

A future for *whose* past?



The Heritage of
Minorities, Fringe Groups and
People Without a Lobby

International and
Interdisciplinary Conference
at Monte Verità, Ascona,
Switzerland
21.–24.10.2025

In 1975, the European Architectural Heritage Year was launched with the motto: “A future for our past.” Fifty years later, we ask: Whose past will monument preservation safeguard in the future?

Climate change, globalization, migration, civil rights movements, and digital transformation have deeply reshaped living environments. Despite ongoing discussions about inclusion and representation, institutional frameworks and mechanisms still often marginalize those without political leverage, representation, or historical visibility. Although the boundaries of what is considered ‘heritage’ are shifting, the concerns of already marginalized groups are still not being sufficiently taken into account.

This conference addresses the question of who defines what is worthy of preservation. Under what conditions—and through which voices, histories, and cultural expressions—are certain narratives excluded from heritage frameworks? What roles do cultural experts, associations, and policies play in shaping (or limiting) recognition? Can and should we rethink or even completely redefine monument preservation from the perspectives of social justice, welfare, and remembrance policy?

The expanding discourse around intangible cultural heritage, Indigenous architecture, and postcolonial memory has already changed the field of monument preservation—but much work remains to be done. Would it be possible to conceive and practice monument preservation in a more inclusive way, and to learn from the perspectives of those who have been overlooked or underrepresented? What would it mean for heritage conservation to focus more on the heritage of marginalized communities? Which places and stories would become visible? And how would practice—materially, legally, institutionally—have to change to make room for this part of heritage?



Koblenz Border Bridge – WWII
escape route, refugees turned away
at the Swiss frontier © Peter Rosa.
Front: Occupation of the porteous
building in Geneva, www.porteous.ge



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Book of abstracts
(accessible from Oct. 2025)

Tuesday 21 October

11:00 Arrival and Registration

13:30 Opening Words / Sala Balint

**Rune Frandsen and
Andrea Schaer**

13:45 Workshops / 1 Sala Eranos / 2 Sala Balint / 3 Auditorium

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| 1 | Public History, Citizen Science, and Practices of Participatory Memory Culture: Insights from Collaborations with Indigenous Communities in Canada | Jasmin Gerig, Angela Müller and Anne Schillig |
| 2 | Heritage Overkill | Nicolas Meier |
| 3 | A Future for the Children's Past: Interdisciplinary Workshop | Maria Kouvari, Damian Zimmermann and Anna Katharina Schmid |
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16:00 Coffee Break / Sala Mandala

**16:30 Session 1A / Sala Balint
Lieux de Mémoire**

**Moderation
Florence Graezer Bideau**

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| 16:35 | Giving a Voice to the Past: Intangible Heritage and Forgotten Territories | Roland Hochstrasser |
| 17:00 | Youth Camps in Bulgaria 1944 – 1989: Creation, Past, Significance | Ekaterina Tsoлова |
| 17:25 | Cultural Monuments of German Jews in Present-Day Poland: Why and How Should We Protect Them? | Tomasz Wolender |
| 17:50 | What Futures for the Jewish Communities of the Swiss Jura Arc? | Raphaël Chatelet and Olena Yatsenko |
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- 18:15 Concluding Discussion

**16:30 Session 1B / Auditorium
Missed Monuments**

**Moderation
Daniela Spiegel**

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| 16:35 | Neues Heim in Stuttgart Rot: From Refugee Camp to Largest Housing Project in the Federal Republic of Germany | Martin Klinger |
| 17:00 | Junggesellenheime: Supervised Youth Homes of the SBB in Zurich | Ekaterina Nozhova |
| 17:25 | Testimonies of Minorities and Marginalised Groups in Baden-Württemberg: Reflections on Monument Listing Practices | Kristina Hagen |
| 17:50 | 'Socially Just' Monument Conservation in the European Architectural Heritage Year 1975: A Turkish Childhood Home in the Old Town of Alsfeld | Annika Sellmann |
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- 18:15 Concluding Discussion

19:00 Welcome Drinks, followed by Dinner / Sala Luce

Wednesday 22 October

08:30	Session 2 / Auditorium Urban Heritage Beyond Landmark Monuments	Moderation Marion Sauter
8:35	The 'Path of Diversity' in St. Gallen: Role and Responsibilities of Heritage Conservation	Matthias Fischer and Klaudia Fryckowska
9:00	On the Legacy of an Example of New Building in Schaffhausen	Sabine Brintzer
9:25	Audiovisual Cultural Heritage: Reactive Cultural Asset and Testimony of Diversity	Cécile Vilas
9:50	'Cultural Memory', Minority Heritage: Vallon in Lausanne	Claude Grin
10:15	Concluding Discussion	
10:30	Coffee Break / <i>Sala Balint</i>	
11:00	Poster Presentations 1 / Sala Balint Memory, Protest and Minorities in Public Space	Moderation Manuel Medina González
12:30	Lunch Break / <i>Sala Luce</i>	
14:00	Session 3 / Auditorium Questioning World Heritage	Moderation Oliver Martin
14:05	Whose Fortress? Middle Ages, Banners and Counter-Memories at Bellinzona UNESCO World Heritage Site	Eva Carlevaro and Domenico Ermanno Roberti
14:30	Whose World Heritage? Global Visions and Local Realities at Petra World Heritage Site	Jiayao Jiang
14:55	People Beside the Genius: People of Building, Operating and Using the (World Heritage) Semmering Railway	Roland Tusch and Günter Dinhold
15:20	The Other Side of World Heritage: The Heritage of Minorities, Communities and Indigenous People	Birgitta Ringbeck and Mechtild Rössler
15:45	Concluding Discussion	
16:00	Coffee Break / <i>Sala Balint</i>	
17:00	Formal Reception / Auditorium	Moderation Florence Graezer Bideau
	Welcome: Silke Langenberg (ETH Zurich), Nicola Braghieri (EPFL), Mathilde Crevoisier Crelier (Swiss Cultural Heritage Network), Sabine Nemeč-Piguet (ICOMOS Suisse)	
	Official Greetings: Marina Carobbio Guscetti (State Councillor Canton Ticino), Oliver Martin (Federal Office of Culture), Terje Birkrem Hovland (European Council), Riin Alatalu (ICOMOS Europe)	
	Round Table with: Mathilde Crevoisier Crelier, Silke Langenberg, Francesca Gemnetti (former Swiss UNESCO Commission), Oliver Martin, Rohit Jain (University of Lucerne)	
19:00	Apéro Riche opened by Giorgio Gilardi (Mayor of the Town of Ascona) / Sala Luce	

Thursday 23 October

08:30	Session 4 / Auditorium Migration Spaces	Moderation Rune Frandsen
8:35	The Lost or Still Salvageable Architectural Heritage of a Working-Class and Migrant City: Current Research and Debates in Biel	Florian Eitel
9:00	The Heritage of Italian Migration in Switzerland: Lausanne	Morena La Barba
9:25	How Can the Memory and History of Seasonal Workers be Incorporated into Our Heritage and Passed On? A Critical Assessment of Two Initiatives Undertaken in Geneva	Patrick Auderset, Jeanne Gillard, Charles Magnin and Nicolas Rivet
9:50	Building a Sense of Belonging through Heritage	Sylvie Pipoz and Sandrine Keriakos Bugada
10:15	Concluding Discussion	
10:30	Coffee Break / <i>Sala Balint</i>	
11:00	Poster Presentations 2 / Sala Balint Intangible Heritage and Unseen Identities	Moderation: Anna Karla De Almeida Milani
12:30	Lunch Break / <i>Sala Luce</i>	
14:00	Session 5 / Auditorium Regional Minorities	Moderation Nicola Braghieri
14:05	Minorities and the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage: UNESCO's International Lists and the Swiss Inventory	Chiara Bortolotto and Florence Graezer Bideau
14:30	A Future for Whose Past? Corsica and Ticino	Madeleine Allegrini and Monique Traeber-Fontana
14:55	Maintaining Qsur: Recovering Continuity Towards a History of Minor Heritage in Morocco	Reda Berrada
15:20	Craftsmanship as Cultural Continuity in Heritage Conservation: Sustaining Skills in Architectural Heritage for Displaced Communities	Irene Ruiz Bazán and Sherine Al Shallah
15:45	Concluding Discussion	
16:00	Coffee Break / <i>Sala Balint</i>	
16:30	Session 6 / Auditorium Post-Colonial Perspectives	Moderation Sabine Nemeč-Piguet
16:35	Words that Build Walls: Japanese Legal Language and the Marginalisation of Ainu Indigenous Heritage (1997-2024)	Cringuta Irina Pelea
17:00	How to Become a Lobbyist for a Chinese Minority? Heritagisation of Religious Practices in Two Branches of the Naxi in China's Yunnan Province	Zihan Li
17:25	Evaluating the Berlin Statue of Peace as Monument: The Politics of Minority Heritage Recognition	Nammyoung Hong
17:50	Concluding Discussion	
19:30	Conference Dinner / Sala Luce	

Friday 24 October

8:30	Session 7A / Auditorium Teaching and Outreach	Moderation Riin Alatalu
8:35	Across the Levant: A Syrian Stonemasonry Training Programme	Emma Sweeney
9:00	Building Bridges Between Archaeology and the Population	Ellinor Dunning and Camille Aeschmann
9:25	Finding Heritage in Unexpected Places: Rethinking Heritage Significance of Everyday People	Lidwine Spoormans and Rienje Veenhof
9:50	Teaching Multiple Layers of Heritage in a Conflicted Region	Shaden Hamed-Safadi
10:15	Concluding Discussion	
8:30	Session 7B / Sala Balint Criteria and Inventories	Moderation Bernhard Furrer
8:35	Expanding Knowledge of Historical Monuments Through the Participation of Marginalised Groups and Minorities?	Irene Plein
9:00	Diversifying Cultural Heritage Preservation: New Ways to Inventory	Annika Büttner
9:25	'Fremde Impulse' Revisited: Ruhr.2010	Markus Harzenetter
9:50	No Preservation without Documentation. On the Presence/Absence of Women in Swiss Building and Garden Inventories	Laura Hindelang and Nina Hüppi
10:15	Concluding Discussion	
10:30	Coffee Break / <i>Sala Mandala</i>	
11:00	Session 8A / Auditorium Subcultures	Moderation Helen Wyss
11:05	From Architectural Parasitism to the Aspiration for Heritage Recognition: 'The Locle Ness Monster' DIY Skatepark	Jérôme Heim
11:30	Urban Zombography of Graffiti 'Living-Dead' Spots in Switzerland	Marc Tadorian
11:55	Squatted Houses Without Squatters – Squatters Without Squatted Houses	Kirsten Angermann
12:20	Concluding Discussion	
11:00	Session 8B / Sala Balint Situating the Margins	Moderation Andrea Schaer
11:05	Atelierhaus am Flutgraben: A Continuous Ruin for a Continuous Presence	Sandra Bartoli and Silvan Linden
11:30	Unfixed Design: Reconsidering Conservation Criteria and Processes	Graham Skeate
11:55	Informality of Urban Heritage: Peripheries as Grounds for Alternative Uses of Heritage and Inclusive Histories of Cities	Mesut Dinler
12:20	Concluding Discussion	
13:00	Plenary and Final Words / Sala Balint	Silke Langenberg and Nicola Braghieri

