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# International Summer School of Museology and Heritage 2025

## Research and Practices in a Rapidly Changing World

Koper, 25 August–5 September 2025

Book of Abstracts





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**International Summer School of Museology and Heritage 2025:  
Research and Practices in a Rapidly Changing World**  
Koper, 25 August–5 September 2025 | Book of Abstracts

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## Introduction

The International Summer School of Museology and Heritage is a place for students, researchers, and professionals to come together to learn more about, protect, and explain the many types of heritage that exist in the world today.

Every year, the school chooses a theme that is relevant to current problems and challenges in the fields of heritage studies and museology. The 2025 edition, titled 'Research and Practices in a Rapidly Changing World,' prompts us to consider how museums and heritage sites can adapt to the rapid changes occurring in our world today. The main point of this year's theme is that research is not just an isolated academic exercise; it is the foundation of museums and heritage studies. We cannot protect heritage, develop new ways of engaging people, or ensure the long-term survival of cultural resources without research.

Research provides the knowledge base that supports curatorial decisions, conservation strategies, educational programmes, and public policies. It helps us move from words and ideas to evidence-based practices that meet the needs of both people and ecosystems. Research becomes ever more important in a world characterised by rapid change. Climate change puts the physical survival of monuments, archaeological sites, and museum collections in danger. Economic instability makes it harder for institutions to carry out their missions. Social changes – such as demographic shifts, migration, urbanisation, and digitalisation – transform how people relate to heritage. Political changes, which can happen suddenly and without warning, affect both the freedom of cultural expression and the funding that museums and heritage projects receive.

New technologies also open up opportunities for documentation, interpretation, and communication, but they bring risks too – from digital obsolescence to the loss of authenticity in the age of AI. Museums and heritage organisations are therefore at the intersection of multiple forces. In addition to addressing urgent concerns about relevance, inclusivity, and resilience, they remain responsible for preserving memory and material culture. Continuous learning and knowledge exchange across disciplines and generations are crucial in this setting. This idea is embodied by the Summer School, which provides an environment where experts and students can share knowledge, gain insights, and develop the skills necessary to adjust to the complexity of our times.

Museology and heritage studies have undergone considerable evolution in recent decades. Once thought to be specialised or even marginal areas, they are now seen as essential for understanding identity, cultural diversity, and sustainable development. Research is the foundation of this recognition. It helps us piece together histories that would otherwise be lost, make sense of physical evidence, and explore the intangible factors that shape communities.

Research supports acquisition, documentation, conservation, and interpretation in museums. In heritage studies, it underpins methodologies for preserving both tangible and intangible heritage. Without rigorous research, decisions about conservation and display risk becoming arbitrary and detached from context.

The significance of research is also evident in its ability to link heritage to broader societal issues. Conservation science shows how environmental change affects museum objects. Social sciences reveal how communities deal with heritage during crises. Historical research situates the political use of heritage, while digital humanities create new possibilities for accessibility and engagement. Research is not conducted in isolation: it informs practice, and practice generates new questions for research. This dynamic relationship is at the heart of modern museology and heritage work. It ensures that institutions are not only repositories of the past but also laboratories for ideas about the future.

The phrase 'rapidly changing world' describes the accelerating pace of the twenty-

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first century. These changes are not abstract – they manifest in dramatic ways. The conservation of cultural heritage is directly affected by rising temperatures, shifting rainfall patterns, and extreme weather events. Erosion, flooding, or desertification damage archaeological sites; humidity, mould, and biological infestations threaten collections. As ecosystems change, intangible heritage – such as traditional farming methods, rituals, or crafts – is also endangered. Museums must find ways to operate sustainably, reduce energy use, and embrace environmentally responsible practices.

Economic crises simultaneously affect government subsidies, private donations, and tourism revenues. This can result in staff shortages, delayed projects, or even institutional closures. At the same time, institutions are expected to demonstrate economic value through cultural tourism, urban regeneration, or creative industries. Balancing financial stability with preservation and education is always a challenge.

Demographic shifts, migration, and cultural diversity are transforming museum audiences. Institutions are now expected to represent multiple perspectives, work with marginalised groups, and foster social cohesion. Digitalisation further reshapes interaction with heritage. Online exhibitions, virtual reality, and participatory platforms broaden access, but they require new skills and resources. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed both the strengths and weaknesses of digital heritage, highlighting the need for adaptable approaches. Politics has always influenced heritage. Today, institutions face pressures from identity politics, contested histories, and geopolitical tensions. Heritage sites may become targets in armed conflicts, symbols in nation-building projects, or flashpoints in debates about colonial legacies and restitution. Museums and heritage professionals must work responsibly, transparently, and ethically in these contexts.

The digital revolution permeates every part of heritage work – from 3D scanning of monuments to big-data analysis of visitor behaviour. AI facilitates sorting and interpretation but also raises questions about authenticity, intellectual property, and human agency. Technology is not neutral; it reflects values and priorities. Heritage institutions must therefore critically evaluate tools, ensuring they serve humanistic and societal goals rather than purely commercial purposes.

In this ever-changing world, one thing remains constant: the need for ongoing education. Knowledge from ten years ago may no longer be adequate. Professionals must continuously acquire new skills, informed by scientific discoveries, theoretical frameworks, and technological innovation. For students, this means preparing for careers that demand adaptability and lifelong learning. For experienced professionals, it requires openness to continuing education and interdisciplinary collaboration. For institutions, it means fostering learning environments not only for staff but also for visitors and communities.

The Summer School addresses this need with a comprehensive programme of lectures, workshops, and peer learning. It emphasises that education is not simply the transmission of information but dialogue and co-creation. By bringing together participants from diverse cultural, academic, and professional backgrounds, the School demonstrates that learning is most effective when collaborative and inclusive.

Confronting the challenges of a rapidly changing world is difficult, but it also opens opportunities for heritage to shape the future positively. Research and practice in museology and heritage studies not only preserve the past but also strengthen communities facing uncertainty. Heritage gives people identity and belonging, provides tools for sustainable development (such as traditional ecological knowledge and adaptive reuse of historic buildings), creates spaces for dialogue on contested histories, and fosters creativity and intercultural understanding.

These contributions, however, require conscious ethical commitment. Museums and heritage professionals must respect community rights, acknowledge conflicting narratives, and ensure accessibility. They must also remain open to questioning their own assumptions and adapting to new contexts.

The title of the 2025 International Summer School of Museology and Heritage – Research and Practices in a Rapidly Changing World – describes our current condition and calls for action. Change is not something that merely happens to us; it is something to which we can respond with creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration. Research enables wise decisions, practice translates knowledge into action, and education prepares the next generation to continue the work. Together, they form a cycle that sustains museums and heritage through uncertainty. As we begin this year's programme, we invite participants to reflect on their role in this cycle. What types of research are needed to enhance our understanding of heritage in evolving contexts? How can museums become more resilient, inclusive, and impactful? How can education foster not only professional competence but also civic responsibility and global solidarity? The answers will not be found in a single lecture or workshop but in the collective experiences of the Summer School – in conversations, debates, and explorations that cross cultural, generational, and disciplinary boundaries. In this way, the Summer School is not just an academic event but a microcosm of the world we aspire to create: one where heritage is a source of knowledge, connection, and hope in a rapidly changing world.



# Programme

## Online Activities (25–29 August 2025)

From 25 to 29 August 2025, participants will attend online lectures. Links for the lectures, access to recordings, and the lecture times will be shared with lecturers and participants. All times are Central European Time (CET).

### Monday, 25 August 2025

- 14:00 Aleksandra Berberih Slana, *Ethical Principles in Museum Curatorship: Building Inclusive and Responsible Permanent Exhibitions*

### Tuesday, 26 August 2025

- 14:00 Agata Cowan-Stronciwilk, *Industrial Heritage in Museums: Case Studies from the Great Northern Coalfield (UK) and Silesia (Poland)*

### Wednesday, 27 August 2025

- 14:00 Goodman Gwasira, *Decolonising Museology in Namibia: Reinterpreting Ethnographic Displays at the Owela Museum*

### Thursday, 28 August 2025

- 12:00 Eva Menart, *Scientific Analyses at the National Museum of Slovenia*  
14:00 Amra Šaćić Beća, *From Stone to Screen: Digital Approaches to Roman Epigraphy*

### Friday, 29 August 2025

- 14:00 Neha Khetrapal, *Museumscapes: An Analytical Framework for Analysing Museum Spaces*

## Live Activities (1–5 September 2025)

Venue: University of Primorska, Faculty of Humanities, Titov trg 5, Koper, Slovenia

### Monday, 1 September 2025

- 08:30 Morning coffee  
09:00–10:00 Introductory icebreaker: Presentation of participants and programme (Zrinka Mileusnić)  
10:00–11:30 Aleksandra Berberih Slana, *Ethical Principles in Museum Curatorship: Building Inclusive and Responsible Permanent Exhibitions*  
11:30–12:00 Maša Saccara, *Inter-museum Exhibitions: An Example of Good Practice in Slovenia*  
12:00–12:30 Danko Dujmović, *Maintaining a Local Collection without a Museum*  
12:30–14:00 Lunch break  
14:00–17:00 Vesna Pajić, *Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Blue...* [Lecture and workshop/fieldwork]

### Tuesday, 2 September 2025

- 08:30 Morning coffee  
09:00–10:00 Jelena Anđelković Grašar, *Archaeological Park Viminacium – Changing Perception of Cultural Heritage in the Local Community: From Looting to Active Participation*  
10:00–11:00 Aleksandra Bugar, *Everything and More: Interpretation of Heritage in Virtual and Physical Exhibition Form*  
11:00–12:00 Mia David, *Remembering as Resistance*  
12:00–14:00 Lunch break



14:00–17:00 Mojca Ramšak, *Sensory Heritage: Olfactory Dimensions of Epidemic Experiences in Museum Narratives* [Lecture and workshop]

### **Wednesday, 3 September 2025**

08:30 Morning coffee

09:00–11:00 Lucia Mancini, *Advanced 3D and 4D X-ray Imaging Techniques for Heritage Science*  
Lidija Korat Bensa, *Application of Digital Non-Destructive Technologies for Museum Artefacts*

11:00–11:30 Coffee break

11:30–12:30 Carolina Frías and Daniel Tejerina, *VRA360 Project, Immersive Technology Applications for Heritage Interpretation and Tourism Management at an Archaeological Site*

13:00–15:00 Lunch break

15:00–17:00 Matevž Štraus, *From 3D to XR Tourist Experiences*  
Matevž Štraus, *Taking Heritage One Step Further: Miners' Houses, Idrija Žlikrofi and Industrial Culture*

### **Thursday, 4 September 2025**

08:30 Morning coffee

09:00–09:30 Dobrila Vlahović, *Ethics and Responsibility in Conservation Practice: Between Authenticity, Reconstruction and Community Expectations*

09:30–10:15 Ivana Pandžić, *Bridging Continents, Confronting Change: Lessons from US and European Archaeology in a Tumultuous World* [Lecture and workshop]

10:30–11:30 Dušan Medin, *Cultural and Creative Industries and Heritage in Montenegro: Synergy and Challenges*

11:30–11:45 Coffee break

11:45–13:00 Bogdan Šteh, *Vertigo Bird 2020: Preservation of the Tallest Chimney in Europe* [Lecture and presentation]

13:00–14:00 Lunch break

14:00–17:00 Tadeja Jere Jakulin, *Systems Thinking as a Tool for Sustainable Cultural Heritage Management in Times of Change* [Workshop]

### **Friday, 5 September 2025**

#### **Field Trip – Museum Visit**

08:00–09:00 Transfer to the museum

09:00–11:00 Guided visit and discussion: Muzej tovorništva in prevoznitva (Rural Transport Museum), Senožeče, Slovenia

11:00–12:00 Conclusion and certificates

12:00–13:00 Transfer to Koper

**Aleksandra Berberih Slana**

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## Ethical Principles in Museum Curatorship: Building Inclusive and Responsible Permanent Exhibitions

This lecture explores the ethical considerations crucial to developing a new permanent exhibition at the Zagreb City Museum and beyond. It highlights the evolution of museum displays over the decades, emphasising the importance of accurate, inclusive, and honest storytelling about history. Lecture underscores the need to respect cultural diversity, promote inclusivity, and avoid biased narratives that may marginalise social groups.

Recognising the political and societal challenges, the lecture advocates for re-evaluating traditional narratives, engaging diverse communities, and adhering to international ethical standards, such as those of ICOM. Ultimately, it affirms museums' role as responsible custodians of history, committed to presenting a comprehensive and truthful account of society's complexities. What can we do to achieve this?

*Dr. Aleksandra Berberih Slana was the director of the National Liberation Museum Maribor (Slovenia) from 2006 to 2022. From 2015 to 2022, she held the position of president of the Association of Slovenian Museums (Skupnost muzejev Slovenije). She was on the board of ICOM Slovenia, and from 2019 to 2022, she was a member of the board of NEMO-Network of European Museum Organisations. Currently, she is the director of Zagreb City Museum (Croatia), the biggest city museum in Croatia.*

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## **Industrial Heritage in the Museums: Case Studies from the Great Northern Coalfield (UK) and Silesia (Poland)**

The lecture compares two different European regions profoundly influenced by the coal mining industry. Coal mining regions' heritage consists of both tangible (architecture, machines, art) and intangible elements (customs, language). Although environmentally needed, the decline of the coal mining industry led to catastrophic social consequences in both regions. The lecture reflects on the social implications of the decline of coal mining, the disappearances of traces of the industry in the cities, and the ways of preserving this difficult heritage (especially in the Museums).

The lecture argues that the reflection on preserving industrial heritage should be connected with the awareness of the impact of fossil fuel extraction on climate change. The lecture concludes with remarks about an educational project about industrial heritage, which was realised in the Silesian Museum.

The lecture is based on research and queries conducted both in the UK (Woodhorn Museum, National Coal Mining Museum, Mining Art Gallery in Bishop Auckland) and Silesia (Silesian Museum in Katowice, Guido Coal Mining Museum).

*Art historian and cultural studies expert associated with the Institute of Art Sciences at the University of Silesia. Recipient of the Fulbright Slavic Award at the University of Washington in Seattle (2024) and a scholarship at the University of Alberta in Edmonton (Canada). She also completed a research internship at UNICAMP in Campinas (Brazil). She is currently conducting research on mining creativity in the Northumberland and Durham Coalfield areas, focusing on the chosen Industry Museums. In 2014–2019, she was professionally associated with the Silesian Museum in Katowice, where she introduced her own proposals for industrial education for children and youth.*

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## Decolonising Museology in Namibia: Reinterpreting Ethnographic Displays at the Owela Museum

This lecture explores the ongoing process of decolonising museology in Namibia by focusing on the reinterpretation of ethnographic displays at the Owela Museum, a display centre of the National Museum of Namibia. The lecture aims at highlighting both the theoretical and practical aspects of confronting colonial narratives in museums. This presentation seeks to contribute to a broader international discussion on ethical museum practice. It offers a southern African perspective on how heritage institutions can become agents of change through inclusive interpretation.

The lecture engages critically with Laurajane Smith's concept of Authorised Heritage Discourse (AHD). This framework helps explain how colonial museums curated knowledge in ways that privileged Western perspectives while silencing or distorting those of local communities. In the Namibian context, this was manifested in dioramic 'Man in his Environment' displays that depicted local communities in static and ahistorical ways in the same gallery as wildlife. Post-independence, these displays have posed an interpretative challenge: how to dismantle entrenched colonial narratives without erasing the material traces of history? Using the Owela Museum as a case study and based on my published research titled 'Towards a Decolonisation of the Ethnographic Displays at the National Museum of Namibia,' the lecture critically discusses collaborative approaches undertaken to reinterpret these displays in a culturally sensitive and community-centred manner. These efforts involved consultations with community members, traditional knowledge holders, and heritage professionals to integrate indigenous perspectives into the museum's storytelling.

The session directly speaks to the Summer School's focus on heritage interpretation and community engagement. It offers a concrete example of how post-colonial museums struggle to transform from sites of representation to spaces of dialogue and empowerment. Furthermore, the lecture demonstrates how community collaboration is not only essential for achieving decolonial aims but also for ensuring relevance and inclusivity in heritage interpretation.

Objectives of the Lecture: (1) To critically examine the legacy of colonial museology through the lens of the Authorised Heritage Discourse; (2) To present a case study of decolonial practice in Namibia that centres local voices and community participation; (3) To explore challenges and opportunities in reinterpreting ethnographic displays in post-colonial contexts; (4) To stimulate dialogue on the relevance of decolonial museology globally and inspire similar transformative practices.

*Goodman Gwasira completed his PhD on the history of Namibia's archaeologies at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa, in December 2020. He holds a Master of Arts in Culture and Environment from the University of Cologne (2011), which focused on the rock engravings of the Domschlucht, Brandberg, as a core element for world heritage status. He worked as a curator of archaeology at the National Museum of Namibia before joining the University of Namibia, where he is a senior lecturer of archaeology and heritage studies. Goodman coordinates the university's Museum Outreach Programme (MOP). He has twenty-seven years' experience in the museology of Namibia. He has developed the Postgraduate Diploma in Museology and Heritage Studies at the University of Namibia. He is a member of the Human Remains Advisory Committee for the Iziko Museums in South Africa. Goodman's current research critically reassesses colonial museum practices with a particular emphasis on developing culturally sensitive and community-centred collaborative approaches.*

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## Eva Menart

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## Scientific Analyses at the National Museum of Slovenia

For decades, the findings of natural science research have been used by both conservators-restorers and curators at the National Museum of Slovenia, as both are often interested in the material composition of museum objects and their properties. The development of non-destructive analytical methods, which allow us to study museum objects without damaging them, is of exceptional importance for research in the museum.

The lecture will present several examples of research conducted in recent years, such as the question of the authenticity of bronze objects, determining the purpose of a small stone fragment, and searching for suitable environmental parameters for storing oil paintings on iron plates.

*Eva Menart has a diploma in Chemistry (University of Ljubljana) and a PhD in Heritage Science (University College London). She is the head of the Department for Conservation and Restoration of the National Museum of Slovenia, where she focuses on (mainly non-destructive) scientific analysis of historic/museum objects and preventive conservation. She is additionally employed as a researcher at the Jožef Stefan Institute.*

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## From Stone to Screen: Digital Approaches to Roman Epigraphy

This lecture/workshop explores the integration of digital technologies in the study, preservation, and interpretation of Roman epigraphic monuments. It covers a range of digital methods, including 3D scanning, photogrammetry, database creation, and virtual reconstructions. Participants will gain insight into how these tools enhance the accessibility, analysis, and presentation of ancient inscriptions, allowing for discoveries and broader public engagement.

Roman epigraphy is a fundamental source for understanding the social, political, and cultural history of the Roman world. However, the physical nature of inscriptions poses challenges related to preservation, legibility, and accessibility. Digital approaches address these issues by enabling high-resolution documentation and interactive platforms, which facilitate both scholarly research and education. This topic is highly relevant in the era of digital humanities, bridging traditional epigraphic scholarship with cutting-edge technology.

Objectives: (1) To introduce key digital techniques and tools used in epigraphy today; (2) To demonstrate practical applications through case studies of Roman inscriptions; (3) To highlight the benefits of digital methods for conservation and broader dissemination; (4) To encourage interdisciplinary collaboration between historians, archaeologists, and digital specialists; (5) To equip participants with an understanding of how to incorporate digital resources into their own research or teaching.

*Amra Šaćić Beća received her BA and MA degrees from the History Department at the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Sarajevo. She defended her PhD thesis at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Ljubljana. She works as an Associate Professor at the History Department (Ancient History) at the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Sarajevo. She is a module coordinator for Bosnia and Herzegovina during the Antiquity and History of the Illyrians and Roman provinces in South-East Europe. She also teaches courses on the History of Old Greece and Epigraphy at the Archaeology Department at the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Sarajevo. She is the author of numerous papers on the topic of Roman provincial history and Latin epigraphy, and she co-authored two books. She is the Executive Editor-in-Chief of the Acta Illyrica Journal. As a leader and member of research teams, she took part in European and local scholarly and research projects on ancient history, archaeology, and Latin epigraphy. She is currently involved in two international projects. As a member of the research team of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, with colleagues from Croatia, Australia, and Albania, she is working on the project Among Gods and Men – The Cults and the Population of Roman Dalmatia According to the Votive Inscriptions. She is also a member of a team working on the project Roman mines in South-East Europe during the Principate. Under this project, she acts as the head of the Editorial Board for the volume to be published within the series South-East European History of the publisher Peter Lang under the auspices of the Balkan History Association (Bucharest, Romania). Since 2014, she has been a member of the Supervisory Board of the Association for the Study and Promotion of Illyrian Heritage, Ancient and Classical Civilisations BATHINVS. She has been actively participating in all the Association's projects. She is a member of the Balkan History Association (Bucharest, Romania). She publishes papers in Bosnian and English.*

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## Museumscapes: An Analytical Framework for Analysing Museum Spaces

The lecture will help spotlight an analytical framework for participants and researchers interested in conducting cross-regional studies. Comparing one museum with another is not a straightforward task due to the multitude of museum spaces, e.g. museums devoted to artworks, history or political partitions (to mention a few). Nevertheless, these museums are embedded in a complex web of sociopolitical forces, which, when organised within a neat theoretical framework, can help make cross-regional comparisons manageable despite the multitude of museum spaces. With 'Museumscapes,' my lecture will help fill this theoretical lacuna.

The museumscape may be divided into distinct spaces. First, macro-space – or the broader landscape or the urban-landscape, within which a museum is embedded, e.g. the time period and the associated political development of the times during which the museum came into being. In other words, the broader geographical or political landscape within which the museum operates. Second, the meso-landscape or the architectural setting of a museum or the appropriation of a historical building to be used as the location of a museum. In other words, narrating museological stories with the help of museum architecture and the actual physical setting or the building that houses a museum. Third, the micro-space that includes elements like the glass enclosures and confines and the coupled textual explanation offered for objects on display. In other words, the micro setting of the museum itself.

Through my lecture, I not only introduce the idea of 'museumscapes' but also showcase two brief analytical case studies from the Asian Civilisations Museum in Singapore and the Partition Museum in New Delhi to exemplify the concept of museumscapes. Theoretical contributions that inspired the idea of 'museumscapes' will be duly acknowledged.

*As a researcher in the Global South, I have been investigating the differences in spatial layout of museum spaces between the Global North and the South and how these layouts help negotiate a sense of collective identity for the populace that the museums serve. Focusing specifically on the museums of India and Singapore over the past two years, my research and fieldwork exemplify how these museums have played an exceptional role in bringing to the fore the silent or suppressed voices of women and migrants, while also serving as the fulcrum for national identities in post-colonial nation-states. I have also looked at special exhibitions that museums have organised from time to time, partly to address various diplomatic needs. For instance, I recently explored how the special display at the Peranakan Museum – Fukusa: Japanese gift covers from the Chris Hall collection – helped portray ties between Japan and Singapore with the help of exquisite Japanese gift covers. In a nutshell, I explore how museums narrate myriad tales – spotlighting issues as wide as political partitions, migration and diplomacy – in myriad ways. My forthcoming endeavours include adopting a cross-regional approach, by looking at museums in India, Switzerland and Singapore, to decipher how national and regional museums help construct a sense of collective identities – both regional as well as national. I have recently been awarded a visiting research grant by SNSF in conjunction with my host at Geneva. This grant will allow scope to look at Swiss museums and their role in the construction of regional identities towards the end of this year (2025). For this application, I would like to emphasise my academic and research background in museum studies and heritage.*

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## Inter-Museum Exhibitions: An Example of Good Practice in Slovenia

Dr. Maša Saccara, an Archaeologist, works as a museum advisor at the Regional Museum of Koper and as a research associate at the Scientific Research Centre of Koper. Throughout her professional career, she has focused on the study of pre-historic fortified settlements, museology, and the interpretation of cultural heritage.

*Dr. Maša Saccara, an Archaeologist, works as a museum advisor at the Regional Museum of Koper and as a research associate at the Scientific Research Centre of Koper. Throughout her professional career, she has focused on the study of prehistoric fortified settlements, museology, and the interpretation of cultural heritage.*

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## Maintaining a Local Collection without a Museum

Brod Moravice is a small municipality in the rural area of Gorski Kotar (Mountainous District) in Croatia, located approximately 70 km from the city of Rijeka. Like much of the Gorski Kotar region, it faces severe depopulation, with the remaining population consisting primarily of elderly residents. In this context, the Turanj Association, a small group of local enthusiasts, has been actively collecting objects related to local history, culture, and traditions. However, these collections remain undocumented and un-inventoried.

As part of their Museum Studies course, art history students from the University of Rijeka assist in the documentation and organisation of these materials, providing much-needed support. Despite these efforts, the future of the collection remains uncertain due to the absence of a heritage institution in the area and the lack of resources within the local municipality to ensure its proper care. This paper will explore the challenges of sustaining heritage initiatives in depopulated rural communities, where local collections rely on ageing volunteers and lack institutional support.

*Danko Dujmović is an assistant professor at the Department of Art History of FHSS Rijeka. He is experienced in museum education (before coming to FHSS Rijeka, he was working as a museum educator in the Museum of Arts and Crafts in Zagreb). He teaches the museological courses within the study programs of Art History at FHSS Rijeka. As an active member of the Section of Museum Education and Cultural Action within the Croatian Museum Association, he was included in the organisation of Croatian Museum Educators' Conferences from 2012 to 2022. He edited several publications related to the field of museum education. Dujmović was the author of the concept and a member of the board of editors of Museum Portal, an online catalogue of educational activities in Croatian heritage institutions, which was developed as a project of the Croatian Museum Association. In 2011, Dujmović began the Museum Education course within the Art History study program at FHSS Rijeka. To this day, it remains the only course in Croatia that focuses on topics related to museum education. Besides, Dujmović was member of several project teams (Croatian Ministry of Science and Education's project 'Romanesque Between the Rivers of Sava i Drava and European Culture,' EU Culture Program project 'Cradles of European Culture – Franca Media' (CEC), University of Rijeka projects 'Medieval Heritage Monuments of the Kvarner Region' (SREBAK) and 'Migrations, Identities and Contexts of Medieval Art in the Kvarner Region' (MIK).*

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## Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Blue ...

The historic built environment can be a source for the creation of sustainable models and a driver of contemporary urban regeneration. The challenge of our time is to find balanced development and simultaneous protection not only of individual cultural monuments, but also of the entire space. The concept of adaptive reuse emerged as a result of a conscious desire to preserve the historical environment, which is both an upgrade and also the opposite of the usual 'reuse' or 'new use' or demolition (Plevoets and Van Cleempoel 2012). Adaptive reuse, a subject of theoretical reflection since the 1970s, is the process of renovating existing buildings for new or continued use.

Cities are complex, layered entities composed of architecture, history, and collective memory (Rossi, 1982). In dense settlements such as cities, the adaptive reuse approach cannot be limited to just one building, but has to be designed as a comprehensive plan for adjusting the city to contemporary societal needs. At the same time, we have to bear in mind the historical, the ethnological, the functional, the city-forming, and the social roles of individual buildings and public spaces.

In the case of the historic city centre of Koper, adaptive reuse is an opportunity to preserve the historical built environment and provide for the everyday spatial and societal needs of the city. By designing the city and retaining its city-forming functions, while respecting all historical layers, we want to create good living conditions, stimulate urban processes and encourage new cultural and tourist practices.

*Vesna Pajić graduated from the Faculty of Arts, Department of History and Art History, with a degree in The Development of Medieval Urban Heraldry. In 2018, she obtained the research title of Assistant, and in 2019, she passed the professional exam for curator. Since 2023, she has been a member of ICOMOS Slovenia. She honed her museological knowledge at the National Gallery, in the field of science communication, and within the framework of numerous exhibition projects. She curated and co-curated over 25 exhibitions. In 2024, she led the city's heritageisation project 'Koper-Capodistria 1500'. Since 2020, she has been an advisor to the Mayor of the Municipality of Koper for Culture and International Relations. From 2020, she has been curating the exhibition program at the Mala loža exhibition venue in Koper. Between 2020 and 2024, she led the program of the Libertas cultural squat. In 2021 and 2022, she participated in the project of renovation and interpretation of the Sabini-Grisoni Palace. Since 2021, she has been leading the renovation project of the former salt warehouse Libertas. As a doctoral student, she is researching the adaptive reuse of the historic built environment. Her research laboratory is in the historic city centre of Koper.*

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## Archaeological Park Viminacium – Changing Perception of Cultural Heritage in the Local Community: From Looting to Active Participation

Archaeological Park Viminacium was established in 2006, representing remains of the Viminacium Military Camp and the administrative capital of the Roman province of Moesia Superior. The vision behind the opening of the archaeological site for the public had a double aim. Firstly, to physically protect the site from the advancement of the strip-coal mine of the Power Plant Kostolac B and secondly, to raise awareness among the local population about the values of cultural heritage to stop century-long looting activities at the site.

Viminacium had a status of cultural property of exceptional importance in 1979. Still, after the Park's opening, the process of its institutional protection was completed in 2009, with the adoption of the Decision on the Determination of Viminacium Site in the Village of Stari Kostolac as an Archaeological Site, with clearly defined boundaries and protection of the surrounding area. The Park was equipped with physical security and surveillance cameras, but it turned out that the real protection from the looting actually was the constant presence of tourists. Afterwards, the dialogue with the visitors and general public opened new areas of collaboration based on the scientifically created interpretation and the site storytelling, via various activities oriented towards a hands-on approach and participatory workshops, new employment opportunities for local people, constant presence in media, application of digital technologies in interpretation, etc. Participation in, as well as organisation of, international conferences enlightens the efforts in making Viminacium results visible on an international level, empowered by the shift of the research itself, from 'just' archaeology to cultural heritage. Thus, the researchers from various scientific fields (architects, art historians, conservators, together with archaeologists) opened a new, interdisciplinary area of research at the Institute of Archaeology, which in 2024 resulted in the establishment of the Cultural Heritage department. Participation in several EU co-financed projects simultaneously contributed to Viminacium's international visibility and acceptance by the local community. The results of these projects opened new possibilities for dialogue with locals from all generations. They improved the site accessibility, inclusion, and green future, leading to the overall territorial development. Some of the best initiatives from EU projects will be shared with students as examples of Viminacium's good practices.

*Deputy director of the Institute of Archaeology (since 2022); Head of the Cultural Heritage department (since 2024). Coordinator of the Transformation team for the project 'Serbia Accelerating Innovation and Entrepreneurship' project of Serbian Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation, funded by the World Bank and EU (since 2022) Jelena Anđelković Grašar obtained the PhD in Art History at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, in 2016. Since 2011, she has worked at the Institute of Archaeology, currently holding the position of Senior Research Associate. Dr Anđelković Grašar has published more than 50 scientific papers and book chapters in Serbian or English, as an author or co-author. She is dedicated to the research of visual culture in the period during and after the Roman domination, focused on the visual testimonies and material remains related to the themes of women's history and gender studies. Her research interests and activities are associated with cultural heritage and the methods of its presentation, interpretation and popularisation, as well as the possibilities for its implementation in education. Dr Anđelković Grašar is actively engaged as a project manager, managing six international projects in the period between 2020 and 2025, co-funded by the EU (Creative Europe, Erasmus+).*

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## Everything and More: Interpretation of Heritage in Virtual and Physical Exhibition Form

The objective of the lecture is to present the concept and implementation process of the so-called hybrid exhibition project centred around an online (virtual) exhibition, along with its physical extensions in the form of exhibitions of a smaller format. In a desire to bring the character and work of Emilij Laszowski, the first director and curator of the Zagreb City Museum, closer to the general public, the museum produced an exhibition, Laszowski – the Founder. He was an archivist and a historian, a museum professional and a writer, a publicist and a librarian, a passionate traveller and a socially engaged individual, a member of many cultural societies, and the founder of three major cultural institutions in Zagreb – the City Museum, the Archive, and the Library.

Through the online exhibition, visitors can browse numerous digitised archival materials across 16 themes and 600 objects – flip through documents, numerous pages of published works he authored and edited, read transcriptions of archival manuscripts, look through photographs, paintings, drawings, newspaper clippings, notes and letters, as well as animated films, sound recordings, and three-dimensional objects related to Laszowski's life and work. The physical mini-exhibitions are targeted at expanding the story of Laszowski with objects that are not extensively covered in the online exhibition but are part of the Museum's or other partners' collections.

A collaboration on the realisation of the exhibition project with multiple institutions – museums, archives, libraries, institutes, cultural associations, and individual experts has led to networking that resulted in a design of additional exhibition activities. As part of the concept of the project going beyond the ZCM and as its constituent part, smaller curated exhibitions by partners were held in other cities. The current permanent display at the ZCM has also become an exhibition component of the project. A guide titled Following Laszowski's Footsteps was printed, enriching the tour of the permanent display by highlighting selected objects that arrived at the City Museum through Laszowski's efforts when he was its first director and curator. The project also has a continuation of sorts as a future travelling exhibition, All the faces of Laszowski, which points to an exciting potential for establishing new contacts, further networking and creating new heritage content.

*Aleksandra Bugar is an archaeologist and art historian. She graduated from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Zagreb. She is a museum advisor at the Zagreb City Museum, the head of the Prehistoric and Roman Period Collection. She has participated in numerous archaeological research projects and collaborated with various institutions in Croatia and Slovenia. Has also authored and co-authored several exhibitions and has been an expert associate on several exhibition projects. She writes scientific and professional papers and is an editor and the author of museum publications. In the role of Zagreb City Museum's accessibility coordinator, she cooperates with various associations for people with disabilities. She has authored and co-authored four exhibitions adapted for people with disabilities and designed as exhibitions for all. She focuses on topics related to inclusion, accessibility, and heritage interpretation.*

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## Remembering as Resistance

The need for a memorial to Srebrenica in Belgrade holds profound significance, particularly in the context of collective memory and reconciliation. However, nationalist sentiments, denialism, and political agendas have created an environment where erecting a monument in a public space is fraught with controversy. The political tension surrounding a Srebrenica memorial in Belgrade reflects unresolved divisions within the country and broader regional tensions in the Balkans. Many groups in Serbian society either contest the genocide's narrative or reject calls for public acknowledgement, making an official monument nearly impossible.

In response, alternative forms of commemoration have emerged, particularly in virtual and conceptual realms. Virtual memorials and artistic projects offer ways to bypass political and ideological barriers, serving as spaces for reflection and remembrance in a decentralised digital environment where they cannot be controlled or destroyed. The initiatives 'Forest' (Šuma) by Mia David and Antonio Grgić and 'Life is What the Dead Dream Of' (Život je ono što sanjaju mrtvi) by Mia David represent crucial opportunities to address the absence of a memorial to the victims of the Srebrenica genocide in Serbia.

'Forest' is a participatory project aimed at societal healing, where individuals can donate trees to create a collective forest as a living memorial. 'Life is What the Dead Dream Of' conceptually explores remembrance beyond physical monuments. These creative approaches push the boundaries of how we think about monuments and memory. They invite the public to engage with history in innovative ways, fostering personal reflection and offering new perspectives on how a nation can come to terms with its past, even when the physical terrain is hostile to such efforts.

*Mia David (Belgrade, 1974) is an architect, curator and set designer. Her main fields of work are contemporary visual art, performing arts, education, and cultural management. She graduated from the Faculty of Architecture in Belgrade and received her master's and doctoral degrees from the Scene Design group at the University of Arts in Belgrade. She was a partner in architectural studios DSZ and Blok, the founder and editor-in-chief of Kvart magazine, and one of the founders of the non-governmental organisation Blokovi. She worked as a lecturer at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade. From 2010 to 2014, she worked as the acting director of the Cultural Centre of Belgrade. She is a member of the Serbian Chamber of Engineers, the Association of Architects of Belgrade, the Association of Architects of Novi Sad, NUNS, OISTAT and IKT. Mia is the author of many projects in the fields of architecture, design, set design, and art, as well as newspaper articles published in various media. Berlin, New York, Vienna, Paris, Rennes, Sarajevo, Zagreb, Ljubljana, Frankfurt, Moscow, Trieste, Rome, Venice, and Prague are some of the cities in which she has exhibited. She is the curator of numerous exhibitions. She is the winner of many awards and recognitions, including the Biennial of Scene Design Award (2007), Joakim Vujić Award (2007), October Salon Special Award (2014) and the Gold Medal for Provoking a Dialogue (Prague Quadrennial 2015). She is the author of radio shows like Life as Such (Radio B92), Life is Where We Are (Remarker Media) and the web show Spaces of Freedom (Remarker Media). She has been running the Navigator gallery from 2016 to 2024. Since 2024, she has been the art director and curator at Novembar gallery. She works as a full professor at the Faculty of Technical Sciences in Novi Sad.*

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## Sensory Heritage: Olfactory Dimensions of Epidemic Experiences in Museum Narratives

The presentation explores the potent yet underrepresented olfactory narratives associated with historical plague outbreaks, offering innovative frameworks for multisensory museum interpretation. By examining artistic and literary representations of plague-related smells, this research illuminates how overwhelming sensory experiences shaped both individual perceptions and collective social responses to epidemic disease.

Historical accounts reveal a complex olfactory landscape during plague outbreaks: the distinctive odours of illness and bodily fluids, the unmistakable scent of decomposition, environmental markers like rodent infestations, and intentional olfactory interventions such as ceremonial incense and purification fires. These sensory elements created a distinctive 'smellscape' that profoundly impacted psychological states and cultural practices during crisis periods.

This research positions olfactory experience as a critical yet underutilised interpretive tool for heritage institutions seeking more immersive and emotionally resonant visitor engagement. The presentation will demonstrate how carefully contextualised olfactory elements can transform traditional museum narratives about epidemics from purely intellectual exercises into embodied, multisensory experiences that foster deeper historical empathy and understanding.

Drawing from interdisciplinary approaches in sensory studies, medical humanities, and contemporary museum practice, this work advocates for thoughtful integration of olfactory dimensions into exhibition design, educational programming, and digital heritage initiatives. The presentation concludes with practical considerations for museums seeking to incorporate sensory experiences while maintaining ethical standards and accessibility for diverse audiences.

*Mojca Ramšak, PhD in ethnology from the University of Ljubljana; Professor of Cultural and Social Anthropology at the University of Ljubljana and Professor of Anthropology at AMEU-ISH, Faculty for Postgraduate Studies in the Humanities. She is a researcher, postgraduate professor, and author who has published ten scholarly monographs that focus on applied research and the use of critical, experimental, and traditional forms of qualitative inquiry in the interest of social justice, human dignity, and human rights. Mojca Ramšak is the chair of the Ethical Committee at The Slovene Ethnological Society (2007–) and a member of scientific evaluation committees in Slovenia and Europe (2007–). Since 2015, she has been an evaluator of the ethics of research projects at the European Commission. Since 2009, she has been an evaluator of research projects for several European research agencies. She was a member of the Journalist's Court of Honour (2011–2013). Since 2020, she has been a member of the expert commission for cultural heritage at the Municipality of Maribor. Since 2022, she has been a member of the national expert commission on intangible cultural heritage at the Ministry of Culture of Slovenia. Since 2024, she has been a member of the Management Committee of Cost Action CA22159 – National, International and Transnational Histories of Healthcare, 1850–2000 (EuroHealthHist). She is currently the leader of a large basic project 'Smell and Intangible Cultural Heritage' at ARIS.*

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## Advanced 3D and 4D X-Ray Imaging Techniques for Heritage Science

In the last two decades, Earth scientists and (bio)archaeologists have developed analysis protocols suitable to investigate and quantify microstructural features of multiple materials relevant for Heritage Science studies to extract precious historical and evolutionary information, but also for restoration purposes, economic evaluation, and fabrication of replicas.

This talk aims to present the possibilities of X-ray and neutron imaging techniques and related software tools for the non-destructive analysis of rare or unique artefacts. More specifically, the potential and importance of three-dimensional (3D) and 4D (3D + time) X-ray computed microtomography techniques in the field of heritage science will be presented through several applications and successful stories. The adoption of a multiscale and multimodal imaging approach, complemented by advanced visualisation tools, will be illustrated as a high-accuracy method to improve accessibility to museums and heritage science, as well as for the integrative restoration of samples.

*Lucia Mancini (PhD 1998, Université Joseph Fourier, Grenoble, France) is a material science physicist strongly involved in Earth Science studies and interested in heritage science applications by using non-destructive three-dimensional (3D) advanced imaging techniques. She coordinated the hard X-ray imaging research activity in Materials Science at the Elettra synchrotron facility (Trieste, Italy) between 2001 and 2022, and for the last 2 years she has been working as a Senior Researcher in the Department of Materials at ZAG (Ljubljana, Slovenia). She is also a Core Member of the Heritage Science theme at LINXS (Sweden). Her research work is focused on microstructural characterisation techniques combining synchrotron, neutron and laboratory X-ray sources as well as computational analysis to extract quantitative information from 3D imaging data, in static and dynamic conditions. This expertise has allowed her to support several research teams working in the cultural and natural heritage domain to answer historical and evolutionary questions. Over the past two decades, she has dedicated a significant portion of her research to applying X-ray and neutron micro-radiography and tomography for the study of fossil remains and archaeological finds. Her research work is also focused on the study of innovative materials and cutting-edge approaches for restoration and conservation purposes. She has a CV that includes more than 200 articles in international journals and over 100 invited and plenary lectures at international congresses; she is presently co-supervisor of the EU MSCA postdoctoral project ENIGMA, member of the EU ERC project MOTHERS led by Sapienza University of Rome (Italy) and Core Member of the Heritage Science theme at the Lund Institute for advanced Neutron and X-ray Science (LINXS, Sweden). She is a member of the European Association of Archaeologists.*

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## Application of Digital Non-Destructive Technologies for Museum Artefacts

The last decade has seen ground-breaking advances in computer technology, both in its development and in its use. The use of digital, non-destructive technologies for movable cultural heritage has increased enormously. Both users and experts can gain new information and insights, and the new technologies are creating a range of new experiences. The digitisation process can be seen as a multi-step process. One of the steps is digital capture. The purpose of digital capture is to create a digital copy of a cultural asset. Such copies can be achieved through various source-based captures, e.g. sound, electromagnetic waves, X-rays, etc. ZAG covers most of these non-destructive technologies, but in this talk, I would like to introduce you to the field of XCT and laser scanning in conjunction with 3D printing. With the advent of 3D printing, it is now possible to reproduce both small and large replicas with extreme precision and at a scalable scale. The technology of particle bed-based 3D printing is particularly suitable for this. Various museum artefacts and their replicas will be presented, which were created in collaboration between the NMS and the SEM.

*Dr Lidija Korat, BSc in Geology, PhD in Built Environment, Scientific Associate at the Slovenian National Building and Civil Engineering Institute (ZAG). Lidija is nationally and internationally recognised as an advanced user and analyst of X-ray computed microtomography (microXCT). She was instrumental in establishing the latter technique at ZAG, which remained unique in Slovenia for 10 years. She also paved the way for digital manufacturing by setting up the particle-bed 3D printer and investigating materials suitable for digital manufacturing in construction. Her research work focuses on reverse engineering, a combination of 3D printing and microXCT, for the restoration and preservation of ancient artefacts and cultural heritage. Last but not least, Lidija is also recognised for her social contributions. She is committed to cultural heritage research, spreading her knowledge through exhibitions and supporting the new generation of professionals through mentoring engagements. However, she is most proud of her contribution to the production of the model of the Carniolan honeybee, which was exhibited at the World Expo in Dubai in 2022 as a central element of the Slovenian pavilion.*

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# VRA360 Project: Immersive Technology Applications for Heritage Interpretation and Tourism Management at an Archaeological Site

The VRA360 Project, developed by the Roman Villa of l'Albir Open Air Museum and the University of Alicante, is based on an innovative understanding of the museum as an active agent in the socialisation of heritage and the dissemination of non-hegemonic narratives. Furthermore, it considers that the use of digital tools allows us to transcend the traditional one-way content transmission model, reimagining the museum as an interactive learning space where not only data, but also values, are conveyed.

This presentation analyses the three immersive tools developed at the museum over the past ten years: an augmented reality guide, a 360° short film, and a virtual reality app. These resources are not conceived as mere entertainment, but as educational tools that complement the visit to archaeological remains that, without interpretive support, are difficult for the general public to understand.

Ultimately, the VRA360 Project represents a model for how immersive technologies can transform the interpretation and tourism management of an archaeological site. By combining technological innovation, academic rigour, and social sensitivity, this initiative demonstrates that it is possible to renew how heritage is presented to the public-making it more accessible, inclusive, and participatory. The three initiatives implemented at the museum-the applications for the baths and the cella vinaria, and the 360° short film-not only enrich the visitor experience but also open new avenues for exploring the tourism potential of ICTs. Based on this experience, new lines of research and practice are emerging, which will continue to explore the vast potential of immersive technologies in contributing to the enhancement and democratisation of heritage knowledge in contemporary societies.

*Carolina Frías holds a Bachelor's Degree in History from the University of Alicante and Master's Degree in Conservation and Management of Cultural Heritage from the University of Valencia. Since 2008, co-director of the excavation and museum development project of the Roman villa of l'Albir (Alicante, Spain), an ongoing initiative. Since 2011, serving as director of the Roman Villa of l'Albir Open Air Museum and as Municipal Heritage Technician at the City Council of l'Alfàs del Pi. Responsibilities include co-directing archaeological excavations at the Roman villa of l'Albir, organising exhibitions and public outreach activities, and coordinating excavation projects and the enhancement of cultural heritage assets. Author of several monographs and scientific articles on Roman settlement in the province of Alicante, as well as on the management and tourism valorisation of cultural heritage. Lecturer in the Master's Degree in Professional Archaeology and Heritage Management and in the Master's Degree in Virtual Heritage at the University of Alicante. Since 2019, a member of the Board of Trustees of the MARQ Foundation (Valencian Community Foundation – Archaeological Museum of Alicante).*

*Daniel Tejerina is an archaeologist specialised in digital technologies applied to Cultural Heritage. Since 2012, he has served as Co-Director of the Master's Program in Virtual Heritage at the University of Alicante, where he works as a researcher and lecturer on subjects including 3D modelling (Blender), real-time engines (Unreal Engine), and digital photogrammetry. His research focuses on the reliability of virtual reconstructions in the context of cultural heritage. He is particularly interested in the implementation of frameworks that promote transparent, traceable, and academically robust digital methodologies for the documentation and visualisation of archaeological and architectural remains. These frameworks provide a structured approach to managing the interpretative processes that underpin virtual heritage projects.*

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## From 3D to XR Tourist Experiences

In the presentation, I will present the recent approaches to digital interpretation in cultural heritage, using 3D digitisation and XR technologies. The presentation will be based on past experiences working with several tourism destinations across Slovenia and international Research&Development projects in the framework of Data Space for Cultural Heritage. The presentation will raise the main challenges with regard to 3D digitisation and digitalisation, namely authenticity/accuracy, data sovereignty and lack of skillset in the heritage sector.

*Matevž Štraus holds an Erasmus Mundus MSc in Urban Studies (universities in Brussels, Vienna, Madrid and Copenhagen), along with an MSc in Market Communication and a BA in Analytical Sociology from the University of Ljubljana. He has spent the past 10 years working at the intersection of cultural heritage and innovation, leading several award-winning projects. Matevž is the Heritage+ Lead at Arctur ([www.arctur.si](http://www.arctur.si)), where he leads projects in 3D digitisation, 3D reconstruction, and the creation of new digital user experiences (using XR technologies). Matevž is also a director of ID20 Institute ([www.id20.si](http://www.id20.si)), which develops new approaches to interpreting cultural heritage, mostly related to Idrija miners' houses ([www.rudarske-hise.si](http://www.rudarske-hise.si)), Idrija žlikrofi ([www.idrijski-zlikrofi.si](http://www.idrijski-zlikrofi.si)), and industrial culture ([www.betrib.si](http://www.betrib.si)).*

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## Taking Heritage One Step Further: Miners' Houses, Idrija Žlikrofi and Industrial Culture

In the presentation, I will discuss how to move beyond preservation of cultural heritage into living with cultural heritage. Through its projects, ID20 from Idrija is innovatively working with cultural heritage, not solely to preserve or present it, but to answer to some developmental projects with it. Using the examples of miners' houses as a response to a lack of housing and/or heritage tourism potential, bridging the gap between traditional gastronomy (Idrija žlikrofi) and younger populations or other audiences, and expanding the concepts of 'industrial culture' from the past, to the present and future.

*Matevž Straus holds an Erasmus Mundus MSc in Urban Studies (universities in Brussels, Vienna, Madrid and Copenhagen), along with an MSc in Market Communication and a BA in Analytical Sociology from the University of Ljubljana. He has spent the past 10 years working at the intersection of cultural heritage and innovation, leading several award-winning projects. Matevž is the Heritage+ Lead at Arctur ([www.arctur.si](http://www.arctur.si)), where he leads projects in 3D digitisation, 3D reconstruction, and the creation of new digital user experiences (using XR technologies). Matevž is also a director of ID20 Institute ([www.id20.si](http://www.id20.si)), which develops new approaches to interpreting cultural heritage, mostly related to Idrija miners' houses ([www.rudarske-hise.si](http://www.rudarske-hise.si)), Idrija žlikrofi ([www.idrijski-zlikrofi.si](http://www.idrijski-zlikrofi.si)), and industrial culture ([www.betrib.si](http://www.betrib.si)).*

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## Ethics and Responsibility in Conservation Practice: Between Authenticity, Reconstruction and Community Expectations

In the context of rapidly changing environmental, social, and cultural landscapes, conservation professionals increasingly face ethically complex decisions. These challenges go beyond the technical aspects of preserving heritage and enter the realm of value-based choices: what do we preserve, how, and for whom?

This presentation will explore the ethical dimensions of conservation and restoration within the field of architectural heritage protection. Drawing on the speaker's background as a conservator-restorer and architect specialising in built heritage, the presentation will reflect on a recent conservation case in Montenegro. The case will serve as a framework for discussing the interplay between authenticity, adaptation, and stakeholder engagement in practice.

Key questions include: (1) How do we determine the limits of acceptable intervention? (2) Can adaptive reuse be reconciled with the principle of minimal intervention? (3) How do local communities perceive 'authenticity,' and how does that shape professional responsibility?

The presentation will advocate for an integrated, human-centred approach to conservation ethics, one that acknowledges the heritage professional's role as both a technical expert and a mediator of meaning. Emphasis will be placed on interdisciplinary collaboration, community dialogue, and long-term sustainability of interventions.

*Dobrila Vlahovic is a Montenegrin expert in the field of conservation and cultural heritage management, currently serving as the General Director of the Directorate for Cultural Heritage at the Ministry of Culture and Media of Montenegro. With a Master's degree in Architecture from the University of Montenegro, specialising in the protection and revitalisation of architectural heritage, and a professional background rooted in conservation and restoration, she embodies the rare synthesis of scientific expertise and public sector leadership. Her career spans over two decades of dedicated service in Montenegro's heritage institutions, including the Republic Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments and the Directorate for the Protection of Cultural Property. During this time, she has led and contributed to some of the most complex and nationally significant conservation projects. She holds the highest professional title in her field-Conservator Advisor-awarded for her excellence in applied conservation practices. As a seasoned academic, she teaches at the Interdisciplinary Conservation and Restoration Program of the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Montenegro, mentoring future professionals through the courses Management of Cultural Heritage and Protection of Cultural Heritage. She is also a prominent voice in the international heritage community, having served on national and international expert bodies, including Montenegro's National Commission for UNESCO, ICOMOS, and the Council of Europe Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage, and Landscape (CDCPP). Vlahovic has authored and co-authored numerous scholarly and professional publications on the field of cultural heritage, historical landscape integration, and cultural sustainability. Her interdisciplinary research is grounded in both field-work and policy-making, offering a holistic perspective on the protection, interpretation, and revitalisation of cultural heritage. Her current research and professional focus centres on the historic stone bridges of Montenegro, which she explores as architectural artefacts deeply embedded in the natural landscape, symbols of both cultural identity and sustainable human response to environmental challenges.*

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## **Bridging Continents, Confronting Change: Lessons from US and European Archaeology in a Tumultuous World**

This lecture/workshop will explore the dynamic landscape of archaeological research and practice, drawing critical comparisons between experiences in the United States, informed by my Fulbright scholarship, and the ongoing developments in European archaeology. The session will delve into how rapid global shifts – encompassing technological advancements, evolving ethical frameworks, and changing societal expectations – impact the discipline, challenging the often-assumed linear progression of ‘progress.’

I will share insights from both continents, analysing how different legal, cultural, and academic contexts influence methodological innovation, community engagement strategies, and the preservation of heritage in an increasingly complex world. We will examine instances where rapid change has led to positive advancements, such as the adoption of cutting-edge digital technologies for documentation and analysis. Crucially, however, the presentation will also critically address the less favourable consequences of accelerated transformation, including new ethical dilemmas, challenges in heritage management under pressure, and the potential for increased commercialisation or misinterpretation of archaeological findings.

By highlighting both successes and the inherent complexities of these ‘tumultuous’ changes, this discussion aims to foster a nuanced understanding of archaeology’s role in a world that is not only rapidly changing but also constantly re-evaluating its relationship with the past. The goal is to stimulate dialogue on how museology, as a field deeply connected to heritage, can adapt to these evolving realities while upholding its core responsibilities.

*Ivana Pandžić holds a PhD from the Department of Archaeology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, on the topic ‘Salt in the Neolithic in the Territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.’ She earned her Master of Science degree from the Department of Archaeology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade (2010). She graduated from the Department of History and Archaeology, Faculty of Philosophy, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece (2004), as a recipient of a Greek Government scholarship. Since November 2006, she has been employed full-time at the PI Museum of the Republic of Srpska, serving as a museum advisor and archaeologist at the Department for Prehistory (Stone Age). Since October 2007, she has worked part-time at the Department of History of the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Banja Luka, on subjects Archaeology and Museology, currently as an assistant professor. She speaks Greek, English and German. She is one of the founders of the Society of Archaeologists of the Republic of Srpska, Banja Luka, and a member of the Serbian Archaeology Society (Belgrade), Matica srpska, Novi Sad and the Association of Members of Matica srpska for the Republic of Srpska, Banja Luka, ICOM BH and EAA. So far, she has successfully conducted several international projects and is currently involved in several ongoing international projects (COST, HORIZON 2020, bilateral relations projects), as well as participating in numerous excavations and seminars in the country and the region. In the academic year 2024–2025, she spent time in the United States of America at Middle Tennessee State University as a Fulbright visiting scholar.*

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## Cultural and Creative Industries and Heritage in Montenegro: Synergy and Challenges

This lecture explores the dynamic relationship between cultural and creative industries and heritage in Montenegro, with a focus on recent developments, ongoing initiatives, and emerging challenges. In recent years, Montenegro has witnessed a gradual but noticeable shift toward integrating heritage with contemporary cultural production, particularly through initiatives led by civil society organisations, independent cultural actors, and academic partners.

A central case study is the work of the Association for Cultural Development 'Bauo' from Petrovac na Moru, a non-governmental organisation that exemplifies this synergy. Since its founding, the Association 'Bauo' has implemented numerous interdisciplinary projects at the intersection of heritage preservation, education, creativity, promotion, and innovation. These include academic and public conferences on cultural heritage, publishing monographs and educational materials on local traditions, heritage, ethnology and archaeology, digitising sources and oral histories, and developing participatory programs for youth and marginalised groups. The lecture will contextualise 'Bauo's efforts within the broader Montenegrin framework, addressing how the country's rich but often underutilised heritage resources are gradually being mobilised through creative approaches. Key topics include heritage-inspired design and branding, community-based cultural tourism, as well as the role of festivals, digital tools, and educational programs in promoting intangible and tangible heritage. Special attention will be given to the challenges faced by Montenegrin cultural and creative industries, such as limited institutional support, fragmented cultural policies, and the need for more robust collaboration between state and independent sectors.

The author aims to encourage discussion on how small-scale, community-rooted initiatives can serve as models of sustainable cultural development. It will also reflect on the potential of cultural and creative industries to not only safeguard but also reinterpret and reimagine heritage in ways that resonate with contemporary audiences while fostering social cohesion and identity in Montenegro and the wider Western Balkan region.

*Dušan Medin is an archaeologist and cultural heritage researcher from Montenegro with over a decade of experience in heritage management, cultural policy, and project coordination across the Balkans. He holds degrees in archaeology and cultural management from the University of Belgrade, the University of Arts in Belgrade, and Université Lumière Lyon 2, and is currently pursuing two PhDs – in archaeology (University of Primorska, Slovenia) and in art theory (University of Donja Gorica, Montenegro). He works as Executive Director of the Association for Cultural Development 'Bauo' and of the creative agency MM Digital, both based in Petrovac na Moru, Montenegro. Since 2020, he has been teaching courses in heritage and cultural tourism at the University of Donja Gorica. He has held various expert roles within museums, educational institutions, and public bodies. He actively contributes to advisory boards and editorial committees, including those of the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts. His fields of expertise include heritage interpretation, creative industries, museology, and sustainable tourism. He is also a researcher and author, having published numerous books, papers, and articles, and edited over 60 academic and professional publications. He was an organiser, author and curator of numerous exhibitions. Frequently, he leads workshops and trainings, and has completed numerous summer schools, residencies, and courses in heritage, cultural leadership, fundraising, and public policy. He is a member of several national and international professional associations, including the European Association of Archaeologists, ICOM, and Interpret Europe.*

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## Vertigo Bird 2020: Preservation of the Tallest Chimney in Europe

In 1976, Power Central Trbovlje constructed its 365m tall chimney, the tallest one in Europe and the tallest building in Slovenia. It was constructed to bring the fumes out of the very narrow and closed valley of the Sava River near Trbovlje. We could say the chimney was an ecological investment, as it helped the local environment recover from pollution caused by burning coal. The end of mining in the Zasavje region after 1990 had its effect, as the power plant was closed in 2015. What was left behind is the tradition dating back almost 100 years and the tallest chimney in Europe that still attracts a lot of attention. With the cooperation of State Electricity Holding (HSE), DDT, museum workers and artists, it is now possible to experience the former power central as a heritage site, with a VR experience making it possible for every visitor to see what the panorama from the top of the chimney looks like.

*Graduated in history with a master of Science degree in early modern history-currently director of Zasavje Regional museum in Trbovlje. Previously I worked as a program associate in Delavski dom Cultural Centre in Trbovlje (DDT) for 10 years, where I was part of the team that developed the setup of 'Virtual Museum of Mining – 4th Drihl.' I was part of an expert team in the EU-funded project Virtual Multimodal Museum (ViMM) and served as a representative of DDT in the consortium Time Machine Europe. Through my work, I connect experience from the fields of heritage, new media art and museology.*

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## Systems Thinking as a Tool for Sustainable Cultural Heritage Management in Times of Change

The lecture focuses on applying systems thinking to museology and heritage. Systems thinking is an approach that enables a holistic understanding of complex systems, their components, and interconnections, which is crucial for contemporary cultural heritage management.

Lecture content: (1) The theoretical foundations of systems thinking – an introduction to key concepts (feedback loops, emergence, self-organisation, robustness, resilience) and their relevance to the heritage field; (2) Cultural heritage as a complex adaptive system: analysis of the interlinkages between physical artefacts, intangible heritage, communities, and political and economic factors; (3) System models for heritage interpretation: This presentation presents practical tools for modelling the complex relationships between stakeholders and heritage elements; (4) Case studies: concrete examples of applying a systems approach to sustainable management of heritage sites, involving communities in decision-making processes, developing the resilience of heritage systems to climate change, and digital transformation of museums and heritage institutions; (5) Participatory workshop: demonstration on using system diagrams in heritage project planning.

Participants will: (1) Learn the basic principles of systems thinking; (2) Understand how to apply systems models to the field of cultural heritage; (3) Gain practical tools for analysing complex heritage systems; (4) Develop the ability to identify patterns and feedback loops in heritage practices; (5) Improve their capacity to design sustainable heritage management strategies; (6) The lecture will be helpful for researchers, practitioners, and students who wish to broaden their methodological repertoire to address contemporary challenges in heritage.

*Dr Tadeja Jere Jakulin is a full professor of systems at the University of Primorska, Faculty of Tourism Studies, a member of the UNESCO UniTwin network. She holds a PhD from the University of Maribor in the field of systems theory – management of information systems. She researches, studies, and teaches in the field of soft systems, developing models within the system dynamics framework to address problems related to natural and cultural heritage. Her research and teaching work have earned her international, national and university awards of excellence. In 2020, she was nominated, together with colleagues from the University of Ljubljana and the University of Maribor, for the Balzan Prize, an annual award of the International Balzan Foundation for outstanding achievements in the fields of systems, humanities, natural sciences, culture, as well as for the pursuit of peace and the brotherhood of man. From 2011 to 2016, she served as Vice-Rector of the University of Primorska. She lectures at local universities and at institutes and universities abroad. She is Vice-Dean for Internationalisation and Quality and Head of the Chair for Cultural Tourism. She is a member of the UNWTO panel of tourism experts, ICOMOS, and the President of the Slovenian Society for Systems Research. In 2001–2005, she was the head of the cultural art foundation 'Jože Ciuha' in Bled, and together with her team, she organised art exhibitions and concert evenings. Since 2022, she has led the bilateral Slovenia/Turkey project BI-TR/22-24-012, which compares Slovenian and Turkish legislation on dispute resolution mechanisms regarding the ownership of works of art and culture. In cultural heritage-related courses (Management of Cultural Events, Cultural Events in Tourism), charity cultural events, which are part of the students' study obligations, connect students with local and national cultural heritage and representatives of institutions.*

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