cataloguing and acquisitions, user education and collection management. In addition to experiencing the daily work of the library, the exchange also gave an overview of higher education in Sweden and provided the opportunity to see the 2009 Konstfack Spring Exhibition, comprising the work of the undergraduate and postgraduate students.

2.1. Detailed work plan

Monday a.m.	Introduction to the Konstfack library, the librarians and the collections Work at the reference desk
Monday p.m.	Tour of the Nobel Library with Lars Rydquist A look at the Riksdagsbiblioteket (government library) Tour of the library at the Konstakademien (Royal Academy of Fine Arts) with Ulf Nordqvist, Swedish representative for ARLIS Norden
Tuesday a.m.	Introduction to the college (structure, admin and organisation) and tour of studios and workshops Work at the reference desk
Tuesday p.m.	The opening of the Konstfack Spring Show (degree exhibition) Visit to the Materialbiblioteket (materials library) Visit to the exhibition (Jan Håfström) at Liljevachs
Wednesday a.m.	Book-buying at Konst-ig bookshop Visit to the Kulturhuset – 3 photography exhibitions ('Dear Friends', Loretta Lux and Ville Lenkkeri)
Wednesday p.m.	Tour of the Fotografibiblioteket (photography library) with Peter Schultz Tour of the Konstbiblioteket (art library) with Maria Sylvén Visit to the exhibitions at Moderna Museet

Thursday a.m.	Introduction to acquisitions and cataloguing at Konstfack Work at the reference desk
Thursday p.m.	Tour of the Arkitekturmuseet (architecture museum) library with Lena Wranne Tour of the archives of the Arkitekturmuseet with Toren Warne Visit to the exhibition at the Arkitekturmuseet Visit to the permanent exhibitions at the Nationalmuseum (Swedish design)
Friday a.m.	Introduction to user education/information skills at Konstfack

3. Introduction to Konstfack

Konstfack University College of Arts, Crafts and Design is the largest college of its kind in Sweden. The college was established in 1844 and existed under various names until it became Konstfack in 1978. Konstfack was based in premises in central Stockholm from 1958 and in 2004 the college moved to the Hägersten suburb where it now exists in a former LM Ericsson factory.

Each year approximately 900 students are enrolled on undergraduate and masters programs across nine departments (Teacher Education; Graphic Design & Illustration; Industrial Design; Interior Architecture & Furniture; Design; Ceramics & Glass; Fine Art; Textile; Metal Department; Interdisciplinary Studies); the college employs about 200 members of staff.

4. Konstfack library

The library at Konstfack is one of Sweden's most important specialist art and design libraries. It houses a collection of approximately 70,000 books, manages subscriptions to 180 journals and provides access to electronic resources such as Artikelsök (a database indexing Swedish newspapers and journals), JSTOR, Art Full Text and the Design and Applied Arts Index.

4.1. Staffing

There are 4 librarians at Konstfack (2 full-time, 2 part-time), one of these being the Chief Librarian. Each librarian has a special area of responsibility e.g. acquisitions, cataloguing, user education, but there is no specific responsibility in terms of course liaison, although larger university libraries in Sweden do have subject librarians. There are no library assistants or shelvers.

4.2. Collections & resources

Aside from books and journals, the library has a materials library (from which samples can be borrowed) developed in partnership with teaching staff at the college; the TIMELINE video lounge (a collection of artists' film and video and viewing facilities created with Prof. Marysia Lewandowska); special collections including the Old Collection (books collected when the college was established in 1844, the oldest in the collection being printed in 1569); Martinska Collection, a picture collection donated by Fredrik Robert Martin (1868-1933) consisting of approximately 600, A1-size folders with photographs of a variety of objects, including graphic prints and original watercolours; the Zickerman Picture Collection of Peasant Textiles, comprising 133 boxes of photographs of traditional Swedish peasant textiles (the original and complete collection of 24,000 slides from which the Konstfack

photographs have been developed is held at the Nordiska Museet) and the Färngren Collection, a 20th Century photographic collection of objects from upper class homes . Other facilities in the library include 2 seminar rooms, 8 PCs, a photocopier, a self-issuing machine and inter-library loans.

The library collections are classified using a customised version of the Swedish classification scheme SAB. The shelving order within the library is divided into sections according to course subjects so there are a few shelving sequences. Signage in the library is in Swedish and English and a large proportion of the library collections are in English. The masters program at Konstfack is taught entirely in English and as such, English language speakers are well-provided for in the library.

4.3. Cataloguing

Swedish university and research libraries share a union catalogue called LIBRIS which is managed by the National Library of Sweden. The librarians at Konstfack catalogue new items in the Voyager cataloguing module of LIBRIS (using AACR2, MARC21 and LCSH) and then import these records into their own Mikromarc database. (Mikromarc is a Norwegian integrated library system and is one of the leading ILS in Scandinavia). Being part of a union catalogue means that Konstfack has remote access to a number of excellent databases e.g. OCLC WorldCat.

4.4. Acquisitions

The budget for books and other library resources, including journals and e-resources is approximately 13% of the total library budget (including staffing costs). Konstfack library has accounts with online booksellers Adlibris and Bokus. The book supplier processes the items and the only additional processing is to add barcodes and spine-labelling at the cataloguing stage. When an item is ordered the librarian creates a basic bibliographic record in LIBRIS (then imports to the Konstfack database) that acts as an acquisitions record. New books are displayed in the library and advertised on the library webpage. The library also buys books directly from art book shops. During the week there was the opportunity to accompany to the librarians to Konst-ig, a bookshop in Stockholm and the largest independent art bookseller in Scandinavia.

The library welcomes requests for purchase from staff and students.

www.adlibris.se

www.bokus.se

<http://www.konstig.se/>

4.5. User education/information skills

All new students receive an introduction to the library and during their course will take part in more detailed user education. User education for electronic resources is usually taught with a group of students in a classroom setting, with one PC and projected display. User education sessions are arranged with course professors and informal follow-up sessions on request from students. Two of the librarians have completed a teaching qualification (in

addition to the 2 year full time LIS masters held by all librarians). The Grundkurs i pedagogik för högskolelärare (Basic course in pedagogy for college teachers) is compulsory in Sweden for all newly hired lecturers, although not compulsory for librarians. It carries the equivalent of 15 credits and is the required qualification for teaching in colleges and universities.

4.6. Study support/disability support

TPB (Talbooks- och punktskriftsbiblioteket i.e. the Swedish Library of Talking Books and Braille) is an impressive government service available to students with disabilities or learning difficulties. Specifically set-up to assist higher education students, TPB aims to produce and lend talking books and books in Braille. TPB is a member of the DAISY consortium (Digital Accessible Information System). The DAISY format is a digital talking book on CD-ROM of up to 50 hours with chapters and sections that can be “bookmarked” by the listener. Using the TPB service the Konstfack library can request to have a printed book converted into a talking book. It is also possible for foreign language course literature to be converted. This service is free of charge.

http://www.tpb.se/english/students_service/

http://www.daisy.org/about_us/

4.7. Staff development

Konstfack library is active within ARLIS Norden. ARLIS Norden is the Art Libraries Society for the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden). The annual conference is held in each country over a five year rotation, with this year’s being held in Stockholm. As such, there is a more open attitude towards travelling for staff development e.g. a group visit to the Venice Biennale in 2007. The librarians at Konstfack take part in all staff development that is relevant to art libraries. High importance is placed on longer-term training opportunities such as the teaching qualification gained by two librarians.

5. Basic comparison of CCAD and Konstfack libraries (based on the year 2007-2008)

	CCAD Library	Konstfack Library
Books	80,000	70,000
Current journals	280	180
Staff members*	10 (6 full time**)	4 (2 full time)
Opening hours p/w	53.75	41 (incl. 11 hr without staffing)
Visitors p/a	112,843	45,067
Items issued p/a	54,567	40,000
Self-issue availability	No	Yes
% of total budget for books	65 [^]	13
Highest level of study supported	Research	Masters

*exclusive of Saturday staffing at CCAD **full-time = a post with 35 hours per week based solely at CCAD [^] excluding staffing costs

It is difficult to make direct comparisons with the libraries at Konstfack and CCAD. Given that Konstfack is an independent university college and CCAD is part of UAL there are large

differences in the way the libraries of each are managed. On a day to day basis the libraries are run in a similar manner, the main differences being in opening hours and staffing. CCAD has a hierarchical staffing structure, whereas Konstfack has one Chief Librarian and three librarians. The opening hours and amount of staffed time in the library varies significantly; CCAD has longer opening hours and is open on Saturdays. Konstfack is open to users without a member of staff at the issue desk between 9-11am, but has a self-issue machine.

CCAD library benefits from the Library and Learning Resources department centrally funded and managed library management system and electronic resources, whereas Konstfack library has to budget for this independently.

6. Significant small differences at Konstfack library

- Students can borrow non-current journals
- There is no limit on the number of items a user can borrow
- Alumni can borrow items
- AV material is all reference
- There are no date stamps – printed receipts with due dates are given
- The library closes for the summer (this year from June 8 – August 23)
- Barcodes are attached to the back cover of the book

7. Summary of visits to other libraries

The visits made to other arts libraries in Stockholm helped to give a wider view of art librarianship in Sweden. All libraries visited were in relatively new premises (with the exception of the Nobel Library) and all were of national, if not international importance. Like Konstfack, the databases of these libraries are all part of the LIBRIS union catalogue.

7.1 Nobel Library

The Nobel Library was the only non-art library visited during the exchange. The library is part of the Nobel Academy and assists the academicians in researching and making selections for the Nobel Prize for Literature. There are around 150 subscriptions to international literature journals and approximately 200,000 volumes in the collection, much of which is foreign language i.e. not Swedish. As such, the Nobel Library is one of the largest specialist literature libraries in Scandinavia.

http://www.svenskaakademien.se/web/The_Nobel_Library.aspx

7.2 Konstakademien

The library at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts serves the needs of the students and academicians. The library has approximately 60,000 books and subscribes to about 80 journals. It houses a special collection, the “1806 Library”, comprising architecture, art history and humanities books from 16th- 19th centuries.

The librarian at the Konstakademien is the Swedish representative of ARLIS Norden.

<http://www.konstakademien.se/sv/Bibliotek/Information/>

7.3 Materialbiblioteket

The visit to the Materialbiblioteket (Materials Library) was an unplanned addition to the exchange work plan. It was set up by Oliver Schmidt, a former member of staff at Konstfack who had been involved in the research and planning of the Konstfack library's own material library. Based in the same area as the Konstfack building, the Materialbiblioteket displays samples of materials that are used by Swedish industrial designers and engineers. Companies pay to display their products so that the users of the library can come and browse the materials free of charge.

7.4 Fotografibiblioteket and Konstbiblioteket

The Photography Library and Art Library are the shared reference collections for both the Moderna Museet and the Nationalmuseum. Although primarily serving the researchers of these two museums they are both open to the public Tuesday-Thursday in the afternoon. The libraries have recently moved (based in the same building a short walk from Moderna Museet) and are well-designed and furnished with adjustable-height enquiry desks and book scanners.

7.5 Arkitekturmuseet – library and archives

The library and archives of the Architecture Museum were based on the collections of a number of Swedish architects who decided to bring their own personal libraries together in order that curators, researchers and students could access the books for their own work. As such, the library collections are part library-part archival collections, as there are multiple copies of some standard reference titles that are significant because of their provenance. The archives house photographs, plans and drawings and models, all in environmentally-controlled conditions.

8 Conclusion

This work exchange was valuable in terms of gaining experience of writing a funding application, developing relationships with external institutions and observing the working practice of art librarians in an academic and museum setting in a different country. The only negative side to the experience was the length of time; one week allows for visits, shadowing and making connections with art librarians in other institutions but it is not sufficient for gaining a true insight to working life in another country.

The exchange was, without a doubt, the best and most rewarding staff development activity I have taken part in. I am very grateful to all the Stockholm art librarians who spent their time guiding me around their libraries and obliging me with their excellent English. Particular thanks go to Liselotte Winka and the Konstfack librarians for organising the exchange and being so welcoming.

Emily Glancy, May 2009