Heritage Encounters

Exhibition 3rd - 6th / Conference 3rd - 4th

Culture Lab

Newcastle University

Newcastle

2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage

EuropeForCulture
Heritage Encounters

European Year of Cultural Heritage Exhibition and Conference

This exhibition gives a sample of the rich research at Newcastle into heritage, broadly understood as the materials and practices through which the past is drawn into the present, stimulating reflection on our futures. Heritage bears critically – sometimes divisively – on our senses of ourselves, and it is often crucial for some of the most pressing social, political, economic and environmental concerns of our time.

The heritage encounters explored in the exhibition are myriad. Heritage is about interrelations with different temporalities, and the linking of past, present and future. It involves encounters with the documentary, material, and mnemonic trances of the past, with other ways of life and other worldviews. Heritage can be a kind of metaphorical space of encounter for different social groups, where contests and tensions about the meanings of the past play out. Heritage crystallises encounters between politics, emotion, knowledges, and moral, ethical and philosophical issues. A key characteristic of heritage research at Newcastle University is its multi- and trans-disciplinarity. The works you will see are the result of constructive encounters between different disciplines, intellectual and creative approaches, critical traditions and ways of seeing and doing. They also represent encounters between researchers and communities, and between Newcastle academics and heritage professionals, with whom we collaborate and co-produce resources in order to make a positive difference to society and to heritage practice.

The conference is presented as a collaboration between Newcastle University and the UK chapter of the Association of Critical Heritage Studies. Structured around the key themes Dialogues, Belongings and Futures, it seeks to represent cutting-edge thinking and new directions in heritage studies. As part of this, Professors Elizabeth Crooke and Rodney Harrison will give keynote addresses that represent critical new viewpoints and prospects in heritage studies.

ACHS website: http://www.criticalheritagestudies.org

We are proud to present Heritage Encounters as part of the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage. This is intended to ‘encourage the sharing and appreciation of Europe’s cultural heritage, to raise awareness of our common history and values, and to reinforce a sense of belonging in a common European space’. Of course, governments and electorates argue about the meanings and values of the European Union, and heritage is an important aspect of this, making us ask questions about what Europe is and how it has come to be, who belongs, and what common ground exists. It may be that European heritage is often characterised by diversity and dissonance as much as sharings and connections. But this detracts little from its richness, plurality and depth, nor from our compulsions about, and attachments to, the past.

Heritage Encounters is representative of our interests in the centrality of heritage for multiple domains and scales, from the material fabric of our cities to intangible cultural practices, from geopolitics to people’s everyday lives and beliefs.
CoHERE (Critical Heritages of Europe: performing and representing identities) is a flagship European Commission-funded project co-ordinated by Professor Chris Whitehead and Dr Susannah Eckersley, leading several research teams at Newcastle University, and 11 other institutions across Europe. It addresses the place of heritages in an intensifying EU Crisis, and how the politics of the past in the present illuminate complex dynamics and clashes between identities in and ideas of Europe. CoHERE researchers explore the ways in which heritages can be used for division and isolation, or to find common ground and encourage dialogue and critically reflective visions and uses of the past. The project engages with various cultural forms, from music to museum displays, food culture, education, protest, commemorations and online/digital practice, among others, and is multidisciplinary, involving teams of historians, archaeologists, heritage, memory and museum studies scholars, anthropologists, political scientists, musicians and musicologists, digital humanities scholars, and political scientists.

https://research.ncl.ac.uk/cohere/about/

In a series of six short films for the CoHERE project, filmmaker Ian McDonald continues his experiments in expanded documentary practice with a split-screen response to a range of questions raised by researchers about the politics of heritage practices and the construction of (European) identity. Here, we get a preview of two of the six films: Bologna and Dresden.

In Bologna [10 mins], McDonald utilises the split-screen as a structural and narrative device to prompt questions about the complex nature of the politics of food heritage and identity in the northern Italian city of Bologna. The ambivalent relationship between tradition and modernity in the Italian food industry is brought to the fore as we accompany pasta fresca makers Graziano and Graziella on a journey from their small restaurant in the centre of Bologna to the outskirts of the city and the site of the latest FICO Eataly World store, dubbed by the media as the ‘Disney World of food’.

In Dresden (12 mins), McDonald explores the potential of the split-screen to emphasise the clash of heritage practices in present-day Germany. Using an observational style, McDonald captures the attempts by right-wing German nationalists to instrumentalise the annual commemoration of the Firebombing of Dresden in 1945 to seek legitimacy for a stridently nationalist German identity in 2018. However, as he also shows, the nationalist attempts to use the controversial attack by British and American forces in 1945 to carve out a right-wing anti-immigrant German identity today do not go unchallenged by the youth of Dresden – be they anti-fascist activists demonstrating on the streets or schoolgirls dancing in the city square!
Erdi: digitally-mediated asynchronous conversations about European heritage

CoHERE Work Package 4 (a collaboration between Newcastle University and the Copenhagen Institute of Interactive Design) investigates the role of digitally-mediated dialogue around and through European heritage. As part of this investigation we have created the interactive ‘dialogic’ digital installation Erdi. Erdi is programmed to stimulate thoughts and opinions on a topic related to European heritage from visitors in the exhibition. It subsequently shares these thoughts with other visitors and asks them to respond, in an iterative cycle. Erdi listens for input and is designed to create the illusion of a conversation. Over time, Erdi fills with thoughts, involving multiple, asynchronous dialogues, for not only do people ‘talk’ to Erdi, but they may also come across what other visitors have said. Erdi is an evolving record and reflection on the visitors’ own experiences and feedback on the themes of the festival. Erdi is an experimental installation that explores the possibilities of collecting multiple, potentially conflicting, voices on European heritages. By enabling asynchronous ‘discussion’ through a playful approach, Erdi offers new possibilities for managing critical dialogues around sensitive, contested and divisive topics relating to the European past that are crucial for identities today.

The installation allows one visitor to engage with Erdi at any given time through a private listening and talking interface.

Rescaping Newcastle

RESCAPER is a mobile app for iOS and Android devices, developed in the McCord Centre for Landscape, Newcastle University, to aid outdoor ethnographic research and recording personal experience. The app allows the user to record their experience of their walk, i.e. take notes and pictures, record sounds, interviews or videos and annotate them with comments. The data they collect are automatically geo-referenced on a map, marking the route they followed. This is accessible to review and share via a web-based platform. The app is available for free from the App Store and Google Play.

For the exhibition, we showcase the app and its functions. We will ask people to download the app and walk around Newcastle, recording things that:

a. Remind them of their hometown and/or country
b. They think are characteristic of Newcastle

The gathered data will be displayed on a second monitor, attempting to draw a collective mental map of Newcastle and the other countries/hometowns it hosts.

RESCAPER has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No. 657050. It has also received funding from the UK Research and Innovation (AHRC) project ref. AH/P014453/1, the Newcastle University Faculty Impact Fund and McCord Centre.
Bringing contemporary site-specific fine-art practice to Roman houses at Herculaneum and Pompeii

This presentation showcases Expanded Interiors, an interdisciplinary, AHRC-funded research project drawing contemporary site-specific, fine art practice into a unique dialogue with ancient Roman wall paintings and architectural remains at the UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Herculaneum and Pompeii.

A practice-led, interdisciplinary, experimental approach explores dialogue with Roman interiors and decorations (and in particular Roman wall paintings) as a means to critically reflect upon contemporary and historical practices, while responding to the complex nature of these iconic archaeological sites within a contemporary context. Led by artist Catrin Huber (Fine Art, Newcastle University), the project brings together fine artists, archaeologists, heritage professionals and digital humanities researchers.

Roman wall paintings played an important part in articulating people’s houses in relation to their social functions. They helped to negotiate public and private space, encoded meanings in a range of different ways, and addressing different audiences. Expanded Interiors explores what contemporary site-specific fine-art practice can learn from Roman wall paintings, and the ways in which they articulated space. It asks whether a practice-based approach to investigating Roman wall paintings can bring new insights, and a new way of understanding them. Furthermore, Expanded Interiors examines the relationship of mobile objects to Roman wall paintings, and what an experimental, practice-based perspective can bring to this discussion.

Catrin Huber’s installation Expanded Interiors at Herculaneum is open to the public until the 15th of January. We are currently installing her exhibition Expanded Interiors at Pompeii, which will open on the 13th July 2018.

You can find more information on: www.expandedinteriors.co.uk

Expanded Interiors is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). It is a partnership between Newcastle University and Parco Archeologico di Pompei, Parco Archeologico di Ercolano, the Herculaneum Conservation Project, and Art Editions North.
Mapping Contemporary Art in the Heritage Experience

Mapping Contemporary Art in the Heritage Experience is an interdisciplinary research project that critically examines the role and practice of temporary visual art commissioning within heritage properties in Britain today, mapping the current landscape and exploring the impact of this activity on its producers and audiences. Led by fine artist Professor Andrew Burton, it approaches this subject from multiple perspectives, bringing together the knowledge and experience of scholars, artists, heritage professionals, volunteers and visitors.

Art commissioning has always been linked with Britain’s great historic properties. Recent decades have seen many heritage organisations vigorously re-engaging with contemporary art, investing in this as a way of developing new opportunities for public engagement with heritage properties and their histories. For many artists, commissioned work for heritage properties is an increasingly important strand within their practice.

However, the actual impact of such projects on their producers and audiences is poorly understood. Similarly, there is little collective professional understanding of the broader character of the contemporary arts in heritage field and its commissioning practices. As a creative practice-led collaboration with two major UK heritage partners, this project makes a contribution to the production of new knowledge around this significant but under-researched area of the visual arts.

Through case study research focused on the development of new art commissions at heritage properties, the project will explore in detail how contemporary artists engage with heritage narratives and how these artworks are received and consumed by visitors.

As public-facing research, this project will have specific benefit for practitioners, organisations and heritage visitors as well as for other academics working in the contemporary arts and heritage field, including creative-practice-led researchers. It has the capacity and potential to stimulate new public interest in contemporary arts in heritage practice in the UK and internationally, as well as providing much needed new knowledge for the sector, including for its funders and policy makers.
How do different communities give meaning to major heritage sites? What happens when such meanings are intertwined with histories of conflict and marginalisation, or are not recognised in official heritage interpretations?

Led by Professor Chris Whitehead and Dr Tom Schofield, the project explores the ‘plural heritages’ of the Istanbul Land (’Theodosian’) Walls and their environs. This 5th-Century CE UNESCO World Heritage Site stretches over six kilometres through the city. We have completed an extensive ethnographic phase involving numerous walking interviews with community members, producing a large body of data about people’s relations to place history.

In the current phase of the project we build on the ethnographic work to develop new understandings of the heterogeneous heritage value of the walls by co-producing public-facing digital interpretation resources with communities. Films, audio recordings and photographic outputs that negotiate between people’s creative and mnemonic responses to the Walls will be made available through web and mobile platforms, as well as through exhibitions. The third, ‘Official Development Assistance’ (ODA) phase of the project involves the roll-out of toolkits and the training of Turkish heritage professionals and relevant stakeholders, in order to disseminate insights and models of practice relating to plural heritages, engaging with communities, and co-production. Plural Heritages combines design research, heritage studies, digital humanities, and anthropological approaches.

For Heritage Encounters we present an on-site interview with one of our research participants [10, 11]. Shot within the confines of a Greek Orthodox church, the interview reflects our interest in ‘plural heritages’, exploring interconnected issues of community, place and history. The interview is presented in 360-degree video, evoking the rich atmosphere of the location.

http://pluralheritages.ncl.ac.uk
Writing the Wall, Reading the Wall: The Cultural Afterlives of Hadrian's Wall explores the cultural afterlives of Hadrian’s Wall. Built in the 2nd century AD, Hadrian’s Wall has had a varied life since its inception as a militarised border monument. Parallel to its varied life as a historic monument, the Wall has accumulated more intangible associations across the centuries, as symbol of the Anglo-Scottish border, of the decline of the British Empire, and of a mystical or reminiscent British past, as well as functioning in complex ways as a site of a romanticised British landscape, and literary inspiration. From Gildas to Neil Gaiman, the Wall has also become a site of international cultural significance. This project explores how the Wall has shaped our cultural imaginary and how our understanding of the Wall is culturally situated.

Hadrian’s Wall is justly celebrated as a well-preserved monument of Britain’s Roman imperial past, but the Wall has a deeper and broader significance beyond its study in archaeology and history. The Wall can be encountered across the centuries in a variety of media, supporting diverse agendas. Writing in the 6th century AD, the Byzantine writer Procopius describes the Wall as a supernatural barrier separating off the land of the dead. William Hutton’s 1801 account of his walk along the Wall praised the Wall as a glorious relict of Britain’s history while castigating the British for failing to value and respect the monument. Sycamore Gap, west of Housesteads Fort, was made internationally famous because of its inclusion in a scene in the blockbuster film Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves (1991). More recently, George R.R. Martin’s acknowledgement of Hadrian’s Wall as the inspiration for the gigantic Wall in Game of Thrones has brought new audiences to the Roman frontier monument through fiction and television. These occurrences attest to the Wall’s influence on broader culture.

The two films presented in the exhibition were developed as part of a research project with Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums (TWAM) which focused specifically on the Destination Tyneside display at the Discovery Museum. Destination Tyneside tells the social, industrial and maritime history of Newcastle and Tyneside and is a permanent display about the history of migration to the area. The research project, Who do we think we are? investigated how this display addresses issues of migration, identity and belonging in the North East of England. Specifically, it examined how the display tries to engage visitors empathetically with the history of migration through telling the stories of individual migrants. Our research looked at what drives visitors’ identification (or lack of identification) with displays like this which aim to reframe regional and city histories in more inclusive and diverse terms.

The research team worked with different audience groups to understand how individuals’ background (such as age, ethnicity, length of time - or family connections - in North East, 1st/2nd-generation migration experience) affected those individuals’ responses to the themes addressed in Destination Tyneside. The project also aimed to help the museum understand the impact of Destination Tyneside on visitor attitudes. What came out of our research was the need for a more multi-faceted and holistic approach to understanding the importance of affect and emotion in visitor behaviour in museums.

The films on display here capture a sense of the ways that participants explained to us what makes them feel they belong and feel ‘at home’. You will notice that there are some things which come up over and over again and clearly function as significant markers of place, identity, and belonging for people in this region whether long-term or new residents. Where do and don’t you feel ‘at home’ and why?

Project Team: Who do we think we are?: Exploring Identity, Place and Belonging in North East England: Professor Rhiannon Mason (PI), Dr Areti Galani, Dr Katherine Lloyd (Glasgow University) and Kylie Little (Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums) https://research.ncl.ac.uk/heritage-newcastle/
Gertrude Bell Archive Research

UNESCO International Memory of the World
[Mark Jackson, SHCA; Ian Johnson, Robinson Library]

The Gertrude Bell Archive, dating from 1871 to 1926, was inscribed in 2017 as a UNESCO International Memory of the World, only the second university-held collection in the UK to achieve this. The inscription acknowledges this priceless and unparalleled source of documentary heritage for the important period of societal change at the end of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of the modern Middle East. It recognises the dramatic change to the memory of places and people over the past century, recorded in the archive of c.10,000 unique items.

Beyond Destruction Project

This project examined the impact of WWI on minority communities today. We used the Gertrude Bell archive to explore how Iraqi Assyrians who participated in this study read their history and describe themselves in the shadow of World War I and its aftermath. The results indicate that past events have become part of the participants’ collective memory and identity and have strengthened their affiliation with their ethnic identity, heritage and religion. Traumatic events have weakened the majority of the participants’ affiliations with their home country and generated a fear of history repeating itself. The Newcastle component of this project, which is a collaboration with Nottingham University, is led by Dr Mark Jackson. It is funded by AHRC through the Centre for Hidden Histories of the First World War.

The Gertrude Bell Online Educational Comics for Children Project

This project will develop the national and international impact of the educational resource Gertrude Bell Comics http://research.ncl.ac.uk/gertrudecomics/, which enables younger historians to access primary historical source materials from an accessible and innovative comic format online. The images and words in the comics were drawn from primary source material access to which was provided by hyperlinks from the comics themselves. This is a collaboration between Archaeologist Dr Mark Jackson and Lydia Wysocki, a specialist in education and comics. It is funded by an ESRC Impact Accelerator Grant.
Tuesday 3rd July
Ballroom, Culture Lab

4pm: Registration

4.30pm: Welcome - Professor Rhiannon Mason (Newcastle University)

4.40pm: Opening Address - Professor Julie Sanders (Newcastle University) and Graham Bell (UK Co-ordinator for European Year of Cultural Heritage)

5.15pm: Keynote - chaired by Professor Rhiannon Mason (Newcastle University)

Professor Elizabeth Crooke (Ulster University)
Heritage Encounters: the object as critical lens

In September 1922 a group of men found themselves on the SS Argenta, a floating prison moored on the Belfast Lough. Each man was considered a threat to the new Northern Ireland state and was held, without trial, in abysmal conditions. One man had an autograph book and, sharing a pen, his fellow prisoners supplied a signature and a few words. This collection of names, surviving in the now fragile book, is a lens through which we can address the central themes of this UK Chapter event. Belonging is suggested in the original compilation and subsequent survival of the autograph book. There is potential for dialogue about historical events, representation in museums, as well as why and how we remember. The autograph book can trigger discussion about how futures are made, whether that is the active remembering at the point of compilation or by subsequent generations. These themes also bring critical reflection to the current ‘Decade of Centenaries’ in Ireland and encourage us to consider more deeply what shapes the nature and outcomes of heritage encounters.

Elizabeth Crooke is Professor of Heritage and Museum Studies at Ulster University where she is Course Director of the campus-based and distance learning MA programmes in heritage and museum studies. Her research explores memory, identity, representation and heritage, themes found in her co-edited book Heritage After Conflict: Northern Ireland (with Tom Maguire, Routledge 2018). These themes also resonate in her work as CI with the AHRC funded First World War Engagement Centre, Living Legacies. Recently she has published in Tom Maguire, Routledge 2018). These themes also resonate in her work as CI with the AHRC funded First World War Engagement Centre, Living Legacies. Recently she has published in Tom Maguire, Routledge 2018). These themes also resonate in her work as CI with the AHRC funded First World War Engagement Centre, Living Legacies.

6.15pm: Drinks reception and buffet dinner (Culture Lab)

Wednesday 4th July
Ballroom, Culture Lab

9am: Registration

9.30am: Welcome - Professor Chris Whitehead (Newcastle University)

9.40am: Keynote - chaired by Professor Chris Whitehead (Newcastle University)

Professor Rodney Harrison (UCL)
Heritage Futures: Some thoughts on the value of comparative research to critical heritage studies

What does it mean to speak of different forms of heritage as distinctive future-making practices? This lecture will explore how taking a comparative approach to understanding natural and cultural heritage conservation practices, and bringing heritage, broadly defined, into conversation with the management of other material and virtual legacies such as nuclear waste, might help transform our understanding of the work heritage and other conservation practices do in society. In doing so, the lecture aims to show the value of critical, comparative approaches to heritage in engaging with some of the key social, political, and ecological issues of the present, and in understanding how past legacies shape future worlds.

Rodney Harrison is Professor of Heritage Studies at the UCL Institute of Archaeology and AHRC Heritage Priority Area Leadership Fellow. He is Principal Investigator of the AHRC-funded Heritage Futures Research Programme; Director of the Heritage Futures Laboratory at UCL; and leads the Work Package on ‘Theorizing heritage futures in Europe: heritage scenarios’ as part of the EC funded Marie Sklodowska-Curie action [MSCA] Doctoral Training Network CHeurope: Critical Heritage Studies and the Future of Europe. He is the founding editor and editor-in-chief of the Journal of Contemporary Archaeology and was a founding executive committee member of the Association of Critical Heritage Studies. He is the [co]author or [co]editor of more than a dozen books and guest edited journal volumes and over 70 peer reviewed journal articles and book chapters. In addition to the AHRC his research has been funded by the Global Challenges Research Fund, British Academy, Wenner-Gren Foundation, Australian Research Council, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and the European Commission.

10.40-11.10am: Tea and Coffee Break

11.10am-12.40pm: “Dialogues” - chaired by Dr Areti Galani and Dr Gabi Arrigoni (Newcastle University)

With contributions from:

Dr Jacek Kołtan (European Solidarity Centre)
Kathleen Boodhai (Northumbria University)
Dr Stelios Lekakis (Newcastle University and MONUMENTA)
Tali Padan (Copenhagen Business School and Møllem Education)

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Dialogue/s through and about heritage

As museums increasingly embrace a social mission, with the mandate to encourage civic engagement and intercultural sensitivity, the idea of dialogue has gained currency in both institutional mission statements and exhibition designs. Furthermore, current European policy considers cultural heritage as a key factor ‘for the refocusing of our societies on the basis of dialogue between cultures’ and for ‘building a future of peace’. Within heritage work the dialogic museum concept has been approached through practices of consultation, co-curation and co-production, as a means for deconstructing institutional, monologic perspectives while developing models of shared and open authority. However, many questions surround our understandings of dialogue in this context: they relate both to the semantic breadth of the term, as well as the variety of ways in which it is put at work, mobilised and mis/appropriated. This panel aims to explore the relevance, aims and modalities of dialogue in heritage through a set of position statements and audience discussion. It brings together interdisciplinary and international perspectives from academia and the heritage sector in the UK and Europe.

12.40-1.45pm: Lunch

1.45-3.15pm: “Belongings” - chaired by Dr Katie Markham (Newcastle University)

With Contributions from:
Dr Ian McDonald and Dr Susannah Eckersley (Newcastle University)
Dr Francesca Lanz (Politecnico di Milano)
Dr Claske Vos (University of Amsterdam)
Dr Katherine Lloyd (University of Glasgow)

The word heritage is often connected to ideas of ownership or attachment, to a sense of inherent or inherited rights and to issues of alienation – fundamental terms also to understanding belonging. Given current political developments and socio-cultural contests around belonging internationally – who may be permitted to belong, and when, where, to what, how or why – whether in relation to individuals, marginalised or groups or indeed entire nations, this session aims to explore different critical research approaches to ‘Belongings’. It will explore how practices of belonging across a range of identities, communities and histories may be mediated, affirmed or denied within heritage forms including museums, commemoration, architecture and cultural governance, and highlight the challenges and opportunities of diverse critical research methods – research on practice, research as practice and practice as research.

Through short work-in-progress presentations from researchers and practitioners from differing cultural and heritage-related disciplines and panel discussions this session therefore aims to address how and why multiple heritages, memories, processes of attachment and belonging to and in cultural spaces and places, are being (re)negotiated during a time of European migration and identity ‘crises’.

Wednesday 4th July
Ballroom, Culture Lab

3.15-3.45pm: Tea and Coffee Break

3.45-5.15pm: “Futures” - chaired by Dr Loes Veldpaus (Newcastle University) and Dr Sarah May (UCL)

With contributions from:
Dr Lorna Richardson (University of York)
Coralie Acheson (Ironbridge Institute, University of Birmingham)
Professor Rodney Harrison (UCL)

What do we have to say about the future of the discipline?

Sessions like this one, at the end of a conference programme, are often used to draw out hopes and fears about the state of the discipline. With a new AHRC strategy for Heritage it can also be used to discuss how strategies like this can lead the discipline. We can ask many questions about the future of the discipline and its short and long-term options and realities, what are our realistic reflections on what is happening, what are our idealistic ideas for the future, what are the strategic pathways. But also, how is the future of the discipline bound up in path dependency, strategy, and our own thinking about it as if it is a discipline? Are different futures and uses of the past thinkable, foreseeable? Can we imagine a post-heritage world? The session will begin with a short discussion of the AHRC Heritage Strategy. Provocations will follow to spur audience discussion of other less predictable futures.

5.15pm: Conference close
Ground Floor
Culture Lab

1. Gertrude Bell Archive Research
2. CoHERE Part 1 - Bologna
3. Mapping Contemporary Art in the Heritage Experience
4. Expanded Interiors
5. Rescaping Newcastle
6. Who do we think we are?

First Floor
Culture Lab

7. Writing the Wall, Reading the Wall
8. CoHERE Part 1 - Dresden
9. CoHERE Part 2 - ERDI
10. Plural Heritages of Istanbul
11. Plural Heritages of Istanbul