

International heritage conference: OUR MODERN: RE-APPROPRIATING VULNERABLE 20th CENTURY HERITAGE

Conference organisers:

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DATES TO REMEMBER:

Call for papers: **November 9, 2012**

Deadline for abstract submission: **February 1, 2013**

Notification of acceptance: **February 15, 2013**

Deadline for full paper final submission: **March 15, 2013**

Icomos Committee on 20th century Heritage' meeting

May 20, 2013

Conference

May 21-24, 2013

CALL FOR PAPERS

Inter-University Center, Dubrovnik and its academic partners – University of Dubrovnik, Institute of Art History – Center Cvito Fisković in Split and Arts Academy of the University of Split – invite architects, conservators, conservation scientists, art historians, curators and other parties involved in the process of preservation, conservation, renovation or transformation of the 20th century Heritage to reflect upon the theme: *„Our Modern: Re-appropriating Vulnerable 20th century Heritage“*.

The concept of the 20th century Heritage is being challenged in the present age of new intellectual, social, ecological and economical circumstances. What can be labelled as cultural heritage in 20th century? Which objects make valuable contribution to our identity and history? How can public awareness about new forms of cultural heritage be increased? The proposed theme gives an opportunity to discuss the 20th century Heritage from a holistic point of view. Conference sessions will cover the following areas: urban, architectural, fine arts, photographic and audiovisual heritage.

DESCRIPTION OF CONFERENCE SESSIONS

The conference sessions examine the concept of the 20th century Heritage in three different aspects and offer views on how fundamental qualities of modern heritage can be preserved and what they have to offer to the contemporary life and its future sustainability.

SESSION 1: URBAN HERITAGE AND ARCHITECTURE

The discussion about the preservation of the 20th century architecture should start with a debate on the philosophy of the architecture of Modernism and of the corresponding architectural forms. Modernism has recently started to be perceived as a historical style, even if in its roots it was a deliberate departure from tradition. Its negation of continuity in architecture, as well as its structures intended to be short-lived, necessarily need specific principles in evaluation of its historic significance.

The theoretical approach to conservation of 20th century architecture in general is also determined by the nature of the new building materials, which deteriorate at a much faster pace than traditional materials, and require different principles of their conservation and repair.

In 20th century architectural conservation the preservation of the original concept is more important than the perpetuation of the original structure. Since the architecture of the 20th century constitutes by far the largest part of the existing built heritage, its treatment is a key issue not only for the conservation profession, but also for the future of our urbanized world.

Sub-themes

1 Architectural History/Urban Space

The 20th century built Heritage includes buildings, structures, urban ensembles and plans, cultural landscapes, industrial and historical archaeology. Points of interest: urban history, environmental psychology, urban planning, urban morphology, urban scale, nature and environment, challenges of sustainable development, everyday constructions.

2 Policy-making

In what way can an effective inventory and protection by law of architectural monuments from the 20th century period be implemented? In what way can management affect the amount, quality and maintenance of restored buildings in the future?

3 Technology

Although the building methods, constructions and service systems are still applied today, most have been forgotten. How can they be recognized and disseminated? Buildings of the modern heritage were knowingly designed with a short life expectancy. Conservation of these buildings brings about a conflict with the intention of the original designers. Should this affect their restoration? What are the consequences of identifying a new function for such buildings?

4 Documentation of buildings from the modern period and identification of their sources and the significance

Identification, evaluation, safeguarding, teaching and promoting the value and conservation of the heritage of the 20th century resources, establishing guidelines if needed.

SESSION 2: FINE ARTS

The session devoted to theory and practice of modern and contemporary art conservation discusses how and why it differs from traditional conservation. New art forms, new materials and new media pose great challenges to conservation community. How do we preserve artist performance? How do we preserve food products used in art works? What about CD-s and DVD-s? The search for new solutions has brought curators and conservators closer than ever before. Artists have been included, too. Conservation scientists play an extremely important role, as the 20th century artist uses materials of various types and provenances.

Murals, street art and graffiti have become heritage items. Many other objects – post World War II monuments, for example – have yet to be recognized as cultural heritage. We welcome presentations that explain and defend their significance.

Sub-themes

1 Artist Materials

What are the most problematic materials in 20th century art? How to overcome typically short lifespan of the materials and techniques used in contemporary art works? What are the current research initiatives?

2 Conservation Practices

What are the challenges in treating modern and contemporary paintings, sculptures and outdoor painted surfaces? How are performance, installation, kinetic, and new media art (digital art, internet art, interactive art etc.) preserved? How can plastics, acrylics, mixed media etc. be dealt with? How to deal with technological obsolescence? How is science applied in 20th century art conservation? How are modern and contemporary works of art documented? How is this knowledge transferred?

3 Preservation Strategies

How are modern and contemporary art works preserved in museums? What can be done to preserve outdoor sculptures and outdoor painted surfaces? Can their deterioration be prevented or slowed down? How to train experts for modern and contemporary art conservation?

4 Theory and Ethics

Is there a decision-making model in modern and contemporary art conservation? What is the position of the curator? What is the position of the conservator? Should artist's voice be heard? How is authenticity perceived in 20th century art? Is the idea (concept) more important than the physical object (material)? What is patina and how is it treated?

SESSION 3: PHOTOGRAPHY AND AUDIOVISUAL HERITAGE

Photographs taken during the 20th century represent the largest part of all preserved photographic objects, as it was in that period that the medium became available to a

widest group of practitioners. This was due to the continuous technology development, on which photography has been dependent since its beginnings. The 20th century photography has gained its position within the visual culture, thus becoming an equal artistic medium that is systematically collected, preserved, and exposed to the public.

With the rising sense of fragility of photographic objects over the last few decades, special attention is given to their conservation and restoration. Although we are faced with many questions about degradation and preservation of chemical ("classical") photography, digital photography and digital printing pose an equal challenge. Great efforts are being invested in developing strategies for the protection of photographic collections stored in museums, archives and libraries, as well as those privately owned.

Moving image and recorded sound heritage has been recognized as a unique and irreplaceable testimony to our economic, political and social development. This refers not only to the cinema, but also television, video, multimedia and other products. Audiovisual materials, such as films, magnetic tapes, videotapes and optically readable laser discs, are subject to rapid decay, especially when stored in poor conditions. Due to the short life span of these materials, their massive and progressive accumulation, as well as technology obsolescence, institutions responsible for their preservation face huge technical and organisational problems. Although the shift from analogue to digital formats has brought many practical benefits, the search for the media carrier that can withstand technological changes continues.

Sub-themes

1 Photography in the 20th Century

Points of interest: photographs from historical, aesthetic and sociological perspectives, photographs as documentary evidence, photojournalism, professional and amateur photographs, photographs in the art world.

2 Evaluating, Collecting and Organizing Photographic Collections

Establishing a collecting policy, the values of photographs (informative, associative, monetary and usage value), accessing and arranging photograph collections. How to describe, research and read photographs?

3 Research, Preservation and Conservation of Photographic Materials

How are photographs preserved in museums, archives and/or libraries? What are the possibilities for identification of 20th century photographic processes? What are the causes of deterioration of photographic materials? How are conservation treatments performed on different types of photographic materials? How is digitalization used for preservation services? How to train experts in the field of restoration and conservation of photographic materials?

4 Conservation and Digitalisation of Audiovisual Heritage

Why has a large part of audiovisual heritage been lost? What occupations are related to its conservation? How is the knowledge and understanding of these issues built? How are conservation treatments performed? How is the long-term accessibility of audiovisual materials ensured? What can be done to raise public awareness of the need for the preservation of audiovisual materials?

5 Ethical Issues in Conservation of Audiovisual Heritage

Who decides what will be preserved? Does copyright affect conservation process? Do we safeguard both the media carrier and the information contained in it, or just the information? What is the significance of the original in conservation of audiovisual materials?

Those interested in presenting a paper should submit an abstract before February 1st 2013.

General Information:

The Conference is hosted by the IUC and realized in collaboration with University of Dubrovnik (Arts and Restoration Department); Arts Academy of University of Split (Conservation-Restoration Department) and Institute of Art History – Center Cvito Fisković, Split.

Scientific/Organizing Committee:

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For information on registration/payments, accommodation and travelling to Dubrovnik etc. please contact:

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