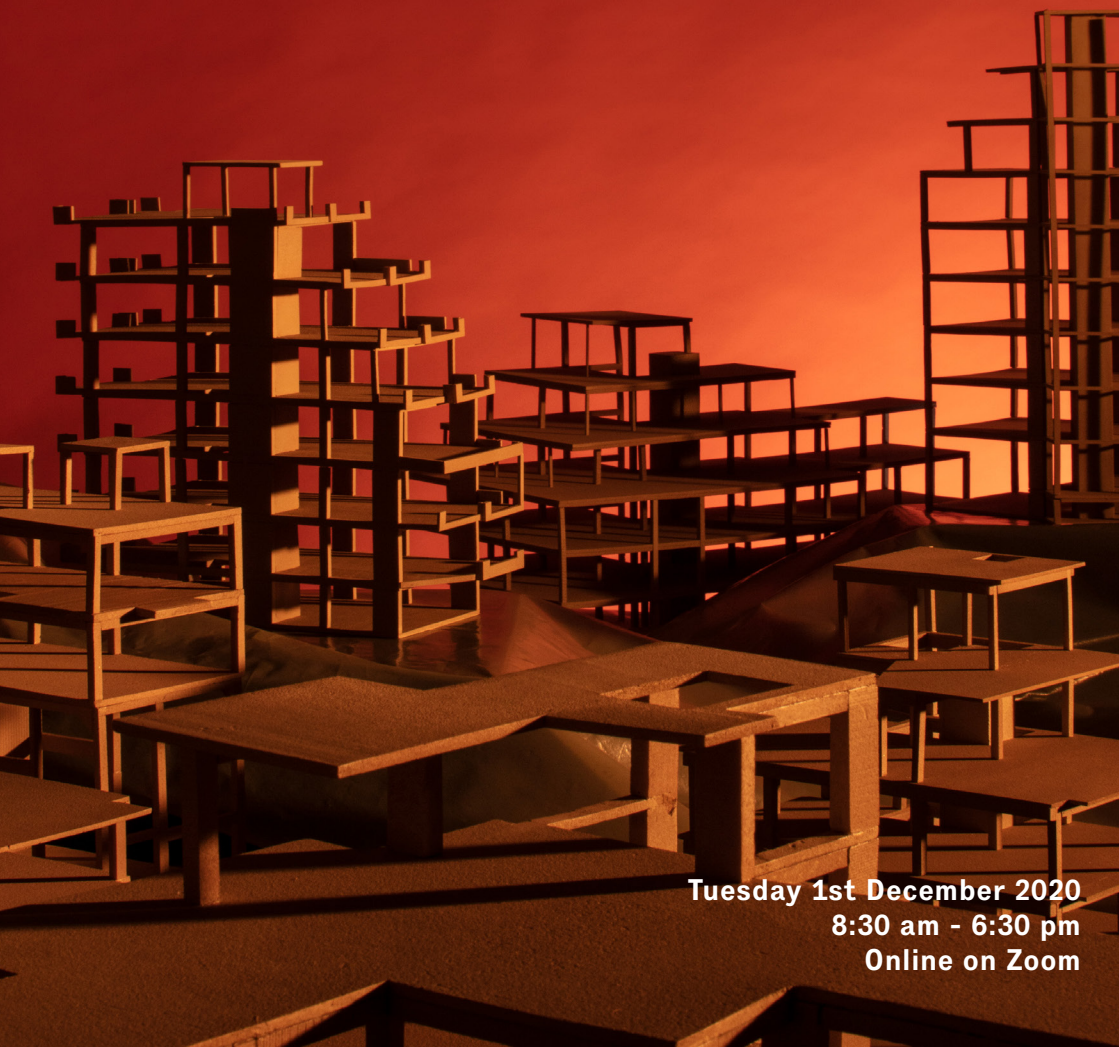


—HEAD  
Genève

*From the Page to the Screen :  
Entanglements between Heritage and Media*

# Interior Architecture Conference



Tuesday 1st December 2020  
8:30 am - 6:30 pm  
Online on Zoom



***From the Page to the Screen :  
Entanglements between Heritage and Media***

In recent history and in the public mind, a certain notion of heritage has become prevalent and pervasive, centred on a set of ideas that crystallised with modernity. These ideas originate in a Euro-Western way of thinking, which fully flourished in architectural thought over the second half of the 20th century.

“From the Page to the Screen: Entanglements between Heritage and Media”, organised by the new Master in Interior Architecture at HEAD – Genève, seeks to critically engage with crystallised notions of heritage. To this end, the conference proposes using the lenses of different media that have been used throughout history to shape our notions of heritage, tradition and preservation.

The seminar traces a path from drawing to photography, and from augmented reality to digital surveys, using the media that have enshrined current notions of heritage to question those same concepts. Additionally, the conference opens up to engage with discourses on heritage, preservation and conservation that originate from outside the Western canon. Over the course of three sessions, the conference will generate productive frictions and offer opportunities to expand our understanding of what heritage is and can be.

**Roberto Zancan, Scientific Deputy of the conference**

**Tuesday 1st December 2020**

**8h30 – 8h45**

**Jean-Pierre Greff, Director, HEAD – Genève, Switzerland**

**Welcome address and conference kick-off**

**8h45 – 9h00**

**Roberto Zancan, & Vera Sacchetti, Professors, HEAD – Genève, Switzerland**

**Theoretical overview**

## **Section 1**

**Chairman : Vera Sacchetti, Professor, HEAD – Genève, Switzerland**

**9h00 – 9h45**

**Noura Al-Sayeh, Head of Architectural Affairs, Barhain Authority for Culture and Antiquities**

**Alternative tradition: Muharraq revitalisation project**

**9h45 – 10h30**

**Amandine Kastler and Erlend Skjeseth (Kastler Skjeseth Architects) Professors, AHO Oslo, Norway**

**Transitions (Representations of interventions in historic fabric)**

**Break 10h30-10h45**

**10h45 -11h30**

**Maria Elisa Navarro Morales, Professor, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland**

**Assassins Creed II and MXT Ballet, using technology in the creation and recreation of the past**

**11h30 -12h15**

**Luis Rojo De Castro, Professor at Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura de Madrid, Spain**

**Botanical machines [On Artifacts, Memory and Nature]**

**12h15-13h00**

**Paola Scaramuzza, Professeur at Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Versailles, France**

**Villa Savoye and Le Corbusier Apt.: practice restoration on modern buildings**

## Section 2

Chairman : Kai Reaver, Professor, HEAD – Genève, Switzerland

14h15 – 15h00

Javier Fernandez Contreras, Head of Interior Architecture Department,  
HEAD – Genève, Switzerland

Reality and reconstruction: Drawings of the Utrecht Town hall by Eric  
Miralles

15h00 – 15h45

Melissa Mars, Interior Architect, EVOQ Architecture Montréal, Canada

Making real, making proud: from media to mediation in the  
conservation of historic interiors in America

Break 15h45-16h00

16h00 – 16h45

Phi Nguyen, PhD Student, HEAD – Genève, Switzerland

Impromptu conservation: Symbiosis between tangible and intangible  
heritage. The case of Thua Thiên Hue, Viet Nam

16h45 – 17h30

David Ripoll, Art Historian, Office du patrimoine et des sites de l'Etat  
de Genève, Switzerland

Genève internationale vs génie du lieu ? Enquête sur une architecture  
acclimatée

17h30 – 18h30

Group discussion among guests and participants



## Abstracts

**Noura Al-Sayeh**

**Head of Architectural Affairs, Barhain Authority for  
Culture and Antiquities**

**Alternative tradition: Muharraq revitalisation project**

The Muharraq revitalisation project has become one of the leading examples of heritage intervention in a non-Western context. The project both highlights the town's history and aims to re-balance its demographic makeup, enticing local families back through improvements to the environment and provision of community and cultural venues.

Facilitated by public-private partnerships, it involves the preservation of a number of sites and buildings, from humble divers' houses to prestigious courtyard residences to commercial warehouses, along with the upgrading of various façades and the construction of new buildings. All of these are connected by a visitor pathway, with plots vacant due to demolition landscaped as public spaces.

**Amandine Kastler and Erlend Skjeseth**

**(Kastler Skjeseth Architects) Professors, AHO Oslo, Norway**

**Transitions (Representations of interventions in historic fabric)**

Many buildings of the future already exist, meaning architects are increasingly involved in the transformation of existing structures. Central to this form of practice is the instrumentalization of architectural representation – taking stock of values and qualities that are present in existing buildings and landscapes. The work of Kastler Skjeseth Architects in the cultural and historical context of rural Norway emphasises the use of models and drawings as a crucial tool to inform built projects.

This talk will reflect on how we, as a practice, convey the complexities of a new architectural intervention in built heritage to stakeholders, clients, statutory bodies and the general public. Identifying the Nordic region as an outlier historically with regard to continental currents and ideas, the work investigates distinct pieces of vernacular architecture, understanding them not as static representations of a specific building culture but as continuously evolving translations of outside impulses merged with local materials and craft. The main research question guiding both built work and academic output is the following: How can critical analysis of history and tradition guide future interventions?

**Maria Elisa Navarro Morales**

**Professor, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland**

**Assassins Creed II and MXT Ballet, using technology in the creation and recreation of the past**

This presentation will show two different projects where technology and play were used as tools for interpreting history. The first will be the video game Assassins Creed II, where the notion of game as structured play will be used to explore possibilities opened up by the playfulness of the game, allowing for engagement with the historical city. The second will be the exhibition MXT Ballet and how Gadamer's notion of play was used to create a shared experience of the city using architectural history as point of departure.

The purpose of the presentation is to examine unconventional ways of interpreting the past that nevertheless make it meaningful for us today.

**Luis Rojo De Castro**

**Professor at Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura de Madrid, Spain**

**Botanical Machines [On Artifacts, Memory and Nature]**

It is generally accepted that landscape, as a concept as well as an instrument, was produced in the 1700s as a cultural construct of nature, dependent on both a complex division of labour in developed economies like England or Holland and a new representation of nature in painting. Nature was a perspective, a background for figures and buildings that belonged to the new urban world.

Ever since, nature has been constructed and re-constructed repeatedly, as the subject of scientific enquiry but also as cultural model and as representational paradigm. These processes signal our progressive distancing from nature and the latter's gradual artificialisation. Today we think of it as a memory, the incomplete image of genuine origins that have been lost and that we try to recover through science and fiction in a sort of representation, rebuilding it, however late, in order to re-identify with it. A lost heritage.

**Paola Scaramuzza**

**Professeure, Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Versailles, France**

**Villa Savoye and Le Corbusier Apt.: Practicing restoration on modern buildings**

New technologies such as BIM, 3Dscan, etc., are causing a great transformation in the theory and practice of restoration. Digital investigations of structures, scientific analyses of materials and innovative intervention techniques have given a new status to the conservation of modernist buildings. These buildings, initially meant to be free of historical associations, are increasingly the object of management processes aimed at protecting construction elements over time and to adapt spaces to uses other than those originally intended.

Through some key examples of interventions on modern structures, such as the Villa Savoye, Le Corbusier's apartment on 24 Rue Nungesser et Coli, and Carlo Scarpa's Tomba Brion, we will try to demonstrate how cleaning and maintenance are not just management actions with regard to existing buildings but are also becoming new ways of envisioning the architectural project today.

**Javier Fernandez Contreras**

**Head of Interior Architecture Department, HEAD – Genève, Switzerland**

**Reality and reconstruction: Drawings of the Utrecht Town hall by Eric Miralles**

When, in February 1997, Enric Miralles and Benedetta Tagliabue won the competition for the renovation of the Town Hall of Utrecht, they were confronted with a building that had been under construction for centuries, at first as a set of medieval houses, later on as a continuous adaptation and remodelling of these houses to serve the uses and functions of a public building. The archive of the Miralles Foundation in Barcelona houses 479 of Enric Miralles's original drawings for the Utrecht Town Hall project. Most of them are floor plans made on onionskin paper, whose size ranges approximately from DIN A5 to DIN A3, mainly at 1/400 and 1/200 scales.

When Enric Miralles, in successive drawings, began to develop a new structure for the Town Hall of Utrecht, his way of drawing and the kinetics of his hand were gradually incorporated into the geometry of the floor plan. The evolution of the project shows a progressive differentiation from the architectural character of the original tecto-



nics, as the floor plan went from being structured by history to being configured by a way of drawing. Miralles drew and designed by hand, on onionskin paper superimposed on the previous version of the floor plan, at small scales when searching for the overall configuration, at progressively larger scales to delineate with precision the geometry of the project and its constituent components.

The repetition of this process over time produced a manual presence in the floor plan of the Utrecht project. The notion that the repetition of the same idea at different times would produce different iterations helped Miralles explain that architectural geometry was linked to the execution of multiple drawings in the design process as a mechanism to dispose of the constraints of heritage.

**Melissa Mars**

**Interior Architect, EVOQ Architecture Montréal, Canada**

**Making real, making proud: from media to mediation in the conservation of historic interiors in America**

New technologies and communication tools are increasingly influencing our practice of built heritage conservation. They allow us to transcribe, document, understand and communicate information to act as gatekeepers, mediators and influencers. In refining our practices, however, they catalyse controversial trends such as digital archiving and the destruction of physical witnesses. This is even more true for heritage interiors, as these spaces are more vulnerable to change and less accessible than public spaces.

Due to contradictory legislation and the complexities of expanding the concept of heritage, the conservation of these spaces struggles to emerge from nostalgia, neglect, and denial. This presentation aims to demonstrate the fundamental need to change our paradigms regarding the conservation of heritage interiors through different cases in America and the renewed use of media.

**Phi Nguyen**

**PhD Student, HEAD – Genève, Switzerland**

**Impromptu conservation: Symbiosis between tangible and intangible heritage. The case of Thua Thiên Hue, Viet Nam**

This paper explores the transformation of and relationship among aging architecture (interior space vs. form language), the urban fabric, and marginal communities' contemporary interventions by interrogating an assemblage of cultural material fragments from Thua Thiên Hue, organised into four trans-scalar and trans-temporal categories. Building on the Historic Urban Landscape debate, I propose the concept of Impromptu Conservation, which considers Hue and its surrounding villages as an on-going bottom-up collective project and process of inhabitation and non-deliberate preservation, entangled between nature and culture, tangible and intangible.

This glossary of fragments demonstrates different Impromptu Conservation methods where local habitat and community building also function as heritage placemaking and vice versa. Drawing from postcolonial and urban studies, this re-interpretation of the province could challenge conventional top-down retrospective approaches to heritage management while revealing not only alternative practices and attitudes toward urban development but also ways of re-defining heritage and urban habitability.

**David Ripoll**

**Art Historian, Office du patrimoine et des sites de l'Etat de Genève, Switzerland**

**Genève internationale vs génie du lieu ? Enquête sur une architecture acclimatée**

To define the value of and identify intervention strategies with regard to existing heritage, it is crucial to recognise and understand the motives, models and actors that contributed to the genesis and modification of buildings throughout their history.

Focused on the city of Geneva and the study of 19th- and 20th-century buildings, this presentation proposes a reflection on the notion – crucial in heritage theory – of “local”. Since the acceleration of trade in the 19th century, the work of the architect has focused on capturing and interpreting models distributed on a global scale. For the historian, therefore, it is a question of understanding the logic of rewriting more than pursuing a hypothetical spirit of place.



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**A conference organised by HEAD – Genève's Interior Architecture Department  
01.12.2020**

**Scientific deputy: Roberto Zancan**

**Organisation: Javier Fernandez Contreras, Valentina De Luigi, Anne-Lise Ollier**

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