



# FACTVM FOVNDATION

FOR DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY  
IN CONSERVATION



## Bucket list

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As a phrase 'bucket list' is now no longer just mainstream - it has become establishment. President Obama was quoted as saying, after his drop-over/photo of visit at Stonehenge that the visit "Knocked this off my bucket list," as he moved on. The phrase comes from the 2007 feelgood movie (released on Christmas Day!) about two terminally ill men with clichéd and very divergent ethnosocial typing crossing off things to do before they died. I'm not a popular movie person but even I have heard of this through the growth of the idea of the bucket list.

Doing things before one dies highlights many issues but I'd like to look at two. One obviously is the fragility of our existence - and that translates into the fragility of all existence. It's not just the terminally ill who can't take it all in in time; the 'all' is in a delicate state of change and that means that every object we see is different to that perceived by others as is the same object we saw ten years ago different. Everything is in a state of change. Of course the crossing off list contains things to do that are active as well as passive ("kiss the most beautiful girl in the world" is in the movie - and yes, it turns out to be the never before seen grandchild, child of an estranged and now reunited daughter). Now there are books containing lists of things to see and admire and adventure planners vie to find more and more esoteric ingredients for the list for people who need to be helped in knowing what they need to see or do. So a majority of the 'things' are physical 'things'. And they are all fragile - we now know, for instance, that the IS is aiming to move into Lebanon next after their want only destructive activities in Iraq and Syria.

Another aspect of crossing things off is the choice of what makes up the list. We all recognise that our cultural heritage is what helps define us and makes us what we are - and it is most often those objects of cultural heritage that bucket list players choose to see before they die. And if they find them so important - a sort of soul topping-up process with all the elements that are required for some idea of after life, or a fulfilment of this - how can they look and then move on without a thought to the future, as well as the past, of the object.

This fragility, this inevitability of change is what the Foundation is so concerned with. We have some remarkably advanced recording technology and we continue to work on its development - all so that we can document digitally (and even sometimes physically, in facsimile) as many objects of our heritage as we can so that they are preserved for future generations just as we received them - we don't just want to look and move on.