

# Digital Art History – Methods, Practices, Epistemologies V:

*Critical Approaches  
to Sources in  
(Digital) Art History.*

Zagreb, October

16–17, 2025, [https://  
www.ipu.hr/section/  
hr/113/digitalna-  
povijest-umjetnosti](https://www.ipu.hr/section/hr/113/digitalna-povijest-umjetnosti)

# Digital Art History – Methods, Practices, Epistemologies V:

*Critical Approaches  
to Sources in  
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**CONFERENCE  
PROGRAMME**

# Digital Art History – Methods, Practices, Epistemologies V: *Critical Approaches to Sources in (Digital) Art History.*

## *DAY 0* OCTOBER 15

### *15:00 GUIDED TOUR*

Optional Guided Tour of the HR-ZOO ZG2 data center, organized by the University of Zagreb University Computing Centre (SRCE), for conference participants

## *DAY 1* OCTOBER 16

### *9:30 – 10:00 INTRODUCTORY REMARKS*

- IVAN MARIĆ, Director of the University of Zagreb University Computing Centre – SRCE
- KATARINA HORVAT-LEVAJ, Director of the Institute of Art History, Zagreb
- SANJA HORVATINČIĆ, Institute of Art History, Zagreb
- LJILJANA KOLEŠNIK, Institute of Art History, Zagreb
- SANJA SEKELJ, Institute of Art History, Zagreb

### *10:00 – 11:00 KEYNOTE LECTURE*

- PAUL B. JASKOT, Duke University
- From the Object to the System: Critical Art History in the Age of the Digital Humanities

### *11:00 – 11:15 COFFEE BREAK*

### *11:15 – 12:30 SESSION I: MODELLING SPACE AND MEANING IN DIGITAL ART HISTORY*

DARKA BILIĆ, Institute of Art History, Zagreb – Chair

- FILIP LOVRIĆ, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb; University of Pisa
- From Historic Maps to Digital Landscapes: A Critical Look at Cartographic Sources for Longue Durée Landscape Study
- CHARLES VAN DEN HEUVEL, University of Amsterdam, SOFIA BARONCINI, Leibniz Institute of European History, Mainz
- Opening Boxes: Contextualizing a 3D Scholarly Edition of the Restoration of the 12th Century Reliquary Shrine of St Servatius with Ontologies of Uncertainty
- HEDREN SUM, National University of Singapore, STEPHEN WHITEMAN, The Courtauld Institute of Art, London
- Ontology as a Method to Represent Intertextuality and Experiential Knowledge of Cultural Landscapes (online)

### *12:30 – 12:45 COFFEE BREAK*

### *12:45 – 14:00 SESSION II: QUANTIFYING PRESENCE, POSITION, AND POWER*

JÚLIA PERCZEL, Hungarian University of Fine Arts; Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest – Chair

- GYÖNGYVÉR HORVÁTH, Independent researcher, Budapest
- Talent versus Genius: a Comparative, Statistics-Based Reception History of Two Hungarian Graphic Artists in the Post-War Period (online)
- ANDREJ SRAKAR, Institute for Economic Research, Ljubljana; School of Economics and Business, University of Ljubljana, MARILENA VECCO, Burgundy Business School; Carmelle and Rémi Marcoux, Chair in Arts Management, HEC Montréal, PETJA GRAFENAUER, Academy of Fine Arts and Design, University of Ljubljana
- Excavating the History of a Network: Finding and Modelling Patient Zero in Two Large Arts Networks

# Digital Art History – Methods, Practices, Epistemologies V: *Critical Approaches to Sources in (Digital) Art History.*

- WEIXUAN LI, Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society; University of Amsterdam
- A Spatial Approach to Understanding Artistic Innovation: Painters' Location Choices and the Market Development in Amsterdam

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**14:00 – 15:00**  
**LUNCH BREAK**

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**15:00 – 16:15**  
**SESSION III: DIGITAL  
INFRASTRUCTURES FOR  
THE HUMANITIES**

IRENA ŠIMIĆ, Institute of Art History,  
Zagreb – Chair

- DRAŽENKO CELJAK, University of Zagreb University Computing Centre
- What Does Data Say? How can Humanists Use Data Services and Infrastructures?

**WHEN HUMANITIES MEETS  
SUPERCOMPUTING: HIGH PERFORMANCE  
COMPUTING FOR EVERYONE**

- BRANIMIR KOLAREK, Ruder Bošković Institute, Zagreb, LJUBO GAMULIN, Croatian Conservation Institute, Zagreb, DAVOR DAVIDOVIĆ, Ruder Boković Institute, Zagreb
- Applying Advanced Computational Infrastructure in Creating High-Resolution 3D Model of the Small Fountain of Onofrio
- HRVOJE STANČIĆ, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb
- Computational Archival Science, or How Can Archives Use Supercomputers to Train AI

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**16:15 – 16:30**  
**COFFEE BREAK**

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**16:30 – 18:10**  
**SESSION IV: REASSEMBLING  
THE ART-HISTORICAL  
RECORD**

MARTINA BOBINAC, Institute of Art  
History, Zagreb – Chair

- VOICA PUȘCAȘIU, Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca
- From Handwritten Ledgers to Digital Insights: The Petranu Archive
- KATARINA MOHAR, ZRC SAZU – France Stele Institute of Art History, Ljubljana; University of Maribor, ROK VRABIČ, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, University of Ljubljana
- Writing the Image: Captioning as a Source in Fine-Tuning Diffusion Models for Art History
- SOFIA BARONCINI, Leibniz Institute of European History, Mainz, WEIXUAN LI, Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society; University of Amsterdam
- When but not Where: Considerations on the Underrepresentation of the Place of Creation in Art Datasets

- VIKTORIE VÍTŮ, Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague
- Scaling Photomechanical Reproductions: Images in Periodicals and Automated Data Collection

# Digital Art History – Methods, Practices, Epistemologies V: *Critical Approaches to Sources in (Digital) Art History.*

## DAY 2 OCTOBER 17

### 09:30 – 10:30 KEYNOTE LECTURE

- CHIARA BONACCHI, University of Edinburgh
- Bias, Injustice, and Repairs in the Digital Heritage Landscape

### 10:30 – 10:45 COFFEE BREAK

### 10:45 – 12:20 SESSION V: CRITICAL DIGITAL METHODS IN HERITAGE AND MEMORY STUDIES

IVANA HANIČAR BULJAN, Institute of Art History, Zagreb – Chair

- MAJA KAMENAR, MAJA BILUŠIĆ, LUKA HORNUNG, Institute of Art History, Zagreb
- Application of GIS in the Architectural Department of the Institute of Art History

- IRENA ŠIMIĆ, Institute of Art History, Zagreb
- From Dust to Open Access: Reflexive Epistemology and the Conscious Role of Actors in Built Heritage Digitization

- SANJA HORVATINČIĆ, Institute of Art History, Zagreb
- Critical Cartography and Contested Heritage: Digital Mapping in Post-Socialist Space

- LJILJANA KOLEŠNIK, Institute of Art History, Zagreb
- Mapping Social Dynamics of the Postwar Yugoslav Housing Practices. The Application of VANIS Information System at the ERC project Housing.YU

### 12:20 – 12:35 COFFEE BREAK

### 12:35 – 13:50 SESSION VI: DIGITAL RECONSTRUCTIONS AND VISUALIZATIONS OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

ANA PLOŠNIĆ ŠKARIĆ, Institute of Art History, Zagreb – Chair

- CHARLENE VELLA, SEBASTIANO D'AMICO, EMANUELE COLICA, FABIO LINGUANTI, University of Malta
- Reconstructing St Anne's Church, Fort St Angelo, Malta: A Digital and Geophysical Approach to its Architectural Evolution
- PAULA ŠPEK, Friends of Heritage Association, Croatia
- Partial Sources, Digital Methods and the Issues of Monument Interpretation: The Study of the Late Gothic Church of St John the Baptist in Kloštar Ivanić
- DOMINIK LENGYEL, BTU Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg
- Virtual Photography as a Method for Historical Narratives Based on Incomplete Sources

### 13:50 – 14:50 LUNCH BREAK

### 14:50 – 16:05 SESSION VII: ETHICS, REPRESENTATION, AND HISTORICAL RESPONSIBILITY

SANJA HORVATINČIĆ, Institute of Art History, Zagreb – Chair

- ANDREW LAWLER, Independent researcher, Belgrade
- 'A Prolific Author': Archival Biases in Attribution of NOB Memorials to Creators in Bosnia & Herzegovina
- SELMA BANICH, Freelance performance artist, Zagreb, MARTINA BOBINAC, Institute of Art History, Zagreb, ALMA TRAUBER, Striegl City Gallery, Sisak, SVEN SORIĆ, Freelance graphic designer, Zagreb
- Digital Cartography of the Sisak Children's Camp as a Methodological and Ethical Framework for Curatorial-Research Work



- RICH A P. MISHRA, Institute of Technology, Nirma University
- Reimagining Sources and Retelling Narratives of Tribal Heritage in India: A Digital Humanities Initiative

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16:05 – 16:20

*COFFEE BREAK*

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16:20 – 17:35

*SESSION VIII: ETHICS, CONTROL, AND CURATION IN THE DIGITAL SPHERE*

SANJA SEKELJ, Institute of Art History, Zagreb — Chair

- ANA AVELAR, University of Brasília, TÂNIA SULZBACHER, Academia de Curadoria, University of Brasília
- AI-Assisted Curating: From the Expository Metaphor to Curatorial Metamorphosis (online)
- HELENA SCHMIDT, Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna
- From Analog Archives to Digital Disruptions: Copyright, Transformation and the In/Justice of Digital Images

- SOPHIE LINGG, Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna
- Questionable Standards of a Community. Social Media Posts, Stories and Images, Social Media, New Forms of Censorship, and Gender-Based Violence

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17:35 – 17:50

*COFFEE BREAK*

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17:50 – 18:20

*CLOSING REMARKS AND DISCUSSION*

- JÚLIA PERCZEL, Hungarian University of Fine Arts; Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest

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19:30 – 22:30

*CLOSING RECEPTION*

(for Conference Participants)

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# *BOOK OF ABSTRACTS*

*International Conference  
Digital Art History –  
Methods, Practices,  
Epistemologies V:  
Critical Approaches to  
Sources in (Digital)  
Art History*

*October 16–17, 2025*

# ORGANIZERS

Institute of Art History, Zagreb  
University of Zagreb University Computing Centre (SRCE)  
DARIAH-HR

## SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

**DARKA BILIĆ**,  
Institute of Art History, Zagreb  
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Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich  
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Folklore Research, Zagreb  
**IVAN MARIĆ**,  
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**JÚLIA PERCZEL**,  
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# ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

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**SLAVEN MIHALJEVIĆ**,  
University of Zagreb University  
Computing Centre (SRCE), Zagreb

The conference is organized within the research project of the Institute of Art History in Zagreb, "Digital network, spatial and (con) textual analysis of artistic phenomena and heritage of the 20th century" (DIGitART, 2023–2027) funded by the European Union – NextGenerationEU.



6	<i>INTRODUCTION</i>
8	<i>KEYNOTE LECTURES</i>
14	<i>SESSION I: Modelling Space and Meaning in Digital Art History</i>
24	<i>SESSION II: Quantifying Presence, Position, and Power</i>
34	<i>SESSION III: Digital Infrastructures for the Humanities</i>
44	<i>SESSION IV: Reassembling the Art-Historical Record</i>
56	<i>SESSION V: Critical Digital Methods in Heritage and Memory Studies</i>

70	<i>SESSION VI: Digital Reconstructions and Visualizations of Cultural Heritage</i>
80	<i>SESSION VII: Ethics, Representation, and Historical Responsibility</i>
92	<i>SESSION VIII: Ethics, Control, and Curation in the Digital Sphere</i>
104	<i>IMPRESSUM</i>

# INTRODUCTION

6

Organized by the Institute of Art History in Zagreb, in collaboration with the University of Zagreb University Computing Centre (SRCE) and DARIAH-HR, this year's DAH conference, *Critical Approaches to Sources in (Digital) Art History*, centers on the epistemological, methodological, and political assumptions that shape how we engage with materials through which knowledge is constructed. It brings together forty scholars, independent researchers, and artists, from sixteen countries (Austria, Brazil, Croatia, Czechia, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania, Serbia, Singapore, Slovenia, UK, USA) who examine the question of sources at the heart of historical and art historical inquiry through diverse disciplinary and methodological perspectives.

Far from being self-evident or neutral, sources are situated, selected, and framed within particular institutional, disciplinary, and technological contexts. They emerge through processes of classification, collection, curation, and exclusion — processes that are historically and politically charged. The conference seeks to unpack these processes and critically examine the assumptions that underlie the use and interpretation of sources — assumptions that take on an added complexity in the context of digital humanities.

7

Contributions explore not only how we define and interpret sources, but also how we build, question, and reimagine them. Participants interrogate the materiality of sources, the conditions of their production, and the power relations embedded in their circulation. They examine sourcing as an act of selection, mediation, and translation, attentive to the ways in which sources both reveal and conceal the worlds they claim to represent. The conference foregrounds the situatedness of knowledge production, particularly how sources are entangled with histories of colonialism, gender, race, class, and labor. By engaging sources critically, contributors aim not only to generate new insights but also to question the very frameworks through which evidence is constructed, legitimated, and mobilized in scholarly work.

Alongside these conceptual engagements, the conference foregrounds methodological innovation. Many of the projects presented here employ digital tools not simply for efficiency or dissemination, but as a means of rethinking the epistemological foundations of research itself. From digital mapping and visualization to online archiving, data mining, and algorithmic critique, these approaches offer new ways to analyze, contextualize, and present sources — inviting reflection on the epistemological and political implications of digital infrastructures in contemporary scholarship.

# *KEYNOTE LECTURES*

8

9

PAUL B. JASKOT

## *From the Object to the System: Critical Art History in the Age of the Digital Humanities*

KEYNOTE LECTURE  
OCTOBER 16, 2025  
10:00–11:00

10 What is the object of Art History in the age of the Digital Humanities? Objects have, surprisingly, always been hard to pin down in modern Art History. While we can sometimes rely on analyzing the physical work of art, Art History has, of course, also been a discipline that works with mediated objects through copies, prints, photographs, slides, and now digital images and models. Has the status of the object actually changed with digital methodologies? Is digital mediation a different kind of visual source for our work?

This talk argues that Critical Digital Art History offers a fundamental challenge to the stable work of art as the central object of study in the discipline. The iterative dynamic that is central to Critical DH creates a fundamental dialectic between our objects of study — works of art — and their reconceptualization in digital form, from databases to simulations. Digital methods, ironically, drive us away from the object of art even as they reconstitute the analysis of that object through computational means. They can and have been used to move us away from methods aimed solely at explaining the work of art towards problems of the many systems of which artworks are a part. In this regard, Critical Digital Art History extends approaches especially related to the

Social History of Art even as it expands the questions posed by social history in radical new ways.

To approach this thesis, the talk will make an historical analysis of key developments and projects within Digital Art History in the last three decades and draw out their critical potential. In addition, it will bring forward new digital approaches to the case study of architecture and construction during the Nazi Occupation of Europe as an example of how critical new questions can be raised with digital methods. Finally, it will argue for the centrality of systemic questions within Art History rather than those that focus exclusively on the object. Lefebvre's concept of the "concrete abstract" will help theorize and isolate the critical potential of such a systemic approach. A systemic focused Art History is a Critical Art History when it reveals the dynamic relationship between political economic or social systems and cultural objects, individuals, specific geographies, and networks. Digital methods have increasingly provided the means to address and to rethink this fundamental relationship. A Critical Digital Art History challenges the static and market-oriented assumptions behind the discipline's impulse to analyse individual works of art and allows us to raise other significant and important problems in human society that our field has long under researched.

11

PAUL B. JASKOT is Professor of Art History & German Studies and the Director of the Digital Art History & Visual Culture Research Lab at Duke University (USA). His work focuses on the political history of Nazi cultural policy and its postwar impact as well as the critical methodological potential for the Digital Humanities in Art History. He is a founding member of the international Holocaust Geographies Collaborative, the first scholarly group to apply GIS and other digital methods to an

analysis of the genocide. In addition to his scholarly work, Jaskot was President of the National Committee of the History of Art (2020–2024), the US affiliate of CIHA. Jaskot's fellowships have included being appointed as the Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.) and the Ina Levine Invitational Scholar in the Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies (U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C.).

CHIARA BONACCHI

*Bias, Injustice, and Repairs  
in the Digital Heritage  
Landscape*

KEYNOTE LECTURE  
OCTOBER 17, 2025  
09:30–10:30

12

This keynote presentation will explore and discuss issues relating to the biases that emerge from the making and analysis of digital heritage today. It will consider especially the kinds of biases and injustice that stem from the production of heritage objects and epistemologies in crowdsourcing, AI-based, and social media environments. Attention will be given to different types of bias, including those pertaining to power imbalances based on gender, class, etc., as well as political ideologies. How can we repair these imbalances and work towards a more just digital (heritage) future?

13

CHIARA BONACCHI is Chancellor's Fellow in Heritage, Text and Data Mining, and Senior Lecturer in Heritage at the University of Edinburgh. She is the founder and director of the Heritage Minds Lab and of the MSc in Cultural Heritage Futures. Dr Bonacchi was awarded the Philip Leverhulme Prize in Archaeology (2022) for developing novel big data-driven methodologies for heritage research and undertaking large-scale and comparative studies of the relationships between people's interactions with the past, their political identities

and future thinking. She has led a dozen collaborative and international research grants and advised heritage organisations including ICCROM, Historic England, Historic Environment Scotland, and Arts Council England. Dr Bonacchi is currently PI of the Leverhulme Research Project Grant *Weaponised Pasts: The evolution of heritage-based hostility on social media* (2025–2028). She is also Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London and Scotland, and of the Royal Society of Edinburgh's Young Academy of Scotland.

*DAY 1*  
*SESSION I*

14

*11:15 – 12:30*

*Modelling Space  
and Meaning in  
Digital Art  
History*

15



## *From Historic Maps to Digital Landscapes: A Critical Look at Cartographic Sources for Longue Durée Landscape Study*

SESSION I  
OCTOBER 16, 2025  
11:15–12:30

16

Following the so-called “spatial turn” in the humanities, landscape-focused research has gained prominence in disciplines such as history, art history, and archaeology. As Antrop and Van Eetvelde describe, landscape is a holistic concept, and as such it provides a valuable framework for interdisciplinary research, allowing scholars to transcend the limitations of individual disciplines through its application. However, historical landscape research remains a multi-paradigmatic endeavor, shaped by methodological and epistemological pluralism. As such, landscape reconstruction requires a critical examination of sources but it also enables new interpretations of historical data.

This paper presents a case study of the Zadar archipelago, demonstrating how the integration of diverse cartographic sources — from the 15th to the 19th century — can significantly enhance our understanding of other sources on landscape, such as architectural remains and documentary records. Because of their high historical dependance on the coastal urban center, the islands of the Zadar archipelago have received sporadic scholarly attention, leaving our knowledge of their histories and landscape biographies highly fragmentary. When studied comparatively and in conjunction with other sources,

cartographic materials — including Venetian plans, early modern nautical charts, and Austro-Hungarian cadastral maps — offer crucial insights into the long-term persistence of monuments, spatial organization patterns, and perceptions of the landscape over time.

As Alfred Korzybski famously remarked, “the map is not the territory,” and the examined cartographic representations, with their inherent biases, inaccuracies, and exaggerations, provide more than just geographic information; they reveal the cognitive and cultural perceptions of space and what Maurizio Forte terms *mindscapes*. By analyzing the recurring ways in which insular landscapes were depicted and correlating them with data on both anthropogenic and natural landscape features, the study traces the resilience and continuity of specific historical landscape elements. In doing so, it addresses and fills the gaps left by traditional sources and scholarly methods. Through the application of a landscape framework and the critical assessment of cartographic data, new insights can be gained into the history of monuments, patterns of space usage, and broader issues regarding landscape transformations from Antiquity to the present day.

17

FILIP LOVRIĆ earned a degree in Art History and Philosophy from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, in 2019. In 2020, he enrolled in a PhD program in premodern history and worked until 2024 as a Research Assistant in the Department of Art History, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Zagreb, on the project *Global Humanisms: New Perspectives on the Middle*

*Ages (300–1600)*, funded by the Croatian Science Foundation. Since 2022, he is also pursuing a PhD at the University of Pisa through the *Cotutelle de thèse* program. His research interests include historical landscape studies, late antique and early medieval architecture and sculpture, and the application of GIS in historical sciences.

# CHARLES VAN DEN HEUVEL, SOFIA BARONCINI

## *Opening Boxes: Contextualizing a 3D Scholarly Edition of the Restoration of the 12th Century Reliquary Shrine of St Servatius with Ontologies of Uncertainty*

SESSION I  
OCTOBER 16, 2025  
11:15–12:30

18 This paper focuses on the contextualization of a 3D scholarly edition of the restoration of the 12th century reliquary shrine of St Servatius (Maastricht) between 1958 and 1962, made in collaboration between the authors, the 4D lab of the University of Amsterdam and the Pure3D lab of Maastricht University. This reconstruction discusses in eight perspectives the cultural-historical, popular-historical, iconographical, technical, and ethical aspects of the restoration of the reliquary shrine of St Servatius and the making of the 3D scholarly edition. Bringing together archival sources from multiple archival institutions, documentation centers, and cultural heritage institutions in the Netherlands (Amsterdam, Maastricht, Nijmegen), Belgium (Brussels), and Germany (Bonn, Cologne, Nuremberg, and Munich), the paper not only attempts to piece together the evidence of the socio-cultural impact of restoration decisions in the iconographical program of this shrine, the so-called Chest of Distress, for its function since the Middle Ages to protect the inhabitants of Maastricht in states of emergency, but also to develop ontologies to bring these sources and storylines together in semantic-web models. While almost all cities and villages have their own local patron saints, we argue that there are strong similarities in the legends

19

and the religious, popular, and cultural practices around these saints from place to place. At the same time, the stories of mythical saints contain many uncertainties such as contradictions, ambiguities, incomplete, and “non-existent sources” that stand in the way of providing the historical evidence needed to come to shared cultural values and ethical decisions in the preservation and restoration of tangible and intangible cultural heritage of liturgical and devotional objects in context. In previous studies we developed ontological models for historical events in storylines (Van den Heuvel and Zamborlini), for interchanges between material and immaterial cultural heritage and their impact on iconographical change (Baroncini, Macaluso and Van den Heuvel, 2025 accepted) and for historical frames to capture historical events, from events recurring over a long period to ephemeral ones (Van den Heuvel and Baroncini 2025 accepted, and Baroncini, Van den Heuvel 2025, submitted). In particular the fuzziness of the ephemeral made us realize that the next step needed is to model uncertainty in interactions between tangible and intangible cultural heritage. The ultimate goal is to link these ontologies to various models in CIDOC-CRM, such as its Argumentation Platform for 3D reconstruction and the CRMCR – a domain ontology dedicated to the conservation and restoration of cultural objects, and if necessary, create new extensions based on classifications of the arts, such as Iconclass, ICON (Baroncini 2024) and Beeldleer (Van den Heuvel 2024).

### REFERENCES

- Sofia Baroncini, “Diving into Artworks. Interpretations through the Lenses of Semantic Data. An Application on Panofsky’s Iconological Studies” (PhD diss., University of Bologna, 2024).
- Sofia Baroncini, Melissa Macaluso, and Charles van den Heuvel, “Improving access to interchanges between material and immaterial cultural heritage through semantic modelling,” in *ADHO 2025* [accepted paper].
- Charles van den Heuvel, “Henri van de Waal’s (1910–1972) unfinished Beeldleer: Exploring new potentials of an iconological classification for the history of the arts.” *Oud Holland*, Vol. 137, no. 4 (2024): 201–236.
- Charles van den Heuvel, and Sofia Baroncini, “Saint On The Move. Modeling and Representing the Ephemeral and Uncertainties in the History of the Procession of the Holy Relics of St. Servatius,” in *Empty Boxes? Modeling the Lost and Ephemeral in Premodern Sacred Places: Booklet of Abstracts and Biographies* (Roma: Bibliotheca Hertziana Max Planck Institut für Kunstgeschichte, 2025), 13–14.

Charles van den Heuvel, and Sofia Baroncini, "The Historical Framing Problem: Temporal Modeling of Interactions between Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage," in *Semantic Web. Special Issue on Semantic Web and Ontology Design for Cultural Heritage* [under open review].

Charles van den Heuvel, and Veruska Zamborlini, "Modeling and Visualizing Storylines of Historical Interactions. Kubler's Shape of Time and Rembrandt's Night Watch," in *Linking Knowledge. Linked Data for Knowledge Organization and Visualization*, ed. Richard Smiraglia and Andrea Scharnhorst (Baden-Baden: Ergon Verlag, 2021), 99–141.

**CHARLES VAN DEN HEUVEL** was trained as an art historian with a specialization in the history of architecture and town-planning. He is Emeritus Professor at the University of Amsterdam (chair Digital Methods and Historical Disciplines) and former Head of Knowledge and Art Practices at the Huygens Institute for Dutch Art and Culture of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Art and Sciences. He has worked in several cultural heritage institutions, as an Inspector of Cultural Goods of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences, as a librarian at the Dutch Institute for History of Art in Florence and as a map-curator at the Leiden University Libraries. His recent research interests are history of knowledge, the history of library and information sciences, in particular the history of classification, and the development of infrastructures, interfaces and ontologies for cultural heritage and history of art. He acted as the Principal Investigator of the NWO-Large Investment Project *Golden Agents: Creative Industries and the Making of the Dutch Golden Age*; the NWO-Smart Culture, Big Data and Digital Humanities Project *Virtual Interiors as Interfaces for Big Historical Data Research*, and the NWO-NWA Dutch science communication project *Through the lens of Antoni: How do you represent what you cannot see?*

**SOFIA BARONCINI** is a Postdoctoral Researcher in Digital Humanities at the Leibniz Institute of European History in Mainz, Germany. Her research interests are knowledge organization and computational methods applied to Arts, focusing on iconography and iconology studies, with a particular interest in the interaction of artworks with their socio-cultural context(s). She has a PhD in Digital Humanities from the Department of Classical Philology and Italian Studies, University of Bologna, Italy. Her thesis focused on modeling iconographical-iconological art historians' interpretations, quantitatively addressing traditional questions on an ad-hoc created semantic dataset. Previously, she graduated with a Master's in Visual Arts from the University of Bologna with a Master's thesis on iconological aspects in ontology design.

## HEDREN SUM, STEPHEN WHITEMAN

### *Ontology as a Method to Represent Intertextuality and Experiential Knowledge of Cultural Landscapes*

SESSION I  
OCTOBER 16, 2025  
11:15–12:30

Ontology has emerged in Digital Art History as a foundational method for structuring, interpreting, and representing knowledge from diverse and evolving sources. It examines human creations and social constructs that exist in reality, considering their matter, form, and mode of existence (Davis, 2009). It explores the discovery of knowledge supported by causal theories of reference, acknowledging its fluidity, subjectivity, and experiential perspectives. The surge in digitisation and documentation of cultural heritage (CH) materials has further posed plural theoretical and technological challenges, including compiling content from heterogeneous sources on the same or related themes and the coherent access to and engagement with this content (Hou and Kenderdine, 2024). Technologies and digital approaches aligned with semantic web principles, notably through ontologies and linked data standards, are developed to explicitly represent the semantics of data sources and enable their content and semantics to be machine-operable and interoperable, thereby advancing data integration, interpretation, organisation, representation, and narration (Bikakis, 2021).

This paper discusses the development of a critical ontology-based framework to (re)mediate the historical

experiences of cultural landscapes, with a particular focus on Chinese classical environments. Here, “critical” reflects how cultural and historical knowledge can be unfolded, organised, and represented within a meaningful context. Using *Virtual Mountain Estate* (VME) as a case study — an immersive VR application that reconstructs the historical experience of park-palace Bishu Shanzhuang 避暑山莊 or Mountain Estate to Escape the Heat, as chronicled by Qing Emperor Kangxi through poems, illustrations, and annotated sources — the paper demonstrates how a domain ontology can enhance the organisation, analysis, and interpretation of cultural landscapes.

X-sheds advances the interpretation of intertextuality by integrating physical, literary, propositional, and experiential entities and relations. Rather than merely depicting landscapes through physical topographical or spatial attributes, the framework draws upon Chinese conceptions of landscapes as embodiments of philosophical thoughts, symbolic meanings, emotional states, sensory experiences, and cosmic principles. Expanding on the CIDOC Conceptual Reference Model (CIDOC-CRM) — a widely recognised standard for cultural heritage documentation — X-sheds introduces additional classes and properties informed by Chinese aesthetics. These include *wuguan* 五官 (“five officials” of the senses) and the paradigm of *yi* 意 (conception), *jing* 境 (inscape), *xiang* 象 (imagery), and *yan* 言 (textuality). By weaving these epistemological perspectives into the ontology, X-sheds enables a holistic modelling of cultural landscapes that respects and reflects Chinese epistemological perspectives.

Through this integrated structure, the ontology illuminates how literary texts, visual interpretations, architectural details, and environmental elements intersect, thereby offering a comprehensive understanding of the intellectual, aesthetic, cultural, and sensory dimensions of historical Chinese landscapes. Consequently, the framework not only preserves the richness of cultural heritage information but also enhances our ability to interpret, visualise, narrate, and represent it in ways that acknowledge the layered intertextual and experiential qualities of these environments that, in this case, facilitated the 3D modelling process of VME.

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**HEDREN SUM** is a Research Fellow for Digital Humanities at the Department of English, Linguistics, and Theatre Studies, National University of Singapore. He is an interdisciplinary scholar specializing in digital methodologies, knowledge organization systems, ontology-based frameworks, and immersive technologies to enhance cultural heritage interpretation. Formerly as principal librarian for digital scholarship, his work bridges art history, information science, and cultural heritage, focusing on how XR and AI transform historical content analysis. He holds a PhD in Art, Design, and Media (Art History) from Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, and is committed to advancing Digital Humanities through research and collaboration.

**STEPHEN WHITEMAN** is a Reader in the Art and Architecture of China, at the Courtauld Institute of Art. He is a specialist in the visual and spatial cultures of early modern and modern China. His work explores the intersections of landscape with ethnic, social, and national identities; transcultural interchange and connected histories of art; and the use of digital methods in art history, among other themes. He is author and editor of eight volumes, including *Landscape and Authority in the Early Modern World* (Penn, 2023), and the award-winning *Where Dragon Veins Meet: The Kangxi Emperor and His Estate at Rehe* (Washington, 2020). With support from the Getty Foundation, the British Academy, and others, he has helped lead collaborative research initiatives around the world, seeking to expand the study of Asian art through connection and dialogue.

*DAY I*  
*SESSION II*

24

*12:45 – 14:00*

*Quantifying  
Presence, Position,  
and Power*

25



## *Talent versus Genius: A Comparative, Statistics- Based Reception History of Two Hungarian Graphic Artists in the Post-War Period*

SESSION II  
OCTOBER 16, 2025  
12:45–14:00

26

From the 1970s, there has been a strong tendency in Hungarian art history and criticism to regard the artist Béla Kondor (1931–1972) as an exceptional genius and a prophetic figure, while other artists, such as Csaba Rékassy (1937–1989), have been labeled as merely “talented” albeit with excellent skills. Although Rékassy achieved all that was possible at the time, his legacy has faded and was forgotten, while Kondor has been elevated to legendary status, a reputation that persists to this day. While art historians typically explore the reasons for their different receptions using traditional historical methods, here I have chosen a different approach by applying statistical analysis to investigate the roots of this polarized view.

The study relies on *Arcanum*, a digital periodical database containing nearly all the journals of the era, including daily and weekly newspapers and magazines specialized on art. I examine the distribution of annual reference lists given by a full-text search for these two artists, first during their lifetimes and then afterwards. The graphs reveal that although Kondor was slightly better known to the public, they followed surprisingly similar career paths. Their early careers are characterized by a slow, gradual rise, followed by breakthrough successes

in 1965 and 1971, respectively, at the age of 34. Each had four significant career peaks; in both cases their deaths generated the highest number of citations and these numbers far exceed the citations they received for their greatest achievements during their lifetime. However, the graphs of their post-career receptions are strikingly different: Kondor’s curve breaks the sky several times, while Rékassy’s diagram declines and remains relatively low. Interestingly, this decline does not indicate complete neglect but rather a lack of sustained recognition from the media.

Through quantitative data analysis, this research not only visualizes the contrasting reception history of these two artists, but traces the steps of systematic construction of Kondor’s posthumous career. Finally, I will discuss the steps taken to cultivate Kondor’s oeuvre and explore the historical and professional circumstances that made him more suitable than others to become a (local) legend.

27

GYÖNGYVÉR HORVÁTH is an art historian and curator residing in Budapest. She first graduated with an MSc in Mathematics, then an MA in the History of Art at Eötvös Loránd University. After obtaining her doctorate degree from the School of World Art Studies and Museology, University of East Anglia, Norwich, she served as an Assistant Professor and taught courses at the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design, ELTE, and Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Budapest. She is now an independent researcher; her main research focuses on art and science topics and the phenomenon of visual

narration. She has published on various topics related to the historiography and methodology of art history, Renaissance and Early Modern painting and book illustration, contemporary art, and Hungarian modernism. Her never-ending project Narrative Art History examines the historiography and methodology of visual narration within the history of art, narratology, and semiotics, and incorporates some relevant concepts of neuroscience. This project was supported by postdoctoral research grants from Dumbarton Oaks, Harvard University, Princeton University, and Collegium Hungaricum Vienna.



ANDREJ SRAKAR,  
MARILENA VECCO,  
PETJA GRAFENAUER

## *Excavating the History of a Network: Finding and Modelling Patient Zero in Two Large Arts Networks*

SESSION II  
OCTOBER 16, 2025  
12:45–14:00

28

Recent attention in the areas of probability theory and mathematical statistics has swung to the mathematical analysis of networks and random graphs (e.g. Temčinas et al. 2024, Süveges and Olhede 2023, Skeja and Olhede, 2023). This has brought to the forefront of attention a new mathematical research area of network archaeology, which aims to find root vertex in large dynamical, i.e. temporal networks (Briend et al. 2023, Crane and Xu, 2021, 2024, Srakar 2024). Presently, analysis is largely focused on modelling the growth process of the dynamic network using a preferential attachment model on random trees (Albert and Barabási 2002) and extensions to Erdős-Rényi graphs, with deriving confidence or Bayesian credible intervals to identify the root vertex of the network (Crane and Xu 2024). In our article, we add to the literature in two broad aspects: firstly, our analysis is to our knowledge the first in cultural economics and digital art history using network archaeology approaches and identifies the root vertex (sometimes labelled “patient zero”) in two arts networks, namely the network of Dutch gallery sales 2000–2010; and Slovenian visual artists from 17th century onwards. Secondly, we extend the applied models in network archaeology to a broader class of branching stochastic processes, which extends the

analysis to models on size-conditioned Bienaymé-Galton-Watson trees, which are a natural choice to model such problems using tools of probability theory. We derive root vertices with appropriate statistical significance on two datasets (including extensions to Bayesian models following Crane and Xu 2024) and provide explanations using economic history of the arts. Our use of the Jordan and rumor network centrality measures follows existing literature common for finding root vertices on preferential attachment random trees (Briend et al. 2023). We discuss estimation and inference, including exponential random graph regression models on random trees. Finally, extensions to different problems in the areas of art history and cultural economics are discussed, including the study of historical clusters of creativity for different arts profiles, spillover, and externalities of firms in the cultural sector, and gravity models in international trade with artworks.

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**ANDREJ SRAKAR** is a Scientific Associate at the Institute for Economic Research Ljubljana, and an Assistant Professor at the School of Economics and Business, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. He researches in theoretical mathematics and cultural economics. He received the Best presentation award for young researchers at the 10th Bernoulli-IMS World Congress in Probability and Statistics. He is a Coordinator in the YoungStatS project, and a Committee Member of the Emerging Applications Section and Discussion Paper Meetings, Royal Statistical Society. He is also a Co-Editor in the Cultural Economics & the Creative Economy Book Series, published by Palgrave Macmillan.

**PETJA GRAFENAUER**, historian of visual anthropology, is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Theory, Academy of Fine Arts and Design, University of Ljubljana. She specializes in regional art after the Second World War, focusing on painting, printmaking, contemporary art, and so-called activism. She was a team member of two research projects: *Models and Practices of International Cultural Exchange of the Non-Aligned Movement: Researching Spatio-Temporal Cultural Dynamics*, and *Protests, Artistic Practices and the Culture of Memory in the Post-Yugoslav Context*.

**MARILENA VECCO** is a Full Professor of Economics and Entrepreneurship at Burgundy Business School, France, and a Professor Associated at the Carmelle and Rémi Marcoux Chair in Arts Management at HEC Montréal. Her research focuses on cultural economics and entrepreneurship. She has participated in various EU-funded projects (Horizon, Marie Curie, etc.) related to cultural and creative industries.

**WEIXUAN LI**

## *A Spatial Approach to Understanding Artistic Innovation: Painters' Location Choices and the Market Development in Amsterdam*

SESSION II  
OCTOBER 16, 2025  
12:45–14:00

Starting from the late 16th century, the sudden, meteoric rise of its economic power quickly pushed Amsterdam to international prominence as a world centre of commerce and finance. Amsterdam's commercial boom was accompanied by the remarkable and rapid flourishing of the arts and the art market, with over a thousand painters working in the city throughout the 17th century. However, it is not yet clear how this large number of painters organised themselves into "the market for art" and how this art market functioned. This research addresses these gaps in our knowledge by observing painters' collective behaviour in early modern Amsterdam.

To do so, this study takes a novel spatial approach. By operationalizing the concept of "deep mapping," it combines archival sources with digital visualizations and uses the city of Amsterdam as a scalable platform to observe individual painters' career and location choices without losing touch with the city-wide artistic landscape. It argues that the art market was a socio-spatial phenomenon in which painters and other actors coordinated their behaviours and embedded themselves in the spatial and social milieu suitable for their careers.

The deep maps reveal the spatial roots of the art market in which three groups of painters of various

ambitions, talents, and market segments demonstrated different preferences for locations best suitable for their line of business. By comparing the location choices of Amsterdam painters of different layers between two decades before 1650 and two decades after, their spatial distribution pattern shows that the unifying taste of the upper echelon of society and the second-hand market squeezed out the livelihood of the most diverse and innovative mid-tier painters. Except for the few upmarket painters, the art world in Amsterdam collectively lost its diversity and innovative drive during the last decades of the 17th century. This study demonstrates that it was the lack of coordination that brought Amsterdam to its most innovative and diverse period in the 1630s and 1640s, thus providing new insights into the driving forces for innovation in the art market.

**WEIXUAN LI** is a Postdoctoral Researcher at Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society (LUCAS) and a lecturer at the University of Amsterdam (UvA). Specializing in digital humanities and early modern Dutch art, her research incorporates computational methodologies to explore art history and the material culture of the period. Her award-winning doctoral dissertation provided an innovative analysis of “painters’ playbooks,” examining their role in artistic development

and business strategies in 17th century Amsterdam. Her work applies computational tools for aligning multi-layered archival sources and investigates the interiors of painters’ homes and the evolution of the art market, offering a socio-spatial perspective on artistic development in early modern Europe. Weixuan has published articles on early modern Dutch art and the art market using historical data and visualization. For more on her research, see [weixuan-li.com](http://weixuan-li.com).

*DAY I*  
*SESSION III*

34

*15:00 – 16:15*

*Digital  
Infrastructures  
for the Humanities*

35

## *What Does Data Say? How Can Humanists Use Data Services and Infrastructures?*

SESSION III  
OCTOBER 16, 2025  
15:00–16:15

36

In the digital age, data is not reserved only for STEM fields — it has also become an indispensable tool in all research practices, including social sciences and humanities. But how can a humanities researcher easily access and use this data in research? What is the role of data infrastructure, and where to store data, find it, analyse it, and make it visible to others and share the results once the research is finished? How can the data infrastructure help in the research lifecycle?

This presentation will offer an introduction to the basic concepts of key data services and infrastructures, using the examples from the Croatian context and adapted to the needs of researchers in the humanities. Through three key national data related services — DABAR, HRČAK, and PUH, we will explore how today's researchers can:

- Reliably store data and collaborate (PUH)
- Preserve and share outputs of their research (DABAR)
- Publish in an open access journal (HRČAK).

We will place a special focus on practical applications of data infrastructure and services with examples from the humanities.

After the presentation, the participants will better understand what data services and infrastructures are,

and what they are used for. We will also explain the basics of the concept of FAIR data (to be Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable), how to use existing national resources in your own research, and the role of research data repositories in the preservation and dissemination of knowledge. The presentation is intended for everyone in the field of humanities and social sciences who wants to better understand and use digital resources, without the need for technical knowledge.

DRAŽENKO CELJAK is Head of the Data Management Department at the University of Zagreb University Computing Centre (SRCE). He coordinates and directs the development of several national infrastructures and services, including the national repository infrastructure Digital Academic Archives and Repositories (DABAR) and the Portal of Croatian

Scientific and Professional Journals (HRČAK). Draženko is a national Research Data Alliance (RDA) node coordinator for Croatia and a European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) promoter. He is currently involved in the EU-funded project *National Initiatives for Open Science in Europe*. His main focus is the development of infrastructure for open science.

37

## *When Humanities Meet Supercomputing: High Performance Computing For Everyone*

High Performance Computing (HPC) is traditionally associated with physics, climate modelling, or genetics. However, an increasing number of research projects in the humanities and social sciences are using the power of supercomputing to process large amounts of cultural, historical, ethnological, and linguistic data.

By using two recent examples, we will show how HPC technologies can open up new possibilities for researchers in fields such as history, archaeology, linguistics, and digital humanities.

Through concrete examples of 3D image processing and digitized portraits, we will show how questions in the field of humanities can be explored using advanced computational tools, and how HPC can contribute to pushing the barriers of research.

Special emphasis will be placed on:

- Dispelling the myth that supercomputing is “reserved for physicists and bioinformatics”
- Application of HPC in the digitization and interpretation of massive data samples
- Collaboration between humanists and computer experts
- Possibilities of using national and European HPC resources (e.g., SRCE Supek supercomputer, EuroHPC JU resources)

The presentation is intended for researchers from the humanities who want to better understand how to use the power of computing for their own projects — whether large digital collections, corpora, 3D reconstructions or complex analyses of cultural patterns.

*BRANIMIR KOLAREK,  
LJUBO GAMULIN,  
DAVOR DAVIDOVIĆ*

## *Applying Advanced Computational Infrastructure in Creating a High-Resolution 3D Model of the Small Fountain of Onofrio*

SESSION III  
OCTOBER 16, 2025  
15:00–16:15

39

Digital documentation and preservation of cultural heritage increasingly rely on advanced technologies like 3D photogrammetry. However, creating high-resolution 3D models of large or spatially complex objects, such as the Small Fountain of Onofrio in Dubrovnik, presents significant computational challenges. Often, due to spatial constraints and the pursuit of exceptional detail, it is necessary to use extensive datasets whose processing may exceed the capabilities of standard computers, or even high-end graphic workstations. This presentation will showcase how High-Performance Computing (HPC) was utilized to successfully process such a demanding dataset for the Small Fountain of Onofrio, resulting in a detailed 3D model. We will present the entire workflow, from data acquisition to the final model, emphasizing how HPC infrastructure empowers humanities scholars to overcome technical barriers and opens new avenues for research, preservation, and presentation of cultural heritage.



**BRANIMIR KOLAREK** is an interdisciplinary researcher, designer, and teaching assistant specializing in the application of advanced computing to cultural heritage preservation. His academic work is centered at the Ruđer Bošković Institute, where he serves as a Research Assistant, and at University North, where he is a Teaching Assistant. He is also a PhD student at the University of Zagreb's Faculty of Graphic Arts, with a dissertation focused on *Photogrammetry as a Tool for the Analysis and 3D Documentation of Historical Graffiti on Frescoes*. This academic focus is built upon more than a decade of professional experience in visual communications. From 2012, he has worked as an Art Director and Graphic Designer developing visual solutions for prominent clients such as Badel 1862, Zagrebačka banka, Peugeot, and Porsche Design. Prior to this, he spent twelve years (2000–2012) as an illustrator and designer for Croatia's leading IT magazines, *BUG* and *Mreža*. His formal education includes a Master of Arts in Visual Communication Design from the Arts Academy, University of Split. His expertise bridges both technical and creative domains, encompassing 3D photogrammetry, AI, and machine learning alongside art direction and visual communications. His work has been regularly featured in professional design exhibitions.

**LJUBO GAMULIN** is the Head of the Photo Laboratory at the Croatian Conservation Institute (HRZ) and an accomplished Art Historian-Conservator with extensive experience in scientific imaging and cultural heritage documentation. In his current leadership role, which he has held since 2020, he directs a team of four photographers in providing essential support for the Institute's national conservation and restoration activities. He oversees a wide range of advanced, non-destructive analytical techniques, including Ultraviolet (UV) fluorescence and

Infrared (IR) reflectography. Under his management, the laboratory handles complex documentation for approximately 250 projects and acquires around 40,000 new images annually, significantly contributing to Croatia's digital art archive (BREUH). This leadership position is built upon his long-standing career at the Institute, which began in 2013 when he joined as an Art Historian-Conservator. Prior to his work at HRZ, he was a freelance artist and a member of the Croatian Freelance Artists Association (HZSU) from 2008 to 2013. His background also includes eight years (2000–2008) as an editor, photographer, and journalist for the monthly magazine *More*. His professional career began with service as a Captain in the Croatian Army from 1997 to 2000, where he was assigned to the Central Military Archives of the Ministry of Defense.

**DAVOR DAVIDOVIĆ** is a Senior Research Associate and Head of the Center for Informatics and Computing at the Ruđer Bošković Institute. He received his PhD from the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing, University of Zagreb in 2014. His research focuses on parallel and distributed computing, code optimization, hybrid and GPU programming and linear algebra, with particular emphasis on the development of large-scale eigenvalue solvers for exascale systems. He is also involved in the optimization of massively parallel computing solutions using multi-GPU architectures, with applications in computational chemistry, materials science and theoretical physics. Beyond the field of traditional HPC, he explores interdisciplinary applications in digital arts and humanities, including the use of photogrammetry to create ultra-high-resolution 3D models of frescoes and cultural heritage artifacts. Dr Davidović has participated in more than 14 international research projects (FP7, H2020, COST, Horizon Europe, Digital Europe) and is currently leading an installation research

project funded by the Croatian Science Foundation. He is a member of the ExaNLA committee, SIAM and MIPRO society and has chaired the Data Science and Biomedical Engineering Conference at the annual MIPRO meeting. He has published 37 original scientific papers in international journals and conference proceedings.

# HRVOJE STANČIĆ

## *Computational Archival Science, or How can Archives use Supercomputers to Train AI*

SESSION III  
OCTOBER 16, 2025  
15:00–16:15

42

The multinational competitive interdisciplinary research project InterPARES Trust AI (2021–2026) aims to design, develop, and leverage artificial intelligence to support the ongoing availability and accessibility of trustworthy public records. It investigates how AI can help improve archival functions — creation and use, appraisal and acquisition, arrangement and description, retention and preservation, reference and access, and overall management and administration of digital records — as well as how archives can influence the development of explainable, ethical, and trustworthy AI solutions. One of the research studies in this project — the study on identification of critical archival challenges which are the best candidates for improvement by AI — identified adding, gathering, and extracting metadata from digitized archival image collections as a good candidate to improve using AI. In the process of research, the Supek supercomputer was used to train an AI model on a collection of digitized portraits from the end of 19th and beginning of 20th century to detect objects in the images and create a metadata set.

43

HRVOJE STANČIĆ is Full Professor with tenure and Chair of Archival and Documentation Sciences at the Department of Information and Communication Sciences as well as Vice Dean for Business at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, Croatia. He is visiting professor at the Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi, UAE. He is member of the Executive Committee at the *InterPARES Trust AI* project (2021–2026). He published more than 80 papers and edited the book *Trust and Records in an Open Digital Environment* (Routledge, 2021), co-authored *Archival Science Dictionary: English-Croatian, Croatian-English* (2015), and authored the book *Digitisation* (2009). His research interests are focussed on procedures in the development of digital archives,

long-term preservation of digital archival materials, preservation of authenticity and trustworthiness of digital records, blockchain, AI as well as digitisation. He is member of the board of Croatian Archival Society and President of the mirror technical committee for development of ISO/TC 307 Blockchain and distributed ledger technologies at the Croatian Standards Institute. He is an affiliate member of the Centre for the International Study of Contemporary Records and Archives (CISCRA), Vancouver, Canada, a member of the board of experts of the Center for Research, Development and Technology Transfer (CIRT), and a member of the Committee for the Development of Cybersecurity Policy of the University of Zagreb.

*DAY I*  
*SESSION IV*

44

*16:30 – 18:10*

*Reassembling the  
Art-Historical  
Record*

45

## *From Handwritten Ledgers to Digital Insights: The Petranu Archive*

SESSION IV  
OCTOBER 16, 2025  
16:30–18:10

46

Art history has been taught at the (now) Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca since 1919, beginning with Professor Coriolan Petranu (1893–1945), who was also responsible for founding and curating what is now an archive of over 11.000 glass plates — the frail, black-and-white predecessors of plastic slides. In his years at the university, he conducted original research on previously undocumented edifices and coordinated and encouraged younger colleagues towards studying Romanian religious and vernacular architecture, resulting in a glass plate collection that contains a wealth of images of local architecture, alongside essential visual materials for studying art history. The collection spans a vast time period and a diverse range of works, from sketches of medieval Arab tapestries to photographs of Brâncuși sculptures — and everything in between. Architecture is particularly well-represented, with floorplans, decorative details, and furniture also featured. Beyond the glass plates, the Petranu archive also contains correspondence, lesson plans, research notes, and manuscripts, none of which have yet been systematically digitized, which is the project's ultimate goal.

However, to better understand the collection's scope and significance, and to provide an insight as to what can

47

be expected of the digitization process, the first phase will focus on digitizing and mapping the handwritten entries that are supposedly the complete records of the glass plates. Petranu and his successors demonstrated immense dedication and a meticulous Austro-Hungarian approach to record-keeping stemming from his education. Each entry is linked to its corresponding plate and contains as much information as possible, although the ledger often has more detail, for obvious reasons of space. There are two full “volumes” of such records, which, depending on the type of artifact depicted, typically provide information such as: identification number, the author's name (when known), name/title of artwork, explanation of detail (if necessary), date, and location. This phase aims not only to scan and transcribe the pages but also to extract their metadata, particularly location data, and finally map the collection.

As it turns out, a basic prompt in ChatGPT suffices to produce a reasonably accurate transcription of the text, bypassing the need for prohibitively expensive software like Transkribus. Some tinkering is needed, especially regarding older spellings of Romanian words and place names, as well as to combat inevitable confusion due to the handwriting-related errors, yet the entire process appears feasible. Once the lists are refined, it will be much easier to create the indispensable database table. This table, in turn, will be updated with additional data and used for a wide range of statistical visualizations. Thus far, the order in which the plates entered the collection is unclear, but hopefully, a method of building the collection will reveal itself. Geographical coordinates will also be entered, particularly for Romanian monuments, as some of them, unfortunately, no longer exist today.

VOICA PUȘCAȘIU, PhD, is a Lecturer at Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, where she teaches courses on Modern and Contemporary Art History, as well as research methodologies in Art History, including digital methods. Her primary research focuses on analyzing art in public spaces from a sociological perspective, alongside an interest in data visualization, particularly interactive cartographies. These two areas intersect in her ongoing project, *Mapping Political Discourse*

*and Inequalities in Present-day Romania*, which was presented at DAH III, and has since evolved into an ample citizen science initiative documenting public monuments across the former Eastern Bloc. She is a founding member of DigiHUBB, Romania's first Digital Humanities center, and co-organized the European Summer University in Digital Humanities (Cluj-Napoca 2023 and 2024). In the 2024 edition, she took on the role of co-trainer for the ESU DH workshop “*Humanities Data and Mapping Environments*.”

KATARINA MOHAR,  
ROK VRABIČ

## *Writing the Image: Captioning as a Source in Fine-Tuning Diffusion Models for Art History*

SESSION IV  
OCTOBER 16, 2025  
16:30–18:10

48

While the application of AI-powered generative diffusion models such as Stable Diffusion is increasing in cultural heritage research, most discussions continue to focus on ethical issues and visual quality, while far less attention is paid to the underlying sources — such as image captioning — that influence what these models generate and how they interpret historical material.

This paper examines captioning as a meaning-making process in the context of fine-tuning diffusion models for art historical use. Drawing on the early stages of an interdisciplinary project on Slovenian art historical heritage (*Tools of the Future for Research of the Past*, ZRC SAZU, 2023–2026), we will explore how different captioning methods such as BLIP-generated text, CLIP-based tags, templates and expert-written descriptions can influence what the model highlights, retains, or overlooks.

Using professional photographs of selected artworks, we will test a range of captioning strategies applied to a pre-trained Stable Diffusion model. In fine-tuning the model with small, specialized datasets, we will analyze how the structure, terminology, and specificity of the captions influence the model's generative results. While the base model retains prior knowledge, we focus on how

the added text interacts with the visual features to shape the stylistic and contextual responsiveness of the model.

We do not claim that the captioning alone determines the behavior of the model, but rather that it plays an important interpretive role in the fine-tuning process. Especially when working with fragmentary or context-dependent artworks, the labels become a bridge between the existing model knowledge and the specifics of the fine-tuning dataset. In this way, captioning becomes part of the broader practice of source preparation and interpretation in digital art history.

By reflecting critically on this underexamined aspect of generative workflows, the paper will contribute to ongoing debates around transparency, the politics of data, and the interpretive choices embedded in digital research practices. It will argue that even within fine-tuning, text is not a neutral input, but a tool that encodes scholarly decisions, assumptions, and disciplinary perspectives, making it essential to treat captioning with the same care we bring to other historical sources.

KATARINA MOHAR, PhD, is an art historian specializing in 20th-century art. Her recent work has expanded into the field of digital art history, with a particular interest in integrating new methodologies that draw on technological advancements from other disciplines. She is a Research Associate at the France Stele Institute of Art History Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (ZRC SAZU), and an Assistant Professor in the Department of Art History at the University of Maribor.

ROK VRABIČ, PhD, is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, University of Ljubljana. His research primarily focuses on digitization and artificial intelligence in manufacturing and robotics. More recently, he has been exploring the broader impact of AI breakthroughs on fields beyond computer science.

SOFIA BARONCINI,  
WEIXUAN LI

## *When but Not Where: Considerations on the Underrepresentation of the Place of Creation in Art Datasets*

SESSION IV  
OCTOBER 16, 2025  
16:30–18:10

50

Inquiries about artworks in cultural history explore interactions and reciprocal influences between artworks and contemporary values. To connect the artwork to the specific socio-cultural context(s), information is needed about the place where the artist created it, and about the place for which it was intended. We argue, however, that the concept of place is underrepresented in cultural datasets.

To enhance quantitative explorations of artifacts in digital art history in a meaningful way, cultural-historical research on artworks needs to be brought to a computational level by adding detailed data about the location(s) of the authors and artworks, and implementing strategies to relate such locations to specific socio-cultural spheres. This implies not only geographical data about the original location of the creation and destination of the artwork, about the following context(s) it traversed (i.e., provenance), but also the inclusion of places where artworks are produced (artists' residences, workshops), and consumed (residences of consumers, etc.).

The proposed paper examines to what extent such information is present in openly available datasets. For an exploratory overview, nine datasets of Renaissance and Early modern art are selected.<sup>1</sup> Seven are domain-specific

datasets, among which five are related to museums, one to a photographic library, one to a documentation and research institute, and the remaining two have a general scope. For each of them, the fields indicating the date and place of artwork creation, the artist's date and place of activity, and their alignment with commonly used reference vocabularies are retrieved and quantified. The first results show that, while the date of creation is generally well-represented, the location is not. This hinders the possibility of establishing a first connection between the artwork and its original spatio-temporal context.

Some partial solutions can be envisioned:

1) inferring a location from information about the artist's place in archival sources, 2) enriching data with further information from other aligned sources, and 3) integrating data about provenance from further databases. These solutions will be showcased by a small-scale case study in which data from the RKD – Netherlands Institute for Art History documenting Dutch and Flemish paintings in the 16th and 17th centuries<sup>2</sup> and the ECARTICO database<sup>3</sup> with biographical information of artists from the same period can be enhanced with inferred information about places of production and transfer of artworks. This research applies a probability approach to list all the possible locations in which a certain artwork was created and travelled. Known locations in the artist's biography are weighed, based on temporal overlaps with the painting's date range and by adjusting for uncertainties in both. This results in a probabilistic model that assigns likelihoods to different origins of places, allowing for more nuanced attributions than binary location labels.

The proposed paper demonstrates that data integration and probabilistic models, combined with traditional research on multiple types of archival sources, allow for filling gaps in spatial data necessary for the understanding of the cultural meanings of artworks.

1 The code is available at <https://github.com/SofiBar/ArtworksInContextDatePlace>

2 <https://www.rkd.nl/en/collection>

3 <https://ecartico.org>



**SOFIA BARONCINI** is a Postdoctoral Researcher in Digital Humanities at the Leibniz Institute of European History in Mainz, Germany. Her research interests are knowledge organization and computational methods applied to Arts, focusing on iconography and iconology studies, with a particular interest in the interaction of artworks with their socio-cultural context(s). She has a PhD in Digital Humanities from the Department of Classical Philology and Italian Studies, University of Bologna, Italy. Her thesis focused on modeling iconographical-iconological art historians' interpretations, quantitatively addressing traditional questions on an ad-hoc created semantic dataset. Previously, she graduated with a Master's in Visual Arts from the University of Bologna with a Master's thesis on iconological aspects in ontology design.

**WEIXUAN LI** is a Postdoctoral Researcher at Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society (LUCAS) and a lecturer at the University of Amsterdam (UvA). Specializing in digital humanities and early modern Dutch art, her research incorporates computational methodologies to explore art history and the material culture of the period. Her award-winning doctoral dissertation provided an innovative analysis of "painters' playbooks," examining their role in artistic development and business strategies in 17th-century Amsterdam. Her work applies computational tools for aligning multi-layered archival sources and investigates the interiors of painters' homes and the evolution of the art market, offering a socio-spatial perspective on artistic development in early modern Europe. Weixuan has published articles on early modern Dutch art and the art market using historical data and visualization. For more on her research, see [weixuan-li.com](http://weixuan-li.com).

# VIKTORIE VÍTŮ

## *Scaling Photomechanical Reproductions: Images in Periodicals and Automated Data Collection*

SESSION IV  
OCTOBER 16, 2025  
16:30–18:10

The *Photomatrix* project integrates automated data extraction, image classification, and metadata enrichment to analyze photomechanical reproductions of artworks in early 20th-century periodicals. This type of source material requires an interplay between quantitative and qualitative approaches, where large-scale pattern analysis will inform (and will be informed by) archival research and historical interpretation. This presentation will examine how the layered nature of photomechanical reproductions shapes the methods we use to work with them. I will present our process of acquiring and structuring the data, and close with some preliminary findings from our research on image scale. Additionally, I will reflect on how the fact that the automated collection of visual data introduces fundamental challenges, particularly regarding the accuracy, reliability, and epistemological implications of machine-assisted methods.

At the core of *Photomatrix* is a relational database that structures reproductions, their captions, printing blocks, source photographs, and artworks and objects featured in the image. The automated workflow consists of multiple stages: 1) Image extraction: a custom-built application detects and extracts images from digitized periodicals, pairing them with page-level metadata;

2) Image matching: a deep learning model identifies identical or near-identical reproductions across different issues and publications; 3) Labelling: AI-assisted classification assigns labels based on the type of object depicted in each image; 4) Caption analysis: the language model parses captions, extracting information such as authorship, title, and dating; 5) Final data integration: the language model will combine the results obtained in the previous steps and integrate them into the database.

While automation enables the processing of large datasets, each step in the pipeline introduces biases and uncertainties. Moreover, the distinction between reproduction, photograph, and artwork remains conceptually complex — a challenge that automated systems struggle to address. Our image-matching model, for example, often misclassifies similar artworks as identical.

Rather than assuming AI as a neutral tool, this presentation argues that the integration of computational methods fundamentally transforms our engagement with historical sources. Through concrete examples from *Photomatrix*, I will illustrate how automated workflows shape the kinds of questions we can ask about historical image circulation and classification. Instead of aiming for completeness or precision at the level of individual records, these methods make it possible to trace broader patterns — such as networks of image reuse, overlaps between periodicals, or shifts in the prominence of certain images over time.

Focusing on the process of acquiring and organizing visual data for large-scale analysis, I will discuss how the structure of our dataset enables specific types of inquiry. Image scale is one such question that can already be addressed at this stage. It provides a concrete starting point for exploring how the size of photomechanical reproductions varies across time, publication contexts, and different periodicals — opening further avenues for research into the proportion between text and image, editorial strategies, and the material constraints of print production.

VIKTORIE VÍTŮ is a co-investigator of the five-year grant project *The Matrix of Photomechanical Reproductions: Histories of Remote Access to Art* (from 2023) at the Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences. She completed her studies in Philosophy at Charles University in Prague (BA 2017), Art History at the same university (BA 2018), and

Theory and History of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague (MA 2020), where she was awarded the Rector's prize for the best diploma thesis. She is currently pursuing a PhD in Theory and History of Contemporary Art at the Academy of Fine Arts under the supervision of Prof. Tomáš Pospiszyl.

*DAY II*  
*SESSION V*

*Critical Digital  
Methods in Heritage  
and Memory Studies*

56

*10:45 – 12:20*

*MAJA KAMENAR,  
MAJA BILUŠIĆ,  
LUKA HORNUNG*

*Application of GIS in the  
Architectural Department of  
the Institute of Art History*

SESSION V  
OCTOBER 17, 2025  
10:45–12:20

58

The Geographic Information System (GIS) is becoming an indispensable tool in contemporary architectural practice, particularly in the context of heritage preservation and spatial planning. Its ability to integrate spatial data with advanced analytical functions provides architects, urban planners, and conservators with detailed insights into the spatial characteristics of cultural assets and supports the development of measures for their protection and sustainable spatial management.

GIS enables the creation of precise digital databases that contain spatial and descriptive information about individual cultural assets. These databases include data on the location of objects, time of construction, subsequent interventions, architectural and urban characteristics (such as urban features, roofing, facades, structural systems, and interior design), as well as evaluation criteria and protective measures. Each element can be geographically located and further documented with descriptions. This not only increases the availability of relevant information to professionals but also facilitates informed decision-making based on comprehensive and accurate data.

The use of GIS allows for the creation of thematic maps that provide a comprehensive overview of

59

historical buildings in a given area, including data on the year of construction, architectural style, authorship, level of conservation protection, and current condition of the structure. Such maps become essential tools in conservation planning, enabling the comparison of historical and present conditions and the identification of spatial and temporal changes. Through the analysis of historical and current cartographic data, patterns of urban expansion, changes in land use, and the loss of traditional spatial structures can be identified. Such insight is crucial for planning interventions that will not compromise the integrity of the historical environment.

In this context, the introduction of the new national e-conservation database system is also worth highlighting, as it further strengthens the role of GIS in conservation work. This digital tool was developed to provide heritage protection services with centralized, up-to-date, and standardized access to spatial data related to cultural assets. The system allows for the input, visualization, and analysis of data in a manner aligned with conservation practices and based on GIS technology. This significantly improves the efficiency of preparing conservation studies and plans, as well as communication between various stakeholders involved in spatial planning.

GIS, in combination with the e-conservation database, forms the foundation for creating a high-quality informational framework that enables transparent, sustainable, and expert management of cultural heritage. Such an approach not only preserves the identity of a space but also encourages the integration of cultural values into the processes of contemporary urban development.

**MAJA KAMENAR** graduated at the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Zagreb in 2014. She completed an Advanced Masters in Structural Analysis of Monuments and Historical Constructions in 2015 with a double degree from the Università degli studi di Padova and the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Barcelona, with the topic *The path from hydraulic lime to Portland cement. Implications for restoration*. In 2023 she acquired the qualification of graphic designer, specializing in digital publishing at Algebra (Zagreb). From 2008 to 2022, she

was an external collaborator of the Croatian Restoration Institute, in the services for immovable (department for architectural heritage; department for wall painting and mosaic) and movable heritage (department for wooden polychromy and sculpture), and the department for terrestrial archaeology. She has participated in international education and training with a focus on research and conservation of cultural heritage at risk (Cultural Heritage without Borders, UNESCO World Heritage Youth Professionals Forum, Emergency Response to

Cultural Heritage at Risk). She has been employed at the Institute of Art History in Zagreb as a Professional Associate in science (architect) since March 2023.

**MAJA BILUŠIĆ** graduated in architecture and urban planning at the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Zagreb in 2011. She defended her Doctoral Thesis *Urban renewal planning criteria for small historic towns in Croatia* at the Faculty of Architecture (supervisor: Zlatko Karač, PhD). She has participated in several international professional workshops. As an external collaborator, she participated in the creation of several conservation studies, urban plans and architectural projects, and was a member of the author's teams in the creation of conceptual solutions for public urban architectural competitions. In 2012–2014 she was employed at the Faculty of Architecture, Department of Urbanism, Spatial Planning and Landscape Architecture as a Professional Associate in urban and spatial planning. She was a part-time assistant in the course Urban Planning and in the course Studio 2. In 2014–2017 she was employed as a designer in the architectural office Arhikon, d.o.o., Zagreb. With written presentations, she participated in several international scientific and professional meetings and published nine scientific papers as an author/co-author. She has been

employed at the Institute of Art History in Zagreb as a Professional Associate in science (architect) since March 2023.

**LUKA HORNUNG** completed his undergraduate studies at the Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, and his graduate studies at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Zagreb. In 2024, he obtained a Master's degree in architecture and urban planning with a thesis entitled *Revitalisation of Pustara Mirkovac in Baranja* (supervised by Krunoslav Šmit, PhD). As part of his graduate studies, he undertook a student internship at the Institute of Art History under the mentorship of Ivana Haničar Buljan, during which he participated in the development of fundamental conservation documentation. Since June 2024, he has been employed as a Professional Associate at the Institute of Art History in Zagreb, where he contributes to the research and documentation of architectural heritage and the preparation of conservation plans. His research interests include architecture and urban planning in the regions of Slavonia and Baranja, with a particular focus on planned settlements in Baranja's heathlands (Cro. pustara, Hun. puszta). In addition to his work at the Institute, he also works as an architect at Studio8 in Osijek.

## *From Dust to Open Access: Reflexive Epistemology and the Conscious Role of Actors in Built Heritage Digitization*

SESSION V  
OCTOBER 17, 2025  
10:45–12:20

The digitization process addressed to built heritage is traditionally viewed as a technical process of transferring analogue materials and documentation processes to digital form. Based on experiential insight the paper contributes to discussion and proposes an epistemological reconceptualization of the “from dust to open access” method as a reflexive practice that requires conscious positioning of all actors involved in the chain of preparation, study, and digitization of reference data sources. The focus is partially on transforming neglected written sources about built heritage through the prism of critical awareness of how (new) information systems can subvert established interpretive frameworks. Actors in the digitization process — archivists, researchers, digital technicians, expert professionals and local informants — act based on internalized dispositions that reproduce existing knowledge hierarchies. Unquestioned frameworks of perceiving reality are deeply rooted in social structures, and their questioning requires somewhat radical reorientation of thinking and habits.

The methodological innovation emerges from recognizing that the digitization process is not a neutral technical procedure, but a complex reflexive practice that requires conscious positioning of all actors, whose

cultural capital directly affects the ability to recognize, evaluate, and interpret neglected sources throughout the “from dust to open access” workflow.

This workflow encompasses several critical phases that reveal the reflexive nature of digitization: 1. recognition and evaluation of uncatalogued analogue materials as potential reference resources, where actors must navigate between institutional value systems and alternative knowledge frameworks; 2. selection and prioritization of materials for digitization, involving conscious decisions about what constitutes valuable heritage data; 3. physical preparation and digitization, including decisions about technical approach and standards that affect future accessibility and reusability; 4. OCR processing and text recognition, where linguistic competencies and cultural knowledge directly influence machine-readable output quality; 5. metadata creation and semantic annotation, involving classification systems that can reproduce or challenge existing interpretive hierarchies; 6. data integration into open access information systems and GIS platforms, requiring decisions about interoperability standards and linked data protocols; 7. quality control and validation of through community engagement and expert review processes that determine final and further accessibility and usability of data and documents. Each phase represents an interpretive act that can reproduce or subvert existing narrative structures, making the entire process open to challenging assumptions about the value and relevance of certain types of sources.

Reflexive practice requires all actors to explicitly articulate their own positions in the field, prejudices, and interpretive challenges and opportunities throughout the workflow. A digital technician setting OCR parameters must be aware of how their cultural competence affects the readability of certain types of manuscripts. A researcher creating metadata schemes must recognize how their position in the academic field reproduces or changes existing classification systems. Specialised experts or local informants must be aware of how their positioning in the community and accumulated social capital influence the selection and interpretation of data.

Epistemological transformation occurs when digitization ceases to be a neutral technical process and becomes a conscious practice of knowledge creation. The “from dust to open access” method becomes an

instrument for challenging established narratives through the creation of complex information foundations that enable multiple and possible contradictory interpretations of built heritage history. Reflexivity thus enables transformation from reproductive to creative practice that can redefine the field of cultural heritage in era of digital abundance.

IRENA ŠIMIĆ graduated in art history from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb in 2009. Since 2011 works as a Professional Associate in Science at the Institute of Art History (IAH), focusing on processing, cataloguing, preserving, digitizing, and presenting IAH collections, including Photoarchives, Architectural Plans, Drawings, and Records Collections and Personal Archival Collections. She contributed to several research projects funded mainly by the Croatian Science Foundation: *ARHZAG* (2023–), *Housing.Yu* (2025–), *Ekspozicija* (2020–2024),

*GLOBE EXCHANGE* (2020–2023), *ARTNET* (2014–2018), and *DUCAC* (2014–2017). In 2022, she enrolled in doctoral studies *History of Art, Cultural Heritage and Visual Culture* at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, University of Zagreb. Within the broad spectrum of topics, her research interests include research methodology, documentation, and presentation of cultural heritage, photography and photographic archives, architectural history, digital humanities, opens science, digitization, and copyright. She is a member of *ICARUS Hrvatska* and board member of the *Croatian Society of Art Historians*.



## *Critical Cartography and Contested Heritage: Digital Mapping in Post-Socialist Space*

SESSION V  
OCTOBER 17, 2025  
10:45–12:20

64

The paper examines how digital mapping can provide new interpretative frameworks for studying monuments as components within complex memorial landscapes of resistance. Through the interediciplinary project *Heritage from Below / Drežnica: Traces and Memories 1941–1945* and the systematic mapping of WWII sites in central Croatian monutain area, I demonstrate how cartographic methodologies that trace both material culture and memory practices function as processes of source creation. While embedded in critical heritage studies and memory studies, this approach emphasizes that digital tools are not merely technical instruments but methods for critical inquiry that open new ways of asking questions about historical relationships and spaces. The digital mapping program georeferenced WWII-related sites in and around the village of Drežnica, a hotspot of partisan resistance — including natural landscapes of resistance that were part of official heritage during socialism but were later declassified as legitimate heritage sites — developing a tripartite classification system: 1) marked and documented sites (including official monuments from the socialist era), 2) unmarked but documented sites (archival records without physical markers), and 3) unmarked and undocumented sites (community memory

practices excluded from institutional records).

This expanded framework illuminates how sources emerge through processes of classification, collection, curation, and exclusion. The 1990s removal of antifascist monuments from Croatian national heritage registries exemplifies what scholars term “contested heritage,” transforming officially recognized memorial markers into marginalized community memory. Our digital mapping revealed how monuments continue to function as nodes within networks of vernacular memorial practices that persist despite official exclusion.

The project employed critical cartography and spatial analysis to provide new interpretative frameworks for understanding monuments not as isolated art objects but as elements within memorial landscapes. Through network analysis of spatial relationships, the research reveals how natural landscapes of resistance — forests, mountains, shelter sites — functioned alongside formal monuments to create complex memorial networks. Community members identified numerous memorial sites absent from official records, revealing how the meaning of formal monuments depends on their relationship to these natural landscapes and unofficial memorial practices. This methodological approach demonstrates how monuments function as political art primarily through their social use, where communities define meaning independently of both original artistic intention and institutional heritage frameworks. However, the digital mapping process exposed fundamental tensions in digital humanities source criticism. While GIS technology enabled systematic documentation, the translation of embodied community knowledge into cartographic data raised questions about extractive research practices.

65

The research argues for approaches to digital art history that recognize mapping itself as a form of source creation rather than neutral documentation. This collaborative methodology reveals how marginalized communities sustain alternative interpretative frameworks for monuments, demonstrating how they function as political art through ongoing social engagement where communities define meaning independently of both original artistic intention and institutional heritage frameworks.

**SANJA HORVATINČIĆ** is a Research Associate at the Institute of Art History in Zagreb, Croatia. She earned her PhD in Art History from the University of Zadar (2017) with a dissertation on memorial architecture from the socialist era in Croatia. Her research focuses on Yugoslav memorial production, critical heritage studies, and digital art history methodologies. Horvatinčić has led several significant research projects, including *Heritage from Below / Drežnica: Memories and Traces 1941–1945* and the EU-funded *DIGitART*. Her work extends to global cultural exchange networks through the *GLOB EXCHANGE* project (2020–2023), which

investigated cultural dynamics within the Non-Aligned Movement and Yugoslavia's role in fostering transnational artistic connections beyond Cold War binaries. Her scholarship has appeared in numerous international journals and edited volumes. She co-edited *Modern and Contemporary Artists' Networks. An Inquiry into Digital History of Art and Architecture* (with Lj. Kolečnik, 2018), and *Shaping Revolutionary Memory: The Production of Monuments in Socialist Yugoslavia* (with B. Žerovc, 2023). Beyond academia, Horvatinčić actively engages with public education and has curated several exhibitions examining socialist memorial heritage.

## LJILJANA KOLEŠNIK

### *Mapping Social Dynamics of the Postwar Yugoslav Housing Practices. The Application of VANIS Information System at the ERC project Housing.YU*

SESSION V  
OCTOBER 17, 2025  
10:45–12:20

The VANIS Information System, an integral part of the digital research infrastructure of the Institute of Art History in Zagreb, was originally conceived as a modular database with built-in interfaces for social network analysis and spatial data visualization, developed in the framework of the projects *ARTNET* and *GLOBE\_Exchange*, conducted between 2014 and 2022, and presented at previous DAH conferences.

At present, VANIS is undergoing a significant technical and conceptual upgrade, prompted by the needs of the five-year ERC research project *Housing.YU: The Right to Housing — The Production of Space for Everyday Life in Yugoslavia (1945–1991)*. Recently launched by its PI, Tamara Bjažić Klarin, PhD, the project brings together a multidisciplinary team of researchers tasked with examining the professional, political, economic, technological, and social aspects of Yugoslav post-war housing practices, approached through the lens of their key stakeholders: producers (architects, urban planners, construction companies), users (citizens), state authorities, and professional organisations. The project also aims to supplement these findings with comparative research into post-war housing in ten Western and Eastern European countries, with the objective of re-evaluating

the distinctive characteristics of Yugoslav post-war housing practices and their role within the broader pan-European housing project.

Alongside a brief description of the planned upgrades and new analytical interfaces of VANIS, I will explain the key challenges involved in this process, such as the necessary intervention in the already expanded concept of the object of art historical inquiry embedded within the current VANIS structure. Responding to the multidisciplinary nature of the *Housing.YU* project, the planned upgrades are expected to be firmly grounded in the principles of digital social art history, enabling, for instance, features such as “critical mapping,” that is, the representation of territories, locations, or movements of social groups excluded from the production of space in socialist Yugoslavia, as indicated by their absences in archival narratives. In addition to supporting a more complex understanding of the social dynamics underlying that process, critical mapping may also help establish correlations with comparable social phenomena associated — in this case — with housing practices, as well as with the internal contradictions of Yugoslav socialism. Usefulness of digital social art history and other possibilities of its application in adopting VANIS to the requirements of the *Housing.YU* project are in focus in this paper, as are changes in the stratification of data sources’ informative capacity.

LJILJANA KOLEŠNIK, emerita, is engaged as the counsellor for the application of digital tools at the ERC project *Housing.YU: The Right to Housing — The Production of Space for Everyday Life in Yugoslavia (1945–1991)* presently conducted at the Institute of Art History in Zagreb. Her research interests encompass the relation between politics and culture, that is, the ways political issues are related to or are manifested in

the field of arts and culture, with special emphasis on Socialist Yugoslavia and post-war socialist Europe, extended, in the last four years, towards the Non-Aligned Movement, and the position of art and culture in the politics of non-alignment. Her research in the field of digital art history focuses on the problems of methodology and application of network analysis. She has published several books and a number of articles.

*DAY II*  
*SESSION VI*

70

*12:35 – 13:50*

*Digital  
Reconstructions  
and Visualizations  
of Cultural Heritage*

71

CHARLENE VELLA,  
SEBASTIANO D'AMICO,  
EMANUELE COLICA,  
FABIO LINGUANTI

## *Reconstructing St Anne's Church, Fort St Angelo, Malta: A Digital and Geophysical Approach to its Architectural Evolution*

SESSION VI  
OCTOBER 17, 2025  
12:35–13:50

72

St Anne's Church in Malta's Fort St Angelo, strategically located on a promontory overlooking the Grand Harbour, stands as one of the oldest and most historically significant ecclesiastical structures on the Maltese islands. With its origins potentially dating back to the Norman period and a core structure preserving 13th-century elements, the church has undergone significant transformations, including a 16th-century expansion by the Knights of the Order of St John. However, its original orientation remains uncertain, with indications that its entrance and altar may have been reversed. Furthermore, emerging evidence suggests that the site may have earlier sacred functions, possibly pre-dating its medieval phase.

To reassess the church's spatial development and historical function, this study adopts a digital and geophysical methodology, integrating ground-penetrating radar (GPR) analysis, LiDAR 3D scanning, digital architectural modeling, and archival research. By leveraging digital humanities tools, our interdisciplinary team — comprising geoscientists and art historians specializing in medieval art and architecture — has attempted to reconstruct the church's architectural evolution, mapping subsurface anomalies, analysing masonry techniques, and visualizing potential phases of

73

construction. The use of digital visualization technologies allows for a non-invasive reassessment of lost or altered structures, bridging traditional art historical approaches with advanced computational analysis.

This study contributes to the growing field of digital art history by demonstrating how geospatial and architectural data can enhance the interpretation of medieval ecclesiastical spaces. The preliminary findings indicate that the present layout may not reflect the church's original design, necessitating a re-evaluation of long-standing architectural assumptions. Furthermore, the identification of potential pre-Christian layers aligns with broader Mediterranean patterns of religious continuity and transformation.

By presenting the methodological challenges and emerging hypotheses of this research, this paper underscores the value of digital humanities in expanding the scope of medieval architectural studies. Through the integration of geophysical surveying, digital modeling, and art historical analysis, this project exemplifies how interdisciplinary, technology-driven approaches can refine our understanding of historical structures and their evolving cultural significance.

CHARLENE VELLA is an Associate Professor in Medieval and Renaissance Art History at the University of Malta's Department of Art and Art History. She earned her PhD in Art History from the University of Warwick in 2016, supported by the Warwick Chancellor's International Scholarship, under the supervision of Professor Donal Cooper. Her research focuses on Late Medieval and Renaissance Art, particularly the works of Antonello da Messina and his followers, as well as the Gagini family of sculptors in Malta. She has led several projects overseeing diagnostic testing, conservation, and restoration of Renaissance artworks. Professor Vella has authored two monographs and numerous papers in local and international journals. In recognition of her contributions, she was awarded the Premio Antonello da Messina 2023 for the section Studi Antonelliani by the Associazione Culturale "Antonello da Messina" in April 2023. Her

educational background includes a BA (Hons) and an MA in History of Art from the University of Malta, completed in 2006 and 2010 respectively.

SEBASTIANO D'AMICO is an Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Geosciences at the University of Malta. He had worked as Research Officer III and Lecturer at the University of Malta, within the Department of Physics and Geosciences, since 2010. He was enrolled in the Physics program of the University of Messina, where he was awarded the title of Dottore in Fisica and holds a PhD in Geophysics from the University of Naples, Italy. In 2005, after completing his MSc studies, he moved to Rome, where he joined the Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica e Vulcanologia (INGV). In 2007, he moved to the USA to join Saint Louis University (Earth and Atmospheric Sciences Department). His research interests are in the applied aspects of applied geophysics. He is the

author of about 100 peer-reviewed publications in this field. Prof D'Amico was Principal Investigator in several national and European projects. He has supervised many Masters and PhD students and has authored many publications.

**EMANUELE COLICA** is a Lecturer in the Department of Geosciences at the University of Malta. He holds a PhD in Geosciences from the University of Malta, where his research focused on coastal landslides in northwest Malta. His expertise spans photogrammetry, spatial analysis, robotics, mapping, geomatics, geospatial science, topography, geoinformation, digital mapping, geoprocessing, and the application of geophysics in cultural heritage. He has authored over fifty publications, with his research primarily centered on coastal erosion, landslide processes, and the use of geophysical and geomatic methods for environmental monitoring and heritage conservation. At the University of Malta, Dr Colica is actively involved in both teaching and research, contributing to various projects that enhance the understanding and mitigation of geological hazards. He collaborates with local and international researchers, playing a key role in advancing geosciences, particularly in the context of the Maltese archipelago's unique geological and cultural heritage landscape.

**FABIO LINGUANTI** is an Italian architectural historian affiliated with the Polytechnic of Turin and the Laboratoire d'Archéologie Médiévale et Moderne en Méditerranée Aix-Marseille Université. His research primarily focuses on medieval architecture in Sicily, southern Italy, and Normandy, with a particular emphasis on Norman influences and on the Frederick period. Among his notable publications is "I benedettini e le chiese cattedrali in Sicilia al tempo di Ruggero I d'Altavilla," which examines the early Norman architectural experiments in Sicily, specifically the Sicilian cathedrals of the period of the county of Roger I. In addition to his research, Linguanti has been involved in organizing scholarly events. He is the convener of the biennial conferences *Medieval Mediterranean. Architecture, archaeology, and art*, of which the last was *Defend Sacred Spaces: Fortified Churches and Monasteries in the Medieval Mediterranean (9th–14th Centuries)*, held in Lipari, Italy, in October 2024. Dr Linguanti has also contributed to academic discussions on medieval monastic architecture, especially Benedictine, Cistercian and Carthusian. His work is recognized in academic circles, and he has been cited in various scholarly publications, reflecting his contributions to the study of medieval architecture in the Mediterranean region.

## PAULA ŠPEK

### *Partial Sources, Digital Methods and the Issues of Monument Interpretation: The Study of the Late Gothic Church of St John the Baptist in Kloštar Ivanić*

SESSION VI  
OCTOBER 17, 2025  
12:35–13:50

The study of historical monuments often relies on partial and fragmented sources, leading to interpretative challenges and methodological dilemmas. The late gothic church of St John the Baptist in Kloštar Ivanić is a prime example of these difficulties. Although it stands as a significant work of sacred architecture in Croatia, mainly notable for its sculptural decorations by famous artists Josip Weinacht, Ivan Jakob Altenbach, and Mihael Komersteiner, its study has been limited by the partial preservation of material evidence. Severely damaged during World War II, the church lost all its artworks. Despite some conservation efforts, the church remains unused, with its interior still bearing visible scars of wartime destruction, and many aspects of its history remaining largely unexplored.

Other than its lost baroque artwork, one of the key historical questions surrounding the church remains its origins. Some records suggest that an even older chapel once stood where the sanctuary is now located. This is not only an architectural concern but a crucial aspect of the history of Kloštar Ivanić itself. It is widely believed that the town's name originates from this early sacred structure, underlining the church's role as a foundation of local identity. If the existence of an older chapel were



to be verified, it would significantly alter our perception of the settlement's development and wider historical significance.

However, due to lack of written and material evidence as well as insufficient archaeological research, digital methods have become increasingly important in our study. Therefore, we created a 3D model of the church of St John the Baptist to better interpret the available data and provide a clearer visualization of the church's lost elements, allowing us, and the local community, to engage with the historical layers that would otherwise be forgotten. Yet, despite their advantages, these digital tools are inherently constrained by the availability of historical data. Gaps in the sources continue to be major obstacles to fully understanding the site's development.

Beyond these methodological concerns, practical limitations also shape research outcomes. Decisions about what is a research priority are often dictated by funding and technical feasibility. While our 3D model represents a significant step toward preserving and interpreting the history of St John the Baptist, it is only the beginning. Further research, combining traditional methods with advanced digital technologies, is essential to uncovering the church's full history. By integrating these approaches, this ongoing study not only enhances our understanding of the church's origins but also contributes to broader discussions on cultural heritage preservation in Kloštar Ivanić and the Moslavina region.

**PAULA ŠPEK** completed her Master's degree in Art History and German Language and Literature at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, in 2023, ranking among the top 1% of students. She has participated in several research projects, including archaeological and heritage studies, with a focus on medieval art and architecture. She contributed to the research of the Early Christian church above Goženka Bay on the island of Rab for several consecutive years, the Church of St Stephen in

Golubić, as well as the late Gothic church in Kloštar Ivanić. She also worked on the project *Echoes of the Middle Ages*, producing a short documentary on Radovan's Portal. She currently works as the Office Manager of the Friends of Heritage Association, where she continuously participates in national and international projects, courses and workshops, organises events, lectures and promotional activities of local heritage, and collaborates on academic and heritage-related projects.

## DOMINIK LENGYEL

### *Virtual Photography as a Method for Historical Narratives Based on Incomplete Sources*

SESSION VI  
OCTOBER 17, 2025  
12:35–13:50

The critical eye is not just a figure of speech; it is the ability of the intellect to draw different conclusions and interpretations from visual perception than, for example, from the spoken word. This applies even to abstract illustrations, so that we are not dealing with images of physical reality, but with highly abstract functional symbols. In the communication of hypotheses in the humanities, such as archaeology or art history, abstraction plays a central role in adequately describing the inevitable uncertainties of science. The visualization of these hypotheses, in turn, requires an equally abstract visual language. We have explained the basics of this in conferences II (general introduction), III (visualization of a purely hypothetical design intention without realisation), and IV (on the perception of space through time). In this paper we would like to elaborate on the significance of virtual photography. It is a method from the disciplines of architecture and photography that transfers expertise from the analogue world, in particular studio object and documentary photography, into the digital world and ensures that even highly abstract geometry is intuitively perceived as architecture. The trains of thought that are triggered are by no means a substitute for verbal description, but rather a complementary basis for further

research questions. The fact that it does have this effect is confirmed by the many projects we have carried out in close collaboration with specialist scientists. It has become apparent that this approach actually represents a blind spot in traditional art historical research, especially in situations that cannot be visualized due to limited or incomplete findings. Furthermore, virtual photography is also an extension of the usual linguistic classification, because as a pictorial language it has to set different priorities in order to achieve the desired effect as an image. The consistency of the image comes first in order to accurately reflect the statement. If the world depicted is consistent in itself, it can open up a space for thought, the consequences of which can also be consistent. Consistency in the image also means that there may be elements of the image that cannot be clearly classified. All in all, research through the image is not a purely analytical approach, since the abstract forms do not emerge through algorithmic reduction, but are real substitutions to be designed. This requires the ability to create forms as it is anchored in the discipline of architecture, among others. It is therefore not a question of specialised knowledge and skills within the humanities, but of opening up disciplinary boundaries so that design from architecture can be used as a method within the humanities. But this doesn't mean that the balancing act between the disciplines is reduced to a technical service. On the contrary, design is a central component of architecture, and so virtual photography is also, in a sense, a return to the analogue object, because it deals with virtual objecthood by treating the abstract model as if it were built architecture. So it is indeed about sources, but also about the interconnected personalities of the researchers, when the discussion about an adequate representation as an iterative process reflects the sources and their interpretation. The result is a visual historical narrative based on incomplete sources.

**DOMINIK LENGYEL** has been a Full Professor and Chair of Architecture and Visualization at the BTU Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg since 2006. He spent one year studying mathematics and physics before studying architecture at the University of Stuttgart in Germany, where he graduated with distinction and an architecture prize after studying for two years at the Ecole d'Architecture Paris-Tolbiac and the ETH Zurich in Switzerland. He worked as an architect in the planning department of the architectural office of Prof. O. M. Ungers in Cologne, Germany, where he also founded an office for architectural

visualization together with the architect Catherine Toulouse. He first became a deputy professor, then a Full Professor at Cologne University of Applied Sciences and was offered a position as a Full Professor at Mainz University of Applied Sciences. He is a member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts in Salzburg. His research projects are funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG), the private German Gerda Henkel Foundation for Historical Humanities and the Federal Ministries for Education and Research (BMBF), for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi) and for the Interior, Building and Housing (BMI), among others.

*DAY II*  
*SESSION VII*

80

*14:50 – 16:05*

*Ethics,  
Representation,  
and Historical  
Responsibility*

81

# ANDREW LAWLER

## *A Prolific Author': Archival Biases in Attribution of NOB Memorials to Creators in Bosnia & Herzegovina*

SESSION VII  
OCTOBER 17, 2025  
14:50–16:05

82

Between 1945 and 1992, over 4.000 monuments and memorials to the People's Liberation War and Revolution were unveiled on the territory of Bosnia & Herzegovina. While the vast majority of these (over 70%, according to the author's own research) were memorial plaques, fountains and stelae (often) produced by members of the local community, the production of sculptures, reliefs and busts commonly involved the commissioning of trained artists.

Unfortunately, much of the information on such creators has been lost over time, with both surviving documentation and approaches to accessing it introducing biases that simultaneously make certain authors appear more prolific than they were (in relative terms) and leave the opus of other authors somewhat marginalized within research. Added to this, it is known that a number of monographs of artists' works have omitted large portions of their opuses dealing with the People's Liberation War.

The author's own experiences with this issue will be presented through a series of case studies, which will highlight:

- Approaches to attributing works to creators in “grey literature” and archival documents
- Misattributions and (intentional?) omissions from creators' opuses
- The importance of accessing creators' personal archives in attributing works
- “Gaps” in archives and popular knowledge in terms of attribution

In addition, a number of regional stylistic variations of memorials will be presented, suggestive of (to borrow from archaeology and related disciplines) “centres of production” that, while not mentioned in literature or documentation, appear to have been important in the creation of memorial plaques and similar for areas spanning numerous municipalities, in processes that appear to have been little influenced by geographic boundaries or top-down administration. In certain instances, the outputs of such (hypothesized) centres also cross present-day state boundaries, with the data presented showing the importance of international collaboration in gaining a full(er) picture of the mechanisms that underlay the creation of monuments and memorials to the People's Liberation War.

83

ANDREW LAWLER is an independent researcher based in Belgrade. He received his BA in Archaeology and Anthropology from the University of Cambridge (2006), MA in Archaeology from KU Leuven (2010), and M.Cons in the Conservation of Monuments and Sites from KU Leuven (2013). He runs the website *spomenicinob.info*, a database of all known monuments and memorials commemorating the People's Liberation War (and wider Socialist Revolution) on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina — compiled since 2013 (becoming publicly available in 2020) and updated on a near-daily basis —

and actively publishes research relating to aspects of tangible memorialization in BiH during the period 1945–1992 and its treatment in contemporary society. His recent publications including “Lost Heritage: The works of Visoko artist Ranko Milanović on the theme of the People's Liberation War,” discussing the fate of works of a little-known-but-prolific author, and “Enumerating monuments to the NOB in Bosnia & Herzegovina: A brief comment,” which explains why the phenomenon of memorial creation in Yugoslavia was nowhere near as intensive as is often claimed in literature on the topic.

*SELMA BANICH,  
MARTINA BOBINAC,  
SVEN SORIĆ,  
ALMA TRAUBER*

*Digital Cartography of the Sisak  
Children's Camp as a Methodo-  
logical and Ethical Framework  
for Curatorial-Research Work*

SESSION VII  
OCTOBER 17, 2025  
14:50–16:05

84

This presentation focuses on the development of a digital museum of the Sisak Children's Camp (1942), a project born from interdisciplinary collaboration between a researcher, curator, artist, and designer. It is grounded in long-term research and the creation of an interactive digital map as a curatorial and educational tool. During the World War II, a polycentric camp system operated in Sisak, which included a concentration camp exclusively for children, primarily of Serbian ethnicity, separated from their parents and brought from regions such as Kozara, Kordun, and Banija. The project unfolds within a broader context of working with unstable, contradictory, and ethically sensitive sources, not only due to the nature of the topic but also because of ongoing changes in urban topography, politically contaminated narratives, and active denial of the camp's existence within parts of the local community.

The digital museum is structured in layers. The first layer, titled *rendgen* (x-ray), uses a digital map to reconstruct known camp locations: barracks, schools, monasteries, quarantine stations, the hospital, railway infrastructure, river, and burial sites. Each location is rebuilt through archival blueprints, correspondence, court testimonies, survivor accounts, newspaper

articles, personal notes, alphabetical registers, medical reports, maps, and photographs (including images of deceased children, whose use prompts a specific ethical discussion). Research includes field documentation of present-day conditions. The camp system, once encompassing over ten physical sites, was simultaneously polycentric, mobile, fluid, and strictly hierarchical – qualities represented through a cartographic logic of networks rather than enclosed perimeters. The network also includes symbolic toponyms such as the Kupa River and railway, which recur in many testimonies.

The second layer focuses on oral histories and subjective testimonies from survivors who experienced the camp as children. Analysis of dozens of accounts reveals sensory memories: smells (mold, stench of waste, smoke), sounds (crying, silence), touch (straw, cold concrete, copper sulfate solution), images (crowded children, numbered tags on strings around necks), and bodily sensations (cold, hunger, weakness). These testimonies reveal sensory, emotional, and both active and passive trauma. Compared to the *rendgen*, which frames the camp through numbers (mortality statistics, transfers), bureaucratic language ("refugee shelter"), formal structures (orders, reports), and geographic data (maps, drawings), these testimonies offer an embodied counterpoint.

The third layer examines spatial memorialization. On the one side, we witness systematic erasure such as renamed streets, destroyed or neglected monuments and unmarked camp buildings. On the other, spaces of memory arise through local initiatives: sculptures, plaques, and parks that aim to preserve remembrance.

The presentation includes reflections on ethical and curatorial decisions in selecting and presenting content, especially for younger audiences (upper primary and secondary students), including the challenges of representation, the risk of retraumatization, and the need for clarity without simplifying historical complexity. It asks whether digital cartography can serve not only as a technological tool but also as a critical space for generating knowledge, restoring erased spatial memory, and enabling responsible remembrance.

85



**SELMA BANICH** is a performance artist. Born in Yugoslavia, she lives in Zagreb. She is the author of a series of works developed independently and in collaboration with other artists, curators, groups, and initiatives across the Balkans, Europe, and the United States. She creates in the medium of performance, through actions and interventions in public space, as well as socially engaged public practices within communities. She has worked as a choreographer on numerous dance, theater, and opera productions. She also performs in films. Artistic films in which she has been involved have been shown at established festivals and in curated independent film programs. Her artistic practice is rooted in process-based, research-driven, and activist work, and politically inspired by anarchism and feminism.

**MARTINA BOBINAC** graduated in Art History (Modern and Contemporary Art) and French Language and Literature from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb (2021). Since September 2021, she has worked at the Institute of Art History in Zagreb as a research assistant and doctoral candidate and is currently a team member of two scientific projects at the Institute: *DIGitART*, led by Sanja Horvatinčić, PhD, and *UrbArH*, led by Matko Matija Marušić, PhD. Since October 2022, she is a team member of the *TRACTS* project — *Traces as an Agenda in Climate Change, Technology, and Social Justice Research*. From September 2021 to January 2024, she was a team member on the bilateral research project *Globe\_Exchange*, led by Ljiljana Kolečnik, PhD. Under the mentorship of Tamara Bjažić-Klarin, PhD, she is currently preparing her dissertation titled *Urban and Housing Reconstruction Models After Natural Disasters in Yugoslavia and the Global South, 1962–1972*. Her research focuses on cultural exchange and diplomacy, international organizations, issues of collective memory and memorialization, decolonization

processes in the context of 20th-century art history, architecture, and urbanism, with an emphasis on digital tools and the application of digital art history methodologies.

**ALMA TRAUBER** is an art historian and curator currently serving as the Director of the Striegl City Gallery in Sisak, Croatia, a position she has held since May 2018. Under her leadership, the gallery has become a significant cultural venue in Croatia and beyond, especially through innovative strategies developed in response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2020 earthquakes. She is the curator and author of numerous exhibitions, curatorial concepts, and research-publication projects in the field of contemporary art. From 2016 to 2018, she was the head of the Krsto Hegedušić Gallery in Petrinja. Since 2016, she has also been a core member of the organizing team of the *Re:Think Sisak* Street Art Festival, contributing to the development of public art and cultural revitalization in the city. Her curatorial work is deeply engaged with the identity of Sisak and the local community, and she continues to shape the role of the gallery as an active and resilient cultural institution.

**SVEN SORIĆ** is a freelance graphic designer and architect whose work centres on designing books, publications, and visual identities for projects in the cultural and academic sectors. Born in Sisak in 1989, he earned his Master's degree in architecture from the University of Zagreb in 2015. His design practice is rooted in collaboration and experimentation, often engaging with artists from outside the design field. He has developed visual identities for a wide range of institutions and initiatives, including the Music Biennale Zagreb, Faculty of Architecture Zagreb, Sisak City Museum, City Gallery Striegl, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung Southeast Europe, and others. In 2012, he co-founded This Town Needs Posters with Hrvoje Spudić, a platform dedicated to

analogue and experimental print, which has been awarded and internationally exhibited. In 2018, he was a resident at the Zentrum für Kunst und Urbanistik in Berlin, where he worked on analogue archiving and held workshops in print and self-publishing. The same year, he co-founded the studio collective M28 in Zagreb. Since 2018, he has collaborated with sound artist Tin Dožić on several projects, including *Radical Now: Streaming Coordinates* (2020). Sorić has been a member of the Croatian Designers Association since 2017, and its president since 2023.



*Reimagining Sources and  
Retelling Narratives of Tribal  
Heritage in India: A Digital  
Humanities Initiative*

SESSION VII  
OCTOBER 17, 2025  
14:50–16:05

88

The construction of historical narratives, particularly within the realm of digital art history, necessitates a critical examination of sources. This scholarly imperative becomes even more pronounced when considering marginalized communities, such as India's tribal populations. Tribals or Adivasis, encompassing groups like the Bhils, Gonds, Santhals, and Todas, constitute approximately 8.6% of India's population (Census, 2011) and are custodians of diverse artistic traditions that significantly enrich India's cultural heritage.

Tribal art in India, manifested through mural paintings, sculptures, textiles, folklore, music, dance, and ritual performances, reflects intricate socio-cultural identities and profound ecological relationships (Guha and Gadgil, 1992). However, historical studies and digital art historical scholarship on these communities are substantially impeded by critical methodological and epistemological issues arising from limited, fragmented, or biased archival sources.

Colonial documentation, such as gazetteers, ethnographic surveys, and administrative reports, has predominantly authored by colonial officials, has historically dominated the narrative construction around tribal communities, often misrepresenting, objectifying,

89

or marginalizing their lived experiences and artistic expressions (Cohn, 1996). Postcolonial India's archival infrastructure remains inadequate, further complicating authentic historical reconstruction, preservation of tribal art, and fostering inclusive cultural historiographies (Pandey, 2006).

Critical digital art history methodologies offer innovative avenues to mitigate these archival limitations. Techniques such as digital archiving, geospatial mapping, multimedia storytelling, and virtual reality (VR) are increasingly leveraged to document and preserve tribal artistic heritage. However, these technological interventions necessitate critical reflections on ethical considerations, such as the agency of tribal artists and communities, researcher positionality, and interpretive authority in digital spaces (Earhart, 2015).

Drawing on insights from the Indian government-funded project, the author doing this research explores how digital methodologies can critically engage with tribal sources and narratives. The project demonstrates the value of community-centered, participatory practices in digital art history, advocating for methodologies informed by ethical rigor, cultural sovereignty, and social empathy (Christen and Anderson, 2019). The research method and methodology employed in this work encompass a critical and interdisciplinary framework combining qualitative, participatory, and digital humanities approaches.

In conclusion, critical digital art historical practices in India are trying to not only prioritize ethical considerations, ensuring tribal agency and interpretive transparency, but also put focus on preserving and amplifying tribal artistic heritage through innovative digital methodologies.

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**RICHA P. MISHRA** is a scholar and educator specializing in Digital Humanities, with extensive experience integrating digital methodologies into humanities-focused research and pedagogy. Currently serving as Research Chair in Humanities and Social Sciences at the Institute of Technology, Nirma University, Dr Mishra leads interdisciplinary collaborations, mentoring researchers, organizing academic events, and enhancing humanities scholarship in India and abroad. Her research engages deeply with digital tools, critical thinking, and innovative pedagogical techniques, particularly within STEM and STEAM contexts. She is the Principal Investigator of research projects funded by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), including initiatives on cultural preservation and the history of

Scheduled Tribes in India. Dr Mishra has been recognized internationally, receiving awards and grants from prestigious institutions such as Oxford University, CLS INFRA, and the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute. Her academic credentials include a PhD in English Literature and advanced training in digital humanities from globally recognized institutions such as Oxford University and Stanford University d.school. Dr Mishra is a member of international academic networks, including the Alliance of Digital Humanities Organizations (ADHO) and the Association for Computers and the Humanities (ACH). Dr Mishra continues to advocate for inclusive, innovative approaches to teaching and research, focusing particularly on empowering marginalized communities through digital humanities.

*DAY II*  
*SESSION VIII*

92

*16:20 – 17:35*

*Ethics, Control,  
and Curation in the  
Digital Sphere*

93

ANA AVELAR,  
TÂNIA SULZBACHER

*AI-Assisted Curating:  
From the Expository Metaphor  
to Curatorial Metamorphosis*

SESSION VIII  
OCTOBER 17, 2025  
16:20–17:35

94

The digitization of curatorial practices is reshaping how exhibitions are conceptualized, produced, and experienced. This shift raises critical questions about access, narrative construction, and the role of artificial intelligence in curatorial processes. The exhibition *Um Banhado Digital [A Digital Wetland]* (2024), organized by the research group Academia de Curadoria, explored AI-assisted curatorship, using artificial intelligence and data analysis to structure relationships between artworks, artists, and exhibition content. The project addressed a dual challenge: how digital technologies reconfigure curatorial agency and how algorithmic decisions shape artistic interpretation and audience engagement.

*A Digital Wetland* employed AI-based virtual assistance tools to dynamically organize curatorial research and texts. The interactive interface, designed to simulate an AI-driven virtual assistant, provoked reflections on automation, knowledge production, and the role of machine-generated discourse in the cultural sphere. Rather than celebrating AI's integration into exhibition-making, the project critically examined its implications for curatorial decision-making, raising questions about authority, bias, and the erasure of human subjectivity in digital environments.

95

The exhibition's curatorial approach was informed by Donna Haraway's concept of "sympoiesis" — a rejection of closed systems in favor of interdependent relationships. This perspective was particularly relevant given the exhibition's setting at the Museu de Arte Leopoldo Gotuzzo (MALG/UFPel), a university art museum located in a historically waterlogged region of Brazil. The metaphor of the *banhado* (wetland) was used to frame digital curatorship as a complex, unstable terrain where knowledge flows and accumulates in unpredictable ways. Just as wetlands resist rigid control, the exhibition questioned the determinism of algorithmic curation and its implications for the production of meaning in contemporary art.

Drawing from theoretical frameworks such as "cosmotronics" (Hui 2020), "infosphere" (Floridi 2014), and "latent aura" (Escobar 2021), *A Digital Wetland* functioned as a critical device to interrogate the evolving relationship between artificial intelligence and curatorial practice. By integrating AI into its exhibition design, the project did not merely adopt digital tools but foregrounded their limitations and ideological underpinnings. The interface design mirrored AI's tendency to produce seemingly neutral yet highly mediated responses, exposing the mechanisms through which technology filters, prioritizes, and structures knowledge.

This article presents *A Digital Wetland* as a case study to reflect on the challenges and potential of AI-assisted curatorship. It examines how curators can navigate the intersection between human agency and algorithmic automation while maintaining critical engagement with the digital tools at their disposal. As the field of curatorship increasingly embraces computational approaches, it is crucial to interrogate the epistemological shifts brought about by AI-driven decision-making. The exhibition's experimental approach sought to illuminate the tensions between digital curatorial methodologies and the embodied, affective dimensions of artistic experience, advocating for a more nuanced engagement with technological mediation in contemporary art discourse.

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**ANA AVELAR** is a tenured Assistant Professor of Art Theory, Art Criticism, and Art History at the University of Brasília (UnB). Specializing in curatorial studies and contemporary art, she has curated exhibitions at major institutions in São Paulo, Brasília, and Belo Horizonte. Her research focuses on Brazilian digital arts, curatorial practices, and the intersection of art, technology, and museum studies. In 2024, *System Update* — an exhibition she coordinated with her research group, the Curating Academy (Academia de Curadoria) — was awarded Best Exhibition in the Midwest by the Brazilian Association of Art Critics (ABCA). The project, developed for the National Museum of the Republic, explored digital narratives and interactive curatorial strategies. Avelar has participated in international conferences, contributed to international academic journals, and served on many juries for contemporary art awards. She is a member of key research networks on curatorial methodologies and digital heritage, continuously bridging critical discourse with curatorial practice.

**TÂNIA SULZBACHER** is designer who holds a PhD in Design and Technology from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS), Master in Design and Bachelor in Product Design from the Ritter dos Reis University Center (UniRitter). She has experience in research, university teaching (Design, Architecture and Urbanism), and professional work in corporate environments, leading projects for the development of digital products and services in the areas of education, UX/UI and digital transformation. Her career combines academic practice with the planning of academic and corporate educational programs, focusing on innovation and digital technologies applied to teaching. She currently works as the digital production coordinator at the Academia de Curadoria research group (UnB) and is a member of the GEMA group (USP), where she investigates the use of artificial intelligence, digital curation, and data visualization for the preservation and dissemination of artistic and historical collections. Her research explores the intersections between art, technology, and design, developing solutions for cultural mediation in physical and virtual environments, with an emphasis on digital preservation, interactive exhibitions, and the impact of digital media on the construction of cultural narratives.

## HELENA SCHMIDT

### *From Analog Archives to Digital Disruptions: Copyright, Transformation and the In/Justice of Digital Images*

SESSION VIII  
OCTOBER 17, 2025  
16:20–17:35

My presentation examines how digital art practices can disrupt traditional notions of copyright and ownership, navigating the tension between technological progress, artistic freedom, legal constraints, and meaning-making. Focusing on the transformation of analog image archives into digital artworks, this contribution explores the shifting status of images as they move between historical repositories and contemporary digital circulation. Building on the article “Everything but Copyright” (Schmidt 2024), this paper centers on Swiss artist Tamara Janes’ recent project *Copyright Swap*, which reworks images (scans) from the New York Public Library’s Picture Collection to “liberate” them from their copyright. By manually altering these images (with digital tools) and thus transferring copyright to the modified works, Janes highlights a core conflict between artistic practices and material rights in digital spaces. Her work challenges established frameworks, revealing how digitization not only extends the reach of analog images but also reshapes their legal and cultural significance.

Digital images — highly mutable, easily reproduced, and endlessly circulated (Steyerl 2009; Schmidt 2024) — expose the loopholes of existing legal structures, which struggle to address the complexities of ownership in

hyperconnected environments. When analog images enter the digital sphere (in this case through artistic intervention), they undergo transformations that raise critical questions about historical narratives, authorship, and accessibility. These images are charged with meanings, assumptions, worldviews, politics, and contradictions (cf. Crawford and Paglen, 2021), making digital (visual) literacies more essential than ever in addressing the injustices embedded in (re)produced visual culture. Digital art not only questions the boundaries of intellectual property but also reveals the sociopolitical implications of platform logic, including censorship and digital injustice.

My presentation introduces an analytical framework to theorize digital (visual) disruptions in relation to aesthetic challenges and legal parameters, starting from an artistic case study. Janes' *Copyright Swap* highlights the tensions between material and digital sources, revealing how the shift from physical collections to digital circulation reconfigures not only legal ownership but also the interpretive frameworks through which images are classified, valued, and understood. This case study also illustrates how the act of digitization is not neutral but embedded in socio-political structures that influence knowledge production (Sollfrank 2018, Benjamin 2019). In line with the conference's critical approach to sources, this paper reflects on the researcher's positionality in engaging with transformed images, emphasizing the ethical and methodological challenges that arise when material artifacts become digital objects and when digital objects become sources. Ultimately, it invites a reflection on the contradictions of digital art history, particularly the tension between its emancipatory potential — in disrupting legal and institutional constraints — and the highly specialized knowledge and infrastructures required to navigate digital justice, platform governance, and algorithmic visibility.

I will approach questions of image-making, its multiple transformative processes, and the in/justices associated with digital circulation from the perspective of art history and art education.

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**HELENA SCHMIDT** is a theorist and researcher in art education, digitality, and visual culture. Since 2025, she has been an Assistant Professor (tenure track) for digitality in didactics and art education at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna's Institute for Art Education. She completed her PhD in 2022, supervised by Prof. Dr. Elke Krasny, with the dissertation *From poor image to poor images. Digital didactics in art education*. Schmidt worked as a guest-lecturer and university-assistant at the Bern University of the Arts (HKB) and co-curated the VIENNA DESIGN WEEK's education program (2020–2022). Schmidt studied Art Education, Art History and Graphic Design in Bern, Vienna, and Graz. Her recent publications include "Poor images

— arme Bilder? Digital Visualities in Art Didactics" (transcript, 2024), "Extensions of Self. An Exchange of Human and Artificial Intelligence" (Francisco Carolinum Catalogue, 2025), "Meeting AI. Museal Encounters with Artificial Intelligence" (Francisco Carolinum Magazine, 2024), "Everything but Copyright. An Art Historical Perspective on Image Rights in the Digital Now" (2024), "Didactics of the Digital in Art and Education. Agencies for art education with digital media on the example of didae.eu" (with Krasny, Lingg, Thurner; fabrico 2024), "Intangible Care — in Care of the intangible." (Springerin 2023), and "What is the poor image rich in?" (Palgrave 2021).



SOPHIE LINGG

*Questionable Standards of a Community. Social Media Posts, Stories and Images, Social Media, New Forms of Censorship, and Gender-Based Violence*

SESSION VIII  
OCTOBER 17, 2025  
16:20–17:35

100

This paper examines the working conditions of queerfeminist artists on social media, focusing on specific forms of digital discrimination, gender-based violence, and censorship. Social media platforms are vital to artists' professional practices, acting as multi-layered workspaces. Queerfeminist artists, in particular, navigate a double bind of visibility and vulnerability, facing digital discriminations that echo the patriarchal violence observed in both public and private spheres (see: Segato 2022).

Drawing on long-term observations of artists' social media accounts and in-depth interviews with five artists, Anahita Neghabat, Julischka Stengele, Natalie Assmann, Sophia Suftmilch and Stefanie Sargnagel — all based in Austria and Germany — the research connects these experiences to digital media theory (Benjamin 2019, Noble 2018, Muller-Helle 2022, Terranova 2022). In addition to the interviews, images on social media, especially Instagram posts and stories, are the main source of research. These digital sources pose new questions to art historic research methods — such as how to deal with ephemeral stories or posts, as well as comments that can change and disappear again at any time depending on the reaction. My observation explores how gender-based

101

violence and discrimination impact artistic work on digital platforms and beyond. Although social media accounts are seen as spaces for easy-access self-representation, they are often undermined by harassment, coded and algorithmic biases and control. Queerfeminist artists experience practices such as content deletions, bans for alleged community standards violations, orchestrated reporting, and hate comments. These issues not only affect individual artists but also pose broader epistemic challenges regarding the new reality of social media as a workspace as well as a form of contemporary artistic expression.

My research is shaped by personal relationships with the interviewed artists, which raises important methodological and ethical questions. Incorporating intimate conversations into academic writing requires sensitivity to avoid exploiting these relationships or reproducing violence. By applying queerfeminist perspectives on epistemology and friendship (Krasny 2023, do Mar Castro Varela, Oghalai 2023), this paper critically reflects on the academic's role in transforming personal, often painful, experiences into scholarly knowledge without reinforcing harm. This approach avoids sensationalism while fostering discussions on transformation and resistance.

This paper is situated within contemporary socio-political contexts marked by reactionary politics, digital surveillance, and neoliberal self-branding, which further complicate the dynamics of resistance and visibility. It examines how queerfeminist artists and activists negotiate between self-expression and self-protection — balancing the demands of visibility with the risks of vulnerability. Platform policies frequently censor or de-platform queerfeminist content under the guise of community standards, raising concerns over whose narratives are accepted. At the same time, academic gatekeeping can marginalize alternative ways of knowing, learning and teaching, perpetuating epistemic violence against those whose lived experiences differ from dominant frameworks. By engaging with feminist and queer theories, this contribution advocates for an academic approach that values relationality, care, and community engagement, ultimately challenging existing exclusions and urging transformation in both digital and scholarly realms.

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104