



TRACES Pop-up Events

EXHIBITION

Contentious Objects/Ashamed Subjects

Artistic research methods and strategies regarding images, objects, spaces, and events of contentious cultural heritages

18 January – 6 February 2019 | Politecnico di Milano, Milan

The conclusion of the TRACES Project will be marked by a **two-day conference** “Transmitting Contentious Cultural Heritages with the Arts”, that will take place in Milan on 17-18 January 2019, and will culminate in the opening of **TRACES final exhibition** “Contentious Objects/Ashamed Subjects”, curated by Suzana Milevska at the Politecnico di Milano.

A rich sequence of **activities and pop-up events**, led by international artists and researchers, will be organised over the entire duration of the exhibition.

- 21 January** - *Curator's Guided Tour and Educational Workshop*, Suzana Milevska, Nora Landkammer, Karin Schneider
 - *Absence as Heritage: Sun Printing Workshop*, Răzvan Anton
 - *Wandering the Colonial Body*, Leone Contini
- 22 January** - *Who is Europe?*, Ian McDonald, CoHERE Project
- 23 January** - *La Orilla Infinita (The Infinite Shore): A Slideshow Lecture-performance*, Ian Alan Paul
- 25 January** - *Deep Space: Re-signifying Valle de los Caídos: Workshop*, Elizabeth Sikiaridi, Frans Vogelaar
- 29 January** - *Staying with the Mining Pit, A Feminist Cartography*, Karin Reisinger

POP-UP EVENTS PROGRAMME

Politecnico di Milano, School of Architecture Urban Planning Construction Engineering
Galleria del Progetto, via Ampere 2, 20133 Milano

Monday 21 January

Curator's Guided Tour and Educational Workshop

Suzana Milevska, Nora Landkammer, Karin Schneider

h. 9.30

Curator Suzana Milevska will give a guided tour to the exhibition "Contentious Objects/Ashamed Subjects". The tour will provide a short introduction to the theoretical framework of the exhibition and will give relevant insights about the deployed curatorial and artistic research methods, as well as the art practices that motivated and enabled the exhibition's realisation.

The tour will be the starting point for a workshop facilitated by Nora Landkammer and Karin Schneider (Institute for Art Education, Zurich University of the Arts) aimed to reflect on learning in relation to contested, contentious or difficult heritages.

Learning around contentious heritage means revisiting one's acquired knowledge and frames of thinking—it often involves unlearning as much as acquiring new knowledge. Giving insights into some of the research outcome of the workpackage on education research in the TRACES project, Nora Landkammer and Karin Schneider will invite arts and gallery educators, researchers in the field of arts based educational methods and heritages, TRACES participants and the general public to discuss together different ways in which collaborative art-research projects on contentious heritages involve audiences and stakeholders. The workshop will introduce some communication methods to address questions as "which communicative methods are productive to activate the critical potential embedded contentious heritages?" "How can we use creative co-productive work as opportunities for shared knowledge productions?" "How can we open learning zones that allow conflict, differences and shared un/learning experiences?".

*

Suzana Milevska is a visual culture theorist and curator from Macedonia. Currently she is Principal Investigator at the Politecnico di Milano (Horizon 2020, TRACES). Her theoretical and curatorial interests include postcolonial critique of hegemonic power regimes of representation, gender theory and feminism, participatory, collaborative, and research-based art practices. From 2013 to 2015 she was the Endowed Professor for Central and South European Art Histories at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. Milevska was Fulbright Senior Research Scholar in Library of Congress (2004). She holds a PhD in Visual Cultures from Goldsmith's College.

Nora Landkammer, is an art educator and researcher from Vienna with the Institute for Art Education at the Zurich University of the Arts ZHdK. She studied Art and Communicative Practice at the University of Applied Arts Vienna and Spanish studies at the University of Vienna, and has worked as a facilitator in contemporary art education at institutions such as documenta 12 (2007), Kunsthalle Wien and Shedhalle in Zurich. As part of the TRACES project she is currently researching educational work dealing with contentious cultural heritage. Her PhD project focuses on decolonising perspectives in education at ethnographic museums. She is active in the international research network Another Roadmap for Arts Education, and teaches museum education in the master's program in art education/curatorial studies at the ZHdK.

Karin Schneider is a trained historian, gallery educator and researcher from Vienna currently engaged in the research on educational work dealing with contentious cultural heritages in the context of TRACES and based at the Institute for Art Education at the Zurich University of the Arts ZHdK. She is an active member of the Viennese working group of the international research network Another Roadmap for Arts Education and teaches gallery education methods at the University of Applied Arts, Vienna. She worked in arts based research projects on politics of history and memory at the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna 2011-2016, and since 2007 at several projects concerned with participatory and museum research. 2002-2007 she held the staff-position for arts education at the Museum of Modern Art (mumok) Vienna and was engaged at the EU funded project “permanent breakfast Dissolving Borders”.

Absence as Heritage: Sun Printing Workshop

Răzvan Anton

h. 15.30

Together with the members of the Casa de lângă Sinagogă team, Răzvan Anton searched for methods to develop processes which facilitate the study and knowledge of local history, processes through which stories can become tangible, can appear before the eyes of the participants along with hidden images which acquire contour in the photographic laboratory.

Coming from a background of drawing and photography, Anton found or developed counter-technological and slow processes of working and thinking which allow time and space for the reflection required to understand such subjects. Beginning in 2016 and on, he began to incorporate this idea practically, developing and printing images, texts and documents from the Jewish Mediaș Archive, allowing them to develop beneath the sun. Light and time became the medium for filtering this material. Beginning with the plate, the negative or the source of the image, the process may evoke the way in which memory itself develops, the manner in which a photograph is developed and perhaps its fading or disappearance.

This development of memory was, in Răzvan Anton’s case, both a collective and an individual process because an important aspect of our project included workshops with students, with young people. In the course of these workshops for visual practice, the artist invited participants to print images coming from the archive of the Jewish communities using silver gelatin paper; the images were developed in natural light in the form of contact prints. The process was apparently unfinished, because the images were not made permanent through a chemical developing process and so in this case they would disappear if they were further exposed to light. Anton believe this is a collective modality for evoking impressions of the topic of heritage and memory of absent communities.

*

Răzvan Anton is a visual artist based in Cluj, Romania. He is currently teaching at the University of Art and Design and is a member of the Paintbrush Factory artist collective. Some of his more recent exhibitions are “‘...but we brought it back...’: Objects, Paths, Stories”, curators: Julie Dawson, Alexandra Toma, Răzvan Anton, Casa de lângă Sinagogă, Mediaș (2018), Objects in the mirror are closer than they appear, Eastwards Prospectus, Bucharest (2018), Life a User’s Manual: I work, therefore I’m not, curators: Ami Barak, Diana Marincu, Art Encounters, Timișoara (2017), Future of Memory, Casa Tranzit, curator: Olga Ștefan, Cluj (2017), The Factory of Facts and Other (Unspoken) Stories, curator: Alina Șerban, Domino, Cluj (2016).

Artist in residence at Mediaș Jewish Archives between 2016-2018 as part of *Absence as Heritage* project (TRACES) and at Museums Quartier, Vienna in November 2018.

Wandering the Colonial Body

Leone Contini

h. 18.00

The project carried with Arnd Schneider in Rome in 2017 started with the discovery of a colonial collection “buried” in various locations across the Capital, developed as an ethnographic research focused on a local community of former colonisers, and culminated in the exhibition “Bel suol d’amore - The scattered Colonial Body”, at the Pigorini Museum. This process was complex and problematic, and many nodes appear far to be solved. The exhibition was a first attempt to question several remains of the colonial heritage, but a more discursive approach is still needed, to elaborate such contradictions together with an audience.

*

Leone Contini studied Philosophy and Cultural Anthropology at Siena University. His research, on the edge between ethnography and art, is focused on intercultural frictions, conflict and power relations. His mediums include Installations, lecture-performances, interventions in public space, writing, drawing and audio-visual narratives.

He exhibited or held intervention at: Manifesta 12, Palermo, 2018; Pigorini Museum, Rome, 2017; GAM, Turin, 2017; MuDEC, Milan, 2017; Quadriennale, Rome, 2016; Cittadellarte, Biella, 2016; D-0 Ark Underground Biennial, Bosnia, 2015; Delfina Foundation, London, 2017, 2015, 2014; MART, Rovereto, 2015; Galleria Civica, Trento, 2014; Khoj, New Delhi, 2014; Kunstraum, Munich, 2014; Villa Romana, Florence, 2014; DOCVA, Milano, 2014 and 2015; Kunstverein, Amsterdam 2013; Tirana Art Lab, Tirana, 2013; Pecci Museum, Prato, 2012.

He took part to the following residencies: Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart; Cittadellarte – Fondazione Pistoletto in Biella, Italy; Delfina Foundation, London, UK; Kronika, Bytom, Poland; Khoj, New Delhi, India.

Leone lives and works in Tuscany, Italy.

Tuesday 22 January

Who is Europe?

Ian McDonald, CoHERE Project

h. 18.00

In this split-screen documentary commissioned by CoHERE, filmmaker Ian McDonald explores the politics of heritage practices and the construction of identity in Europe today. Composed of six parts, each responding to the research activities of six teams in the CoHERE project, the film takes us to Dresden, Bologna, Bodrum, Tompa on the Hungarian-Serbian border, and to Melilla, a Spanish exclave in Africa, to ask “Who is Europe?”. It ends with the sounds of bells ringing across Europe on International Peace Day.

In DRESDEN, the split-screen makes palpable the clash of opposites circulating in heritage practices in present-day Germany. Using an observational style, McDonald captures the attempts by right-wing German nationalists to instrumentalise the annual commemoration of the Firebombing of Dresden in 1945 to seek legitimacy for a stridently nationalist German identity in 2018. However, the nationalist attempts to use the bombing attack by British and American forces in 1945 to carve out a right-wing anti-immigrant German identity today does not go unchallenged by the youth of Dresden—they anti-fascist activists demonstrating on the streets or schoolgirls dancing in the city square!

In BOLOGNA, the split-screen works as a structural and narrative device to prompt questions about the complex nature of the politics of food heritage and identity in the northern Italian city of Bologna. The ambivalent relationship between tradition and modernity in the Italian food industry is brought to the fore as we accompany pasta fresco makers Graziano and Graziela on a journey from their small restaurant in the centre of Bologna to the outskirts of the city and the site of the latest FICO Eataly World store, dubbed by the media as the “Disney world of food”.

In TOMPA, McDonald is drawn to a small border-town as a base to visit and film the barrier-border erected by the Hungarian Government to stem the flow of migrants entering from Serbia into Hungary as a gateway to western Europe. Evocative visuals of this desolate place and encounters with the Hungarian border-guards are set alongside provocative testimonies from two of the increasing number of German citizens who are choosing to migrate to Hungary in the wake of the refugee crisis and its perceived impact on German society.

In BODRUM, a popular tourist resort on Turkey’s south-west coast, a controversial plan is underway to construct a 50-metre-high glass reconstruction of the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, ranked as one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. In this film, we visit the archaeological site with the ruins of the huge tomb of Mausolous and listen to conflicting opinions from architects, archaeologists and local people about the ambitious and audacious “glass-project”. At stake in this debate about Bodrum’s heritage and its relationship to civic pride and, of course, the business of tourism. Alongside these testy issues, opinions about the plans show up contests about the ownership of the Mausoleum and whether it is an expression of Hellenistic and European, or Anatolian (“Carian”), civilisation.

In MELILLA, one of two Spanish cities situated in Africa, hundreds of migrant young men and boys from neighbouring Morocco, known as “Harragas”, risk their lives trying to illegally board ships bound for mainland Spain. In this city known for its rich heritage, McDonald spends time with these young homeless migrants and allows them to use his mobile phone to communicate with home and speak into the camera to communicate with the outside world. In a reflexive attempt to redress the power imbalance inherent in “dialogues” about young Muslim men migrating from Africa to Europe, McDonald insists that they, the ignored and demonized youth, talk, and we, the privileged viewers, listen.

WHO IS EUROPE? concludes with images and sounds of bells ringing out in Cologne, Riga, Warsaw and Northumberland in RINGING FOR PEACE. The UN-backed International Day of Peace is marked throughout Europe by a call for churches, city halls, belfries and memorials to ring their bells “for solidarity and peace” and a celebration of “shared cultural heritage in Europe”. Coming after five films that in different ways explore how heritage practices are often mobilised in support of antagonism and exclusion as much as peace and inclusion, this initiative leaves us with a key provocation of this 60-minute film, *Who is Europe?*

*

Ian McDonald is a documentary filmmaker and Reader in Film Practice at Newcastle University. He is the founder-Director of Film@CultureLab and Director of the Research Centre for Film. His previous works include a multi-award-winning feature documentary *Algorithms* (2012), about young blind chess players from India, and a four-screen film installation, *FREEDOM* (2017), a response to the visit of Dr Martin Luther King to Newcastle in 1967, that was exhibited at The Great North Museum in Newcastle and at the Grand Parade Gallery in Brighton. Ian can be contacted at ian.mcdonald@ncl.ac.uk

Wednesday 23 January

La Orilla Infinita (The Infinite Shore): A Slideshow Lecture-performance

Ian Alan Paul

h. 18.00

The work explores the entanglement of three contentious historic narratives on the Canary Islands brought together by the surrounding sea: The Spanish colonisation and genocide of the indigenous communities in the 15th century, the fascist coup that was initiated from the islands in 1936 while Francisco Franco was stationed there, and the mass arrival and drowning of migrants coming from West Africa in the present.

Excerpt:

***La Orilla Infinita
(The Infinite Shore)***

This is the story of an infinite shore.

It is a story told through the oceanic accumulation of arrivals and drownings, of ships and bodies afloat and adrift in the waters of the Atlantic, of turbulent legacies and liquid inheritances circulating in the currents surrounding an archipelago 100 kilometers off of the West Coast of Africa.

On the islands there is talk of fishing boats catching bodies, their skin bleached white by the sun. Restaurant owners and fishing excursion organizers worry that tourists will no longer want to eat fish that have fed on the flesh of the drowned.

While mass graves from the civil war are mapped on the Spanish peninsula and a Fascist monument on the beach is renamed but preserved, rumours float off of tongues that anarchists, communists, and other antifascists were kept on floating prisons or simply dumped in the sea.

This is the story of the ineradicability of resistance. It is the story of infinities and indeterminacies, of the pasts' capacity to come to matter anew, inexhaustibly and in perpetuity.

*

Ian Alan Paul (b. 1984) is a transdisciplinary artist and theorist whose work examines instantiations of power and practices of resistance in global contexts. His projects are formally diverse, often making use of writing, photography, video, and code, and are informed by critical theory as well as contemporary communist and anarchist thought. Over the course of his life, Ian has lived, taught, and worked for extended periods in the United States, Mexico, Spain, Egypt, and Palestine. He received a PhD in Film and Digital Media Studies from UC Santa Cruz in 2016 as well as a hybrid MFA/MA from SFAI in 2011. Ian is currently based in Brooklyn, NY and is Assistant Professor of Emerging Media in the Department of Art at Stony Brook University.

Friday 25 January

Deep Space: Re-signifying Valle de los Caídos: Workshop

Elizabeth Sikiaridi, Frans Vogelaar

h. 16.00

Valle de los Caídos (Valley of the Fallen), the Francoist monument built between 1940 and 1959 close to Madrid, will soon be emptied of Franco's remains. As it risks becoming a cenotaph—an empty burial monument—and it is at the centre of heated public discourses surrounding its future, Valle de los Caídos is paradigmatic of the difficult processes of re-signifying controversial monuments.

In October 2018, as part of the *Deep Space* independent artistic project and long-term investigative program, Hybrid Space Lab curated the international, interdisciplinary workshop “Deep Space: Re-signifying Valle de los Caídos” in Madrid.

The reliance on artistic practices and applied disciplines transgressing the arts field, such as architecture and media studies, to approach controversial heritage interrogates how these disciplines and their interaction may contribute to the re-construction of memory, exploring the potential of integrating diverse methods to process historical wounds.

By favouring artistic engagement with memory making, “Deep Space: Re-signifying Valle de los Caídos” aims at establishing a place for dialogue and proposals on possible future visual and sensual heritage landscapes in the Valley's contentious spatial and affective context.

The workshop's special focus lay on networked digital and physical tools that allow transforming the site without physically touching it. These tools also enable the integration of side-lined voices within the vision of a polyphonic monument, counterbalancing the site's totalitarian narrative, paving the way from recognition to reconciliation. The workshop kick-started the *Deep Space* exploration, focusing on how future heritage sites could look, feel, sound like, and how their digitally enriched features could affect memory-making processes.

*

Elizabeth Sikiaridi and **Frans Vogelaar** are the founders of Hybrid Space Lab, a Berlin-based Think Tank and Design Lab (<http://hybridspacelab.net>).

Hybrid Space Lab is a laboratory for cultural innovation, a cultural breeding ground for the development of groundbreaking concepts and for the promotion of innovations that contribute to positive changes in society and the environment.

Since 1997 Prof. Elizabeth Sikiaridi has been teaching design at the Landscape Architecture Department of the University of Duisburg-Essen and the University of Applied Sciences Ostwestfalen-Lippe. She was born in London and grew up in Athens. She studied architecture at the École d'Architecture de Belleville in Paris and at the TU Darmstadt, worked in the architecture office Behnisch & Partner in Stuttgart and was an Assistant Professor at the TU Berlin.

In 1998 Prof. Frans Vogelaar founded the first worldwide "Department of Hybrid Space" at the Academy of Media Arts Cologne. Frans was born in Holland and grew up in Zimbabwe and Holland. He studied industrial design at the Design Academy in Eindhoven and architecture at the Architectural Association School of Architecture, London, and worked in the Studio Alchymia in Milan and the Office for Metropolitan Architecture in Rotterdam.

Both Elizabeth and Frans are lecturing broadly internationally, among other as Visiting Professors at the Politecnico di Milano.

Tuesday 29 January

Staying with the Mining Pit, A Feminist Cartography

Karin Reisinger

h. 18.00

During this session a feminist cartography of exploitation will be cross-examined in relation to a specific heritage case: Malmberget, “ore mountain”. It is a town in the north of Sweden that perforated by mining cavities will soon lose its last 2,000 remaining inhabitants as the mining activities expand. Malmberget is thus literally going to disappear from the map. In current processes of documenting what is still left, I foreground the unprecedented feminist history of Malmberget (since 1900), which is often left out in the male-dominated mining history. The same applies to indigenous actors—the Sámi, who co-exist with the mine, and whose activities have been heavily interfered with by the environmental destruction wrought by mining activities. And refugees have found temporary places to stay within this scenery of resource exploitation. To assemble the diverse perspectives, this project adopts a posture that Rosi Braidotti has termed “we-are-in-this-together-but-we-are-not-one-and-the-same” and will engage with the architectural archive of ArkDes (Sweden’s national centre for architecture and design) in Stockholm with a large collection of plans and architectural photography. Thus, instead of accumulating new objects, the project seeks to diversify the heritage of Malmberget by adding narratives to the existing material to show how we are in this together, spatially and epistemologically.

*

Karin Reisinger is an architect with a PhD in Visual Culture from Vienna UT (*Grass Without Roots: Towards Nature Becoming Spatial Practice*). After teaching the seminar *Art in Changing Environments* at Vienna UT (Institute of Art and Design) and a seminar entitled *Feminist Ecologies* at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (Institute of Art and Architecture), Karin is research fellow at ArkDes (Sweden’s national centre for architecture and design) in Stockholm, following a postdoctoral fellowship in Critical Studies in Architecture at KTH Stockholm (2016-2017), which allowed her to engage with the mining areas of North Sweden. Resulting book chapters include “Insomnia: Viewing Ecologies of Spatial Becoming-With” in *After Effects: Theories and Methodologies in Architectural Research* (forthc. 2018, Actar), “Abandoned Architectures: Some Dirty Narratives” in *Architecture and Feminisms: Ecologies, Economies, Technologies* (2018, Routledge), and “Connective Oscillations: Architectures Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea” in *More: Expanding Architecture from a Gender-based Perspective* (forthc. 2018, Didapress). Karin co-organised the conference “Architecture and Feminisms: Ecologies, Economies, Technologies” (2016) before Karin Reisinger and Meike Schalk edited the *Architecture and Culture* issue 5(3) called “Styles of Queer Feminist Practices and Objects in Architecture,” and the *field* issue 7(1) called “Becoming a Feminist Architect,” both 2017.

Conference webpage:

<http://www.traces.polimi.it/2018/10/02/traces-final-conference/>

Exhibition webpage:

<http://www.traces.polimi.it/2018/10/10/traces-final-exhibition-contentious-objects-ashamed-subjects/>



www.traces.polimi.it | infoTRACES@polimi.it

TRACES Final Conference and Exhibition are promoted by TRACES project, that has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon2020 Research and Innovation Programme. The views expressed here are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission.