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Cover Story

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by Dr Helaine Silverman

This week's cover story is by CHRC Affiliate Dr Helaine Silverman, where she shares the work of the Mythic Mississippi Project, developing rural Illinois histories to promote inbound tourism.

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Cover image:

The Mother Jones Monument at the Union Miners Cemetery in Mt. Olive, Illinois.

Photo by Helaine Silverman.

Mining Memory, Heritage and Identity in the Illinois Coalfield

by Dr Helaine Silverman



Image: The Mother Jones Monument at the Union Miners Cemetery in Mt. Olive, Illinois. Mother Jones was called the “coal miners’ angel.” She requested to be buried here, near miners slain in the 1898 Battle of Virden. Photo by Dr Helaine Silverman.

Since 2019 I have been leading the [Mythic Mississippi Project](#) (MMP). Its overall goal is to help rural towns in Illinois to deploy their histories as heritage resources with which to build tourism routes so as to promote economic and social development. The project was so-named because of its original intent to focus on de-industrialized towns along the Illinois bank of the mythic river. Although the project extended its reach inland to work with former [coal towns](#) of Central Illinois, the MMP’s evocative name was retained.

By the time I entered the scene with grant money from the University of Illinois four local groups had just undertaken the heritagization of their mining and

labor history. They had created the Mother Jones Museum in Mt. Olive, reinvented Miners Day and May Day at the Union Miners Cemetery in Mt. Olive, opened the Illinois Coal Museum in Gillespie, and formed the Grow Gillespie civic association. I met with these groups repeatedly and with municipal officials and citizens. Mt. Olive and Gillespie have such a large number of committed heritage non-experts (per John Schofield) with whom to collaborate and generate impact that these towns became the anchor of the “Coal Triangle” tourism route.

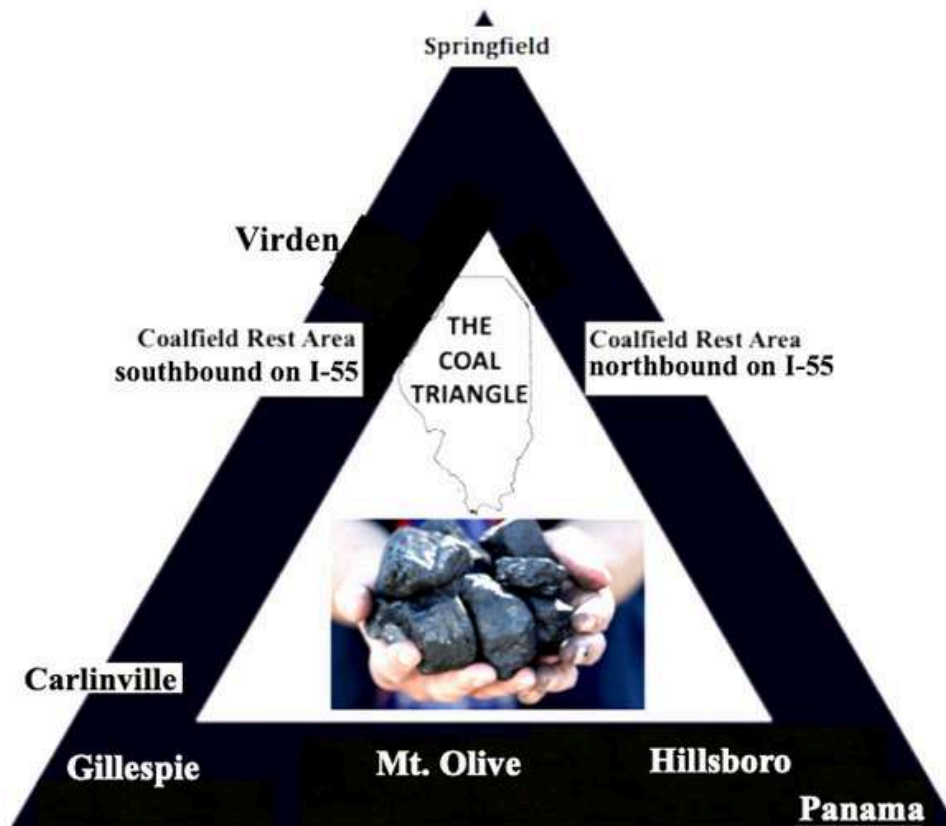


Image: Former coal towns in Central Illinois that have been scripted in a thematic tourism route called “The Coal Triangle.” Image by Helaine Silverman.

Public engagement has enabled the MMP to help its local partners build on what they already were doing. Throughout, they have chosen which actions and products they wanted the MMP to fund. Together our goals have been to (1) promote historical, community and personal memory of the great labor movement led by coal miners, (2) support coal miners’ deeply held sense of identity, (3) bequeath this knowledge and activism to future generations, and (4) help rebuild their towns’ economies through the added contribution of modest tourism.

The results of the MMP-funded, community-driven collaboration include dozens of historical building panels and large plaques telling the story of these towns to create a walking tour; the digitization of the local newspaper for key decades of union activity; credit-bearing lectures for high school teachers; new museum exhibitions – including comparisons to County Durham where Dr. Andreas Pantazatos (CHRC) and I have worked; a book about mining heritage co-authored by a local union president and me; an article about the heritage role of the Mother Jones Museum and Mother



*Image: Parade of banners at the Union Miners Cemetery, Mt. Olive, Illinois.
Photos by Helaine Silverman.*

Jones Monument, co-authored with the museum's Vice-President; a paper co-authored with the Curator of the Illinois Coal Museum about the collection; and dozens of voice recordings and videos of community members eagerly telling their stories for the YouTube channel we are creating.

Alongside the MMP's public engagement activities are academic research and publications. Right now I am interested in the processes of memorialization, heritagization and invention of tradition that have been occurring, particularly at the Union Miners Cemetery in Mt. Olive where performances of labor history and working-class identity have become increasingly elaborated and ritualized over the past few years. For example, a procession of new labor heritage themed banners, inspired by those paraded at the Durham Miners' Gala, leads celebrations at the Cemetery. In 2025, for the annual celebration of Miners Day, the President of a local mine union revived the 1900 Burial Service of the United Mine Workers of America.



*Image: Miners like to "hang out" at the Illinois Coal Museum.
Photo by Helaine Silverman.*

Former miners today are recreating above ground the fulfilling social world and brotherhood they enjoyed underground. Some miners "hang out" in the Illinois Coal Museum, talking mine. They also have donated densely meaningful artifacts of their jobs and arranged them in an exhibition at the museum. Each of these objects carries a story, which we are beginning to record for use with QR codes. Indeed, for some retired and forcibly displaced miners, the Illinois Coal Museum has become the mine – a place of camaraderie, self-valorization, memory and (re) generation of memory (per Holtorf). A pin for sale in this museum revealingly says "If you ain't a miner, you ain't shit."



Image: Miners have donated many personal artifacts to the Illinois Coal Museum. Photo by Helaine Silverman.

Two or three times a week miners may drive by the site of the abandoned mine at which they worked to ponder its industrial obsolescence. Driving with them, they have narrated, with pride and nostalgia, the work they did and the life the mine engendered.



Image: Structures of abandoned Monterey Mine No. 1 are still visible. Mandated reclamation is underway. Photo by Helaine Silverman.

The public engagement of the Mythic Mississippi Project has been a gratifying personal experience, connecting me with people outside the campus bubble and generating long-term friendships. I am honored to have been named a “Gillespie Hero” and to have received the “Mother Jones Solidarity Award” from Mt. Olive. The project also has assumed an international dimension as the City of Cork, Ireland (birthplace of Mother Jones) sent me a commendation recognizing the installation of a historical plaque at her original gravesite. These accolades attest to the value of the MMP in the communities and of extended ethical fieldwork with partners. It also is yielding desired tourism attention. The project will continue indefinitely. I welcome questions (helaine@illinois.edu).

Bio



Helaine Silverman recently retired from the University of Illinois where she taught in the Department of Anthropology and was Director of CHAMP/Collaborative for Cultural Heritage Management and Policy. She is now Research Professor Emerita. She is an Affiliate of CHRC and has collaborated closely with Deputy Director Andreas Pantazatos on the mining heritage of County Durham where they studied enduring performances of identity and memory in the lost context of coal mining alongside a UNESCO World Heritage site. Dr. Silverman’s current research examines former coal towns in Illinois where memory of mining’s “glory days” and knowledge of labor history are mobilized in personal and public settings. This research is embedded in a larger project of public engagement that aims to help rural Illinois communities – not just those formerly dependent on mining – to develop their interesting sites as heritage resources for themed tourism routes intended to promote sustainable economic development.

DCMS considering fees for foreign visitors to UK national museums



Image: National museums like the Natural History Museum could soon require proof of citizenship to enter for free (By Chiuchihmin, CC BY-SA 3.0).

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport is exploring the possibility of charging entry for non-citizens in a major break from the national standard of universal access. Culture Secretary Lisa Nandy has expressed interest in “the potential opportunities that charging international visitors at museums could bring”, citing the need for new revenue to tackle climbing costs. The plans are in response to the independent review of Arts Council England by Baroness Margaret Hodge, published in December 2025. The review suggested that the government’s planned introduction of mandatory ID cards “would present a valuable opportunity to revisit the policy of free entry for international visitors to national museums and galleries”.

However, DCMS-sponsored museums and heritage organisations have been quick to address the shortcomings of such proposals. Art Fund has published research which shows public support for protecting free admission for all to national museums. A poll by More in Common suggests nearly three quarters of the public (72%) believe that revenue from a potential tourist tax should be used to keep entry free instead. Royal Armouries Museum expressed “serious reservations about this proposal” as a “two-tier entry system would fundamentally undermine our commitment to universal access.” General director Nat Edwards described the plans as “a superficial, short-term response to a deeper problem and offers considerably more challenges than benefits”.

[Learn more](#)

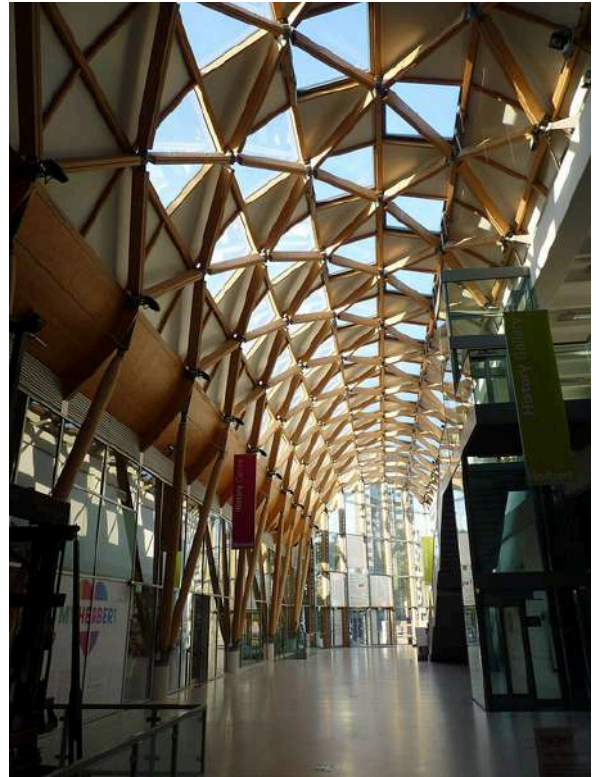
Coventry museum holds interactive exhibit on South Asian heritage

Image: Forecourt of the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum (By Cmglee, CC BY-SA 3.0).

A new pop-up event series at the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum is encouraging residents to contribute to an exhibition celebrating the heritage of local South Asian communities. 'Stories That Made Us - Roots, Resilience, Representation' is taking place until 25 May. More than 300 handwritten memories of migration, racism and belonging had been added to the exhibition since it opened in November, organisers said.

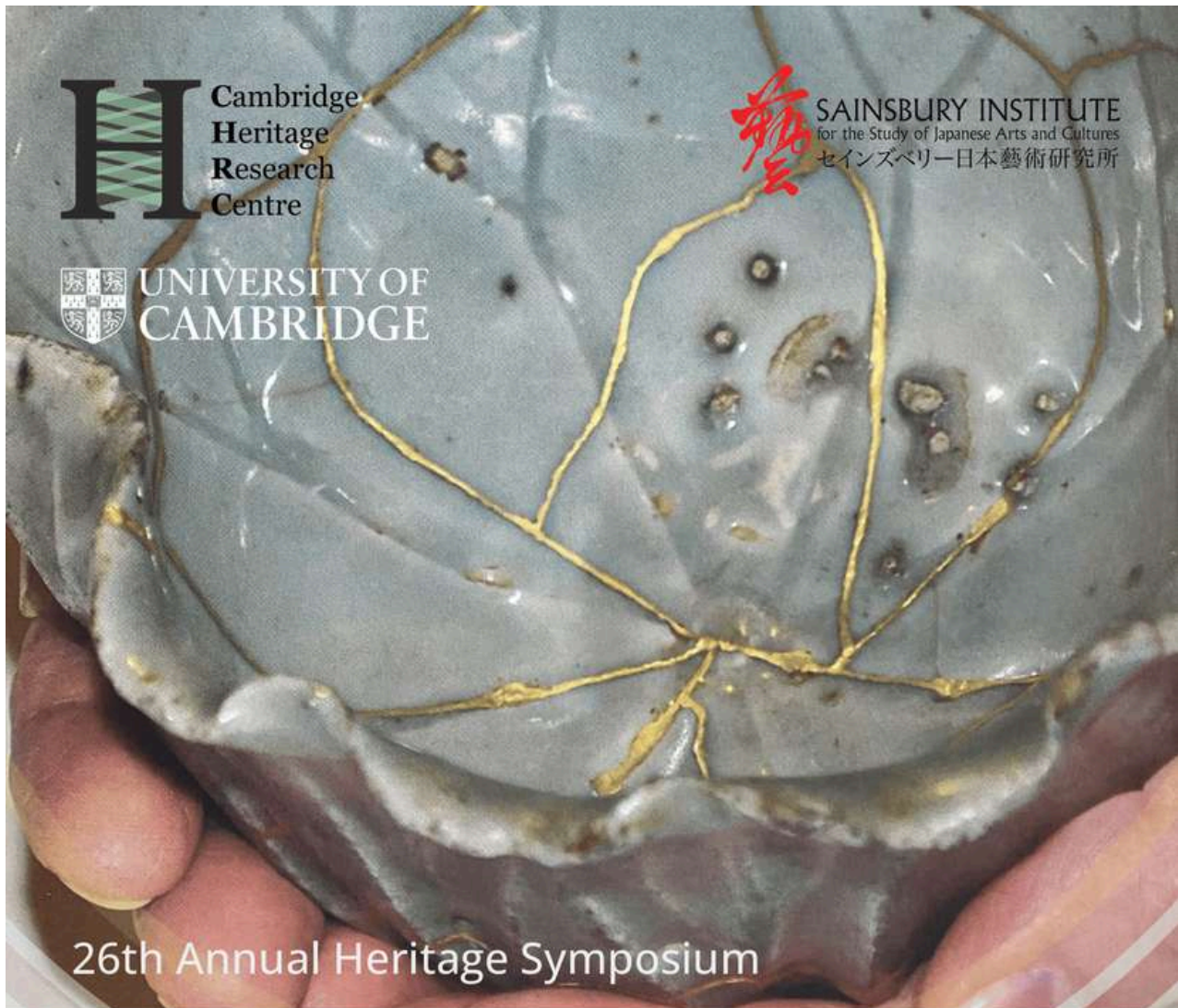
The programme began earlier this month with a poetry workshop, followed by a spoken-word performance and a community open mic event. Visitors were able to record their own oral histories with Coventry Archives, with other activities and a workshop taking place over the remainder of the opening week.

The project was created by Coventry artist and curator Hardish Virk and tells the story of his family from 1968 to 2010, using immersive rooms, oral histories, film, music and a 410-year timeline of South Asian and British history. "The heart of the exhibition is my family's story, but what we're seeing is that people are finding their own story in it," Virk said. "These pop-up events are designed to give more people the chance to add their perspective and build on the incredible testimonies we've heard over the last few months."




[Learn more](#)





 Cambridge
Heritage
Research
Centre

 SAINSBURY INSTITUTE
for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures
セインズベリー日本藝術研究所

 UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

26th Annual Heritage Symposium

The Role of Heritage in Shaping Ontological Security in the Contemporary World

Friday 8th - Saturday 9th May 2026

McDonald Centre for Archaeological Research, Downing Site Cambridge

For more details visit our website or to book your **FREE** place please scan the QR code
www.heritage.arch.cam.ac.uk/events/annual-symposia



McDonald Institute for
Archaeological Research



THE A. G. LEVENTIS
FOUNDATION

[Book here](#)



Axé: Art and Spirituality in the Black Diaspora

April 22-24 | Online & University of Vienna

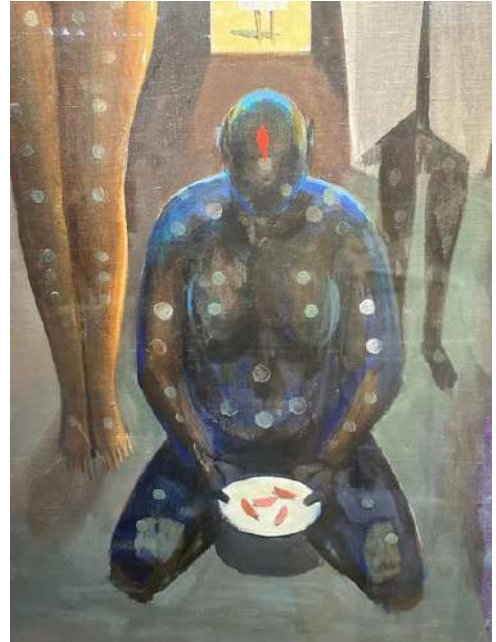
Image: Carybé, mural, Aeroporto de Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. Photo: Luisa Karman.

The Yoruba concept of Axé/Aché/Aṣẹ, the believe that every being, expression and object has an inherited spiritual energy granted by the creator Olódùmarè, as well as many other cultures and religious beliefs from West and Central Africa, travelled with its people on the ships of the transatlantic slave trade since the 16th century to the colonised Americas and Caribbean.

The cultural expressions of these involuntary migrant communities can still be found in music, dress, art and spirituality of the people of countries such as Brazil, Cuba and Haiti, and in museum collections all over the world, forming a unique part of the broader African diaspora.

Focusing on the diasporas which resulted from the transatlantic slave trade, we examine diaspora identities are a “matter of becoming and being” (S. Hall) through the material and artistic expressions and practices of these newly formed identities.

Exploring themes of translocation, continuities and local histories in transnational contexts, we are looking at cultural and aesthetic self-redefinitions and how communities created spiritual and artistic alternative spaces of varied forms of black identities in Central/South America and the Caribbean.



[Book here](#)

PSSA | Sculpture in the Garden of Death:
Tendencies in Cemetery Memorials 1840-1940



May 7 | Online

Speaker: Dr Roger Bowdler FSA

This talk emerges from the newly published book, co-written with Brent Elliott, *The British Cemetery 1700 – 2020: Architecture, Landscape, Sculpture* (Historic England/Liverpool University Press). Little attention has been paid to the sculpture present in cemeteries and there are fine things to be seen. Outdoor conditions determined the choice of material and made bronze a preferred option, particularly in the age of the New Sculpture. Some sculpted monuments were bespoke: other marble memorials were mass-produced and imported in considerable numbers from Italy. The talk will also look at works in less common material including concrete and granite.



Roger Bowdler studied History of Art at Cambridge and completed his PhD there in 1991, on death-related 17th century church monuments. He joined English Heritage in 1989 as a historian in the London Region and rose to become Director of Listing in 2011 and a member of the Historic England executive team on its creation in 2015. Since 2019, he has worked as a partner at Montagu Evans, planning consultants, advising on heritage issues. A Commissioner of the Royal Hospital, he sits on the London Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) and is a trustee of the War Memorials Trust. He has written extensively on funerary art, and his short books *War Memorials* and *Churchyards* were published in 2019. Roger is a PSSA Trustee and a member of the PSSA's Specialist Advisory Board



Tickets: Members: free | Non-members: £3.50

[Book here](#)





7 MAY 2026



Celebrating African World Heritage

12:00 - 16:45 GMT +1

RESEARCHING THE DEEP HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY OF AFRICA AT CAMBRIDGE

Lightning talks (5 minute summaries of current projects from staff and students in the Archaeology Department, University of Cambridge) followed by brief Q&A

17:00-18:00 GMT+1

ANNUAL LECTURE

Mapping Africa's Endangered Archaeological sites and Monuments Project

Dr Siyakha Mguni

University of Cape Town

Unveiling the curtain with ukubuyisa or go lata: complicated roles of museums and nation states in the cultural repatriation discourse and practice in southern Africa



This presentation explores some cases of international repatriation and intra-national restitution to indigenous communities, and the growing importance of digital technologies and databases in preserving cultural materiality. Using a parallel indigenous notion of ukubuyisa (Nguni word) or go lata (Sotho-Tswana word), which is a widespread cultural practice among southern African Bantu-speaking people meaning to 'bring home the spirit of a deceased person', it critically examines the oft-unenlightened treatment of the intersection between tangible and intangible assemblages of materiality in restitution practice

Dr Mguni is a Senior Lecturer at the Michaelis School of Fine Art, University of Cape Town. His research focuses on San rock art, Khoe and San cosmology and the study of hunter-gatherer visual heritage through archives, orality, and ethnography. Dr Mguni brings African perspectives and indigenous knowledge systems into contemporary discussions on art, archives, curatorship, and cultural heritage.

UNESCO African World Heritage Day - 5 May 2026

Join us on 7 May to celebrate

12:00-16:45 Lightning Talks
17:00-18:00 MAEASaM Annual Lecture
18:00-19:00 Drinks Reception

TIMES
GMT+1

Online and in-person
McDonald Institute Seminar Room



Register



@MAEASaMproject



Department of Archaeology







McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research



[Book here](#)



10th East-West Workshop on Industrial Archaeology (Cheers!)

 9 May 2026
 10.00 – 12.00 (London time)
 Zoom
 register for free scanning the QR code



Amber Patrick
Malthouse Developments (late 18th – mid-20th century)

Pablo Alonso González
Craft Vs. Industrial? A Critical History of Spanish Wine



Yuchen Wang
Luzhou Baijiu Heritage as an Urban Cultural Landscape

background image: Amber Patrick



[Book here](#)



National Portrait Gallery Annual Seminar 2026 |
Curating Historic Portraits: Transcultural Conversations



May 14-15 | Online & University of Plymouth



Places are free but booking is essential.

Symposium Session One: Thursday 14 May, 13:00–17:00

Symposium Session Two: Friday 15 May, 10:00–13:30

About the Symposium

This symposium will examine how historic portraiture can be reframed to broaden access to lives and narratives that have been overlooked within traditional museum and archive structures. It will also consider new methods being tested to foster more meaningful and relevant connections with contemporary audiences. Taking *Journeys with Mai*, a national partnership tour led by the National Portrait Gallery, as its starting point, we will hear from project partners how a British portrait masterpiece was radically redefined by introducing Pacific Island perspectives, new research approaches and contemporary art responses across the successive venues.

The event will showcase innovative projects from the South West and across the UK to share recent curatorial and engagement work which has challenged or reinterpreted historic portrait collections to support more inclusive conversations. Papers and discussion sessions in this symposium will interrogate:

- How can contemporary artists' responses draw out parallels between historic portraits and today's most urgent challenges?
- How can portraits help explore themes of migration, belonging and identity?
- How can projects that centre a range of voices and perspectives lead to meaningful transcultural conversations?

[Book here](#)

Museums Association | All Inclusive: Championing Accessible Museums



May 20 | Online



Ableism – prioritising the needs of non-disabled people over disabled people – remains pervasive across the museum sector. Disabled people still face barriers in our buildings, policies and structures, and are chronically under-represented in our workforce and collections.

All Inclusive is the Museums Association’s annual online conference exploring how museums can become anti-ableist in everything that they do. Anti-ableism recognises abled privilege and actively looks to challenge and dismantle it through theory, actions and practices.

Come to ‘All Inclusive’ to hear provocations, case studies and panel discussions and discover...

- what an anti-ableist museum might look like in practice
- how to challenge and dismantle ableism in your museum
- ways to elevate the perspectives of D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people
- how to remove barriers in buildings and policies
- ideas to build a representative workforce.

This event is for you if...

- you work in any aspect of people or volunteer management
- your role involves engagement with the public
- you manage a small museum with wide-ranging responsibilities
- you have human resources responsibilities
- you are responsible for access, diversity and inclusion in your organisation.

Tickets: Members: £47 | Non-members: £69

[Book here](#)





Patrimonio, Cuidados y Personas
en un mundo resiliente

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

HERITAGE, CARE AND PEOPLE

in a Resilient World: Heritage
Networks as a Strategy for
Sustainability

MAY 27- 29 / 2026
MADRID



CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS – DEADLINES

Deadline for the submission of **open special session proposals**:
30 January 2026

Deadline for the submission of discussion **panels, papers, posters, audiovisual contributions and workshops** proposals:
20 February 2026

*Exceptionally, proposals for **special closed group sessions** will be accepted until **20 february 2026**.



ORGANIZES



PID2021-127248OB-I00



[Book here](#)

**Call for
Papers:**



**ISDG
Symposium
2026**

**Please send your abstract to
isdgcambridge@gmail.com**

Submission deadline 20TH MARCH 2026
ISDG Symposium 14TH MAY 2026
Hybrid event



**UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**



**Cambridge
Heritage
Research
Centre**

[Book here](#)



Memory Studies Review Special Issue |
Mobilizing memory: repression and resistance



Abstract deadline:
April 30

This Memory Studies Review special issue is based on a conference held in November 2025 at the Center on Social Movements Studies (COSMOS), Scuola Normale Superiore in Florence. This special issue seeks to reflect on and deepen our understanding of the role of *collective memory in social movements* at a time when incessant attacks by illiberal forces on democracy have undermined democratic institutions, values, and practices. Indeed, across the world, the political landscape has seen a significant rise in authoritarian practices—even within long-established democratic regimes. One of the most notable aspects of this shift is the strategic use of collective memory: selective interpretations of the past, the glorification of specific historical narratives, and the silencing of others have become central tools for reshaping the political legitimacy of regimes. However, grassroots mobilizations and social movements have also emerged or re-emerged to challenge these authoritarian tendencies.

These developments point to an urgent need to reconsider the political uses of memory—not as peripheral, but as central to the dynamics of contemporary governance and political contestations in both democratic and repressive settings. With an interdisciplinary approach, we delimit our focus on the memory-movement nexus to two thematic areas:

- a) the deployment of politics of memory for repression and control by political regimes
- b) the practice of memory work by social movements and activists, and its use in establishing alternatives to institutional narratives

We invite empirical contributions from across the social and political sciences, as well as from humanities disciplines, and we encourage diverse cases and plural methodological approaches. **We welcome submissions from both conference participants and non-participants.**

Submission details

For submissions, you can send a **500-word abstract (including up to 5 keywords)** along with a **short bio abstract (max 150 words)** through [this form](#). Further information will be communicated in due course, particularly to accepted authors. In the meantime, we encourage the authors to familiarize themselves with the journal's submission guidelines.

[Apply here](#)

ICOMOS TheoPhilos ISC Conference | 'Doctrinal' Texts in an Age of Living Heritage: What/Who are They For, and Do We Still Need Them?



Abstract deadline: April 30

Aims & thematic scope

This session, hosted by TheoPhilos, is called in support of the important work of the ongoing Review of the Doctrinal Text Adoption Process in the context of Living Heritage. In an age when local communities and regional interests have an increasing say in conservation processes, this session will discuss whether it is still feasible or desirable to attempt to develop universal principles for the conservation and care of historic places. It will discuss the case for (and against) continuing to produce such documents, and the practical experiences of attempting to do so.

Format

The session will be structured around a series of short presentations in PechaKucha format – up to 20 slides and 6m 40s length. These will be followed by a fruitful discussion. We encourage TheoPhilos members and non-members alike to propose papers and to contribute to the session; the aim is to bring a broad range of ISCs and ICOMOS members together to discuss this important issue. It is hoped that the papers and discussions will help inform the current Review of the Doctrinal Text Adoption Process.

The presentations and discussions will cover the following themes:

1. What is a 'Doctrinal' Text, and are they compatible with Living Heritage?
2. What role, if any, should 'Doctrinal' Texts play in a Living Heritage context?
3. How can we speak of universalism in a Living Heritage context?
4. Personal (positive or negative) experience/examples of the use of 'Doctrinal' Texts in a Living Heritage context

Submission information

Submission of abstracts for proposed papers is via [this web form](#). When submitting your abstract, please ensure that in answer to the first question ('Submission Category') that you select 'Session', and then the third option.

[Apply here](#)

ICOMOS TheoPhilos | Amazing city: historic public spaces in the age of climate change



Abstract deadline: June 15

Objectives & thematic scope

The aim of the conference is to create a platform for interdisciplinary discussion and exchange of experience between representatives of local governments, conservation authorities, academic communities and design practitioners – architects, urban planners and landscape architects – concerning contemporary conditions, principles, forms and limits for the shaping of historic public spaces, particularly in the context of their adaptation to climate change.

The conference also aims to encourage deeper reflection on the relationship between the protection of heritage values and the need to introduce environmental and functional solutions. An important element of the debate will be to define the scope of permissible interventions in the substance and composition of historic public spaces, as well as to develop principles for balancing conservation, social, aesthetic and climate-related requirements. Another objective of the meeting is the identification of good practices in the management and modernisation of public spaces in historic cities, as well as the indication of models of cooperation between local government and heritage protection authorities.

An important component of the conference will be the presentation of theoretical studies and practical solutions developed within the Re-Public Spaces project, co-financed by the Interreg Central Europe Programme. The project concerns the adaptation of historic courtyards to climate challenges in Central Europe and culminated in the implementation of four pilot climate-oriented revitalisation projects in partner cities: Łódź (Poland), Pinerolo (Italy), Osijek (Croatia) and Velenje (Slovenia), addressing the most significant local climatic factors.

As part of the summary of the Re-Public Spaces project, recommendations concerning a document formulating the principles for the protection and modernisation of historic public spaces in the context of climate change – the Charter for the Modernisation and Protection of Historic Public Spaces – will be discussed, evaluated and subsequently adopted during the conference.

Submission information

Abstracts should be submitted by 15 June 2026 [by email](#). Abstracts should not exceed two pages of text (a structure in the form of separate points will help reviewers grasp the concept of the presentations).

[Apply here](#)



Heritage Call for Papers | Cultural Tourism, UNESCO Sites and 2030 Agenda: Where Are We At?

Abstract deadline:
August 31



Just 5 years from the 2030 milestone and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, our proposal intends to take stock of the codified good practices or, more simply, the experimental solutions still underway, to govern the economic development processes based on cultural tourism in sites with tangible and intangible values, starting from those recognized by UNESCO as World Heritage, to measure their carrying capacity and mitigate the impacts of their enhancement.

These could be some of the topics for which contributions could be directed:

1. Assessment of the carrying capacity of territories and sites and tools for mitigating pressures on local communities and cultural heritage;
2. Assessment of the impacts of cultural tourism;
3. Strategic planning and organization of the cultural-tourist offer;
4. Governance models, community involvement and redistribution of benefits;
5. Real estate dynamics;
6. Strategic classification of cultural assets for their enhancement as touristic resources (from a historical standpoint, too);
7. Networks;
8. New trends, new markets.

Keywords

Agenda 2030 | overtourism | best practices | UNESCO sites | cultural tourism governance | markets

Submission information

Manuscripts should be submitted online at www.mdpi.com by [registering](#) and [logging in to this website](#). Once you are registered, [click here to go to the submission form](#). Manuscripts can be submitted until the deadline. All submissions that pass pre-check are peer-reviewed. Accepted papers will be published continuously in the journal (as soon as accepted) and will be listed together on the special issue website. Research articles, review articles as well as short communications are invited. For planned papers, a title and short abstract (about 100 words) can be sent to the Editorial Office for announcement on this website.

[Apply here](#)



Opportunities

University of Aruba | PhD Position in HERITOUR -
enhancing collaborative synergies between
Cultural HERItage and TOURism



Deadline: April 30

Salary: £31,543 p.a.

About HERITOUR

HERITOUR is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Doctoral Network that examines how the cultural heritage and tourism sectors can collaborate more effectively to address shared challenges and reduce the negative impacts of tourism. Cultural heritage represents a major segment of contemporary tourism, yet increasing touristification and overtourism have intensified debates about environmental degradation, social disruption, and pressures on heritage sites. Although European and international policy frameworks promote ethical and sustainable tourism, heritage and tourism governance remains fragmented, with sectors operating under different institutional structures and priorities. HERITOUR investigates how current collaborations function and how cross-sectoral policies can be developed within a democratic and regenerative governance model. The project focuses on hybridisation, sustainability, resilience, and democratisation, and provides interdisciplinary training for Doctoral Candidates.

HERITOUR is a collaboration between Erasmus University Rotterdam, (the Netherlands) University of Stavanger (Norway) Middle East Technical University (Turkey), Mid Sweden University (Sweden), the University of Granada (Spain), and the University of Aruba. Successful Doctoral Candidates will be seconded at heritage and tourism organisations for the total duration of three months during the employment period. A total of 10 PhD vacancies are available across six universities.

Requirements and selection criteria University of Aruba

- A (research) master's degree or equivalent with a relevant specialisation within the social sciences or humanities, such as cultural heritage, sociology, media studies, anthropology, island studies, and/or related disciplines;
- Familiarity with and keen interest in qualitative research methods;
- Independent thinking and critical analytical skills;
- Good collaboration skills and an ability to join interdisciplinary and intercultural academic communities;
- Excellent oral and written communication skills in English (CEFR C1);
- Motivation to carry out high-level research and publish in top peer-reviewed international journals.

[Apply here](#)





Opportunities

CreaTech Frontiers CDA | Regional Museums and Creative Technologies: addressing barriers to digital equity



Deadline: April 30

Background

Developed in dialogue with Heritage and Culture Warwickshire and regional museum partners to address their needs, this research project investigates both visitor expectations and the ability of regional museums to meet them, systematically exploring the factors that affect this, such as resourcing, skills and capacity gaps, and modes of working within the sector. The project will generate evidence-based insights for regional museums, industry, sector professionals, and local and national policymakers with the aim of promoting efficient, effective, and impactful uses of creative technologies in regional museum practices.

The project will be led by Dr. Jamie Larkin in the Centre for Cultural and Media Policy Studies and Emma Andrews, Service Manager, Heritage and Culture Warwickshire, Warwickshire County Council.

The research is part of a wider doctoral programme supported by CreaTech Frontiers, a 5-year, £7.2 million project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). The project aims to establish a thriving createch ecosystem across the West Midlands by developing skills and talent, funding collaborative R&D, and supporting business innovation. Led by Birmingham City University, CreaTech Frontiers is delivered by a consortium of six core partners that includes Coventry University, the Royal Shakespeare Company, the University of Birmingham, the University of Warwick, and Digital Catapult. The successful candidate will join the CreaTech Frontiers academic community and play a key role in delivering the project's objectives.

How to apply

Stage 1. Apply for admission for your MPhil/PhD in Creative Industries and obtain your 7-digit ID number.

Stage 2. Submit your scholarship application. You will need the following:

- Your University of Warwick 7-digit ID number
- A CV (maximum 2 pages). You may supplement this with a short statement as to how you meet the "Person and Preparedness" descriptors.
- A Research Proposal (maximum 3 pages) that outlines how you would respond to the project as outlined here. You should supplement this with a statement.

[Apply here](#)





Opportunities

University of Leeds Doctoral Studentship | Spaces of Health: Connecting Past and Present Experiences of Health and Wellbeing in Heritage



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

May 1

Start date: October 2026

Funding: £21,805+

Hours: Full time

Prerequisite: UK students

From historic hospital buildings to medical museums, England's health heritage has a powerful role to play in supporting wellbeing — but we don't yet know how. This PhD project will uncover how these unique sites can draw on their own histories and collections to benefit communities now and in the future.

About the project

This PhD explores how England's rich medical and healthcare heritage can be used to support public health and community wellbeing today. While heritage engagement is widely recognised as beneficial, we know surprisingly little about how sites with historic ties to medicine – from former hospital buildings and clinics to medical museums – might offer unique opportunities for promoting wellbeing. These health-related heritage institutions (HRHIs) have distinctive histories that shape how people experience them, yet their potential as public health assets remains underexplored.

The research project will investigate this potential through a national study of HRHIs in England, complemented by two in-depth case studies of St Bartholomew's Hospital and the Thackray Museum of Medicine. This combination of breadth and depth will allow the researcher to map the landscape of England's health heritage while also examining, up close, how specific institutions engage visitors, interpret their histories, and design wellbeing-focused programmes. Research questions might include:

- How can HRHIs work most effectively to promote community and audience health and wellbeing?
- How and why do historic and contemporary associations of places with healthcare impact on audience and community experience?
- What are the most effective approaches that HRHIs can take to promote health through their collections?
- What can we extrapolate from the experience of HRHIs to inform practice across the wider heritage sector?

[Apply here](#)





Opportunities

American University of Rome | Summer Courses on Cultural Heritage Crime and Protection

July 13-17

Cost: €1,495



The American University of Rome is offering two courses in Rome in July 2026 on the illicit trafficking of antiquities in the MENA region and on cultural heritage protection. No prior knowledge of the subject matter is assumed. The courses are designed to appeal to professionals, aspiring professionals and those with an interest in museums, cultural heritage, archaeology, law enforcement, art/culture management, heritage tourism and security.

Looting and Illicit Trafficking of Antiquities in the Middle East and North Africa. Rome, Italy, July 6-10, 2026. Instructor Dr Samer Abdel Ghafour

This course offers a comprehensive introduction to the complex problem of antiquities trafficking, examining the motives and operations of looters, traffickers, and dealers focusing on the Middle East and North Africa. Participants will gain insight into how stolen artefacts are laundered through illicit supply chains before appearing in prestigious galleries and museums worldwide. By understanding these processes, participants will be better equipped to recognise and combat art and heritage crimes.

Protecting Cultural Heritage: Risks, Threats, Responses. Rome, Italy, July 13-17, 2026. Instructor Professor Valerie Higgins

The course examines the factors that present risks, threats and/or security issues for cultural heritage in the 21st century. These include overtourism, museum security, conflict, climate change, changing societal expectations and new historical narratives.

Each day will explore a new theme making use of contemporary examples and including some outside speakers. Participants will gain insight into underlying trends affecting cultural heritage, the different manifestations of these issues on the ground, and potential strategies to resolve or mitigate the risk.

[Apply here](#)





Opportunities

University of Liverpool |
MA Sustainable Heritage Management



UNIVERSITY OF
LIVERPOOL

September 11

Funding: Scholarships and bursaries available

About the course

If you are still considering your next steps after graduation, I would like to share a postgraduate opportunity that may be of interest to you. The Liverpool School of Architecture offers a Master's programme in Sustainable Heritage Management, fully recognised by the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC), the UK's leading professional body for building conservation and the historic environment. The programme also aligns with the educational frameworks of ICOMOS, UNESCO, and the Council of Europe.

This interdisciplinary Master's is suitable for graduates from a wide range of Arts, Design, and Built Environment disciplines, including (but not limited to) Architecture, Archaeology, History, Landscape Architecture, Urban Design, Interior Design, Fine Art, Civil or Structural Engineering, Project Management, Quantity Surveying, and Philosophy.

If you have an interest in heritage, conservation, and the management of historic environments, this programme could be a strong next step academically and professionally.

Funding schemes

[Aziz Foundation Scholarships](#) (University of Liverpool Widening Participation and Outreach Strategy): applications must be submitted via the portal on the Aziz Foundation website.

[Barakat International Studentship](#)

[Apply here](#)





Contribute

We would be especially interested in hearing from you about events and opportunities. Contributions in the form of short reviews of conferences, exhibitions, publications or other events/material that you have attended/read are also welcome. Please note that advertisements for any non-CHRC events, jobs, or programs do not imply endorsement of them.

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