



PARTICIPATION IN ART/MUSEUMS

CONFERENCE

4 – 5 September 2025

Zagreb, Croatia

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Filozofski fakultet
University of Zagreb
Sveučilište u Zagrebu

Ivana Lučića 3
10000 Zagreb, Croatia



PARTICIPATION IN ART/MUSEUMS CONFERENCE

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb
Ivana Lučića 3, Zagreb, Croatia
4 – 5 September 2025

ORGANIZERS

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb
Cabinet for Architecture and Urbanism with the Archives of Fine Arts in Zagreb, Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts

CONFERENCE PARTNERS

National Collaborative Platform New Patrons
Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
PARTICIPATION IN ART/MUSEUMS

4 – 5 September 2025

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
University of Zagreb

Programme and Book of Abstracts

Preface

We are pleased to present the Book of Abstracts for the Participation in Art/Museums conference, a gathering dedicated to exploring the rich and multifaceted relationships between art, community, and participation.

The contributions address five topics, which make up four sessions and a panel.

The first session, **Curating Change**, investigates the complex terrain of participatory and socially engaged art across political and historical contexts. The contributions examine how participation is shaped by power, institutional mediation, and historical circumstance. They invite reflection on participation as a contested process, which can both reinforce hierarchies and dismantle them, and which draws on ambiguities, failures, and unfinished forms for its transformative potential.

The session **Making Places** explores how artistic and cultural interventions reconfigure urban landscapes marked by post-industrial decline, environmental precarity, and socio-economic fragmentation. Focusing on specific case studies, the papers examine how public art, grassroots initiatives, and participatory events activate neglected or contested spaces, turning them into arenas for community engagement, collective memory, and sustainable futures.

Shifting Institutional Practices explores participation as a complex, contested, and often uneven process. It highlights the ambiguities, contradictions, and structural conditions that shape how participation is framed, enacted, and experienced. Together, these contributions investigate how institutions (and an experimental museum project) navigate the tensions between access, authority, and sustainability.

The fourth session, **Engaging Different Communities**, considers participation in art as a transformative practice that reshapes what art can do and for whom it is intended. The papers highlight how art and cultural heritage can be co-created and reinterpreted through collective processes that centre on equity, agency, and belonging, and democratise cultural production by empowering local communities, youth, and underrepresented groups as co-creators of meaning and memory.

The **New Patron panel** focuses on a specific approach to commissioning and realising artworks in public space. The presented projects offer a compelling look at how commissioning artworks by communities can reshape urban dynamics and reclaim public spaces as commons co-produced by their inhabitants.

The contributions featured in this book of abstracts reflect a wide range of disciplines - from art history, sociology, anthropology, and urban studies, to cultural practice and museum work. Whether theoretical reflections or case studies, each abstract offers a valuable lens into the dynamic and evolving field of participatory art and culture. We thank all contributors for their thoughtful and inspiring work, and we look forward to the conversations and collaborations that will emerge from this conference.

Organizing Committee



PROGRAMME

Thursday, 4 September 2025

09:00 – 09:30 REGISTRATION

09:30 – 10:00 WELCOME ADDRESS

10:00 – 11:00 KEYNOTE SPEECH

Anna Chiara Cimoli – Participation without Rhetoric

11:00 – 12:45 SESSION 1: CURATING CHANGE / moderator: Patricia Počanić

Ileana Parvu – Ana Lupas: Working with Peasant Communities in 1970s Romania

Corey Dzenko – Secretary to the People: Recent Case Studies from Sheryl Oring's *I Wish to Say*

Jasmin Kolkwitz – Participatory Strategies and Practices in Rasheed Araeen's work *Shamiyaana – Food for Thought: Thought for Change* (2016–2017)

Xiangyin Gu – Speaking the Unspeakable: Participation, Haunting, and the Politics of Collective Memory

12:45 – 14:15 LUNCH BREAK

14:15 – 15:45 SESSION 2: MAKING PLACES / moderator: Lidija Butković Mićin

Petra Kelemen, Sanja Potkonjak, Nevena Škrbić Alempijević – From Factory to Festival:

Space, Art, and Community in Sesvete

Diletta Haberl – Growing Together: Giuliano Mauri's *Cattedrale Vegetale* and the Poetics of Participatory Nature

Daniel Ongjerth – How Art Can Change a Neighborhood – a Case Study of the Work of 11_11

16:30 – 18:00 VISIT TO THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART IN ZAGREB

Guided tour of Andreja Kulunčić's exhibition *Making the World a Better Place* (optional)

PROGRAMME

Friday, 5 September 2025

10:00 – 10:30 REGISTRATION

10:30 – 11:30 KEYNOTE SPEECH

Ana Škegro, Celina Damjanović – MSU Youth Club – Actively Engaging Young People in Museum Programmes

11:30 – 13:15 SESSION 3: SHIFTING INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES / moderator: **Željka Miklošević**

Dalibor Prančević – Reimagining the Museum: Participation and Inclusion in Vladimir Dodig Trokut's Antimuzej

Heejung Ryoh – Democratizing the Exhibition? A Critical Case Study of the Seoul Museum of Art's Citizen Curator Program (2015-2022)

Lorena Šimić – Digital Museum Presence: Stories from the Museum Repository as an Example of Participation in Virtual Space

András Müllner – The Canoe Made of One/Two (?) Trees. A Case Study of a Communication Failure in Ethnographic Film

13:15 – 14:45 LUNCH BREAK

14:45 – 16:15 SESSION 4: ENGAGING DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES / moderator: **Josipa Alviž**

Ana Rizmaul, Sanja Lončar, Janko Petrović – Participatory Artistic Practices in Heritage Education: The Case of *Luka's Lines* (*Lukine crte*) and Endangered Wooden Architecture in Central Croatia

Benedetta Caglioti, Giorgia Sala – Archaeology and Childhood: A Project of Fruition without Perceptual and Cognitive Barriers

Blanka Stančić Puhak – The Inclusion of People with Intellectual Disabilities in Art

Sandra Uskoković – Art in Motion: Collaboration and Circulation of Communities in Representing Migration

16:15 – 16:30 COFFEE BREAK

16:30 – 17:30 NEW PATRONS – ENGAGING COMMUNITY IN COMMISSIONING ART IN PUBLIC SPACE (short presentations of the methodology and ongoing projects in Croatia) / moderator: **Željka Miklošević**

Jasmina Šarić – Working with a Community Using the New Patrons Methodology

Sonja Leboš – Participation in Art – The Case-Study of the EU Project ALILAND (Art Living Lab to Repair the Land)

Maša Štrbac – Challenges in the Implementation of New Patrons Projects – the Case-Study of the Let's Renew a Well! Project



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Challenges in the Implementation of New Patrons Projects – the Case-Study of the Let's Renew a Well! Project

Anna Chiara Cimoli

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Participation without Rhetoric

The rhetoric of participation can be alluring but also insidious. It can obscure or reveal underlying tensions – from the ambiguous promise of “inclusion” to the unclear knowledge of the people we invite to the table; from the disappointment of tepid or polemical participation, to the lack of reflection on the tools chosen to support the process, particularly, evaluation.

Participatory processes in museums often evoke “white fragility” (White Fragility, Di-Angelo, 2018) or other forms of “institutional fragility”. At the same time, they can act as a reagent that exposes malfunctions or flaws in museums in terms of shared visions, governance policies, relationships with the local communities, prior engagement with the public, and communication (The Nightmare of Participation, Miessen, 2011). However, participation should not be considered a panacea, and museums that decide to co-curate, co-design, and engage in public dialogue must be aware of the time, energy, and scrutiny this entails. Is it worth it? What are the objectives, implications, and expectations? What determines the “success” of a participatory practice? And above all, what do we mean by “success”? These are some of the questions to be faced, without rhetoric.

This keynote address aims to explore the theoretical framework of the issue from both a scholarly and a practitioner’s perspective, with a specific interest in art museums. To do so, it draws on several case studies that arise from first-hand experience, focusing specifically on the co-design of an urban community museum (MUBIG, Milan) and a shared curatorship project carried out at a contemporary art collection (GAMEC, Bergamo). While the first case raises questions about collaboration with the neighbourhood in all its intimate diversity and the serendipity this entails, the second proposes a reflection on the work of a permanent panel, called upon to reorganize the museum collection over two years.

Anna Chiara Cimoli is a lecturer in History of Contemporary Art at the University of Bergamo. After graduating in Art History, she earned a diploma in Museology from the Ecole du Louvre in Paris and a PhD in History of Architecture from the Polytechnic of Turin. She has worked for many years at the intersection of visual art, education and public engagement, collaborating with numerous museums and cultural institutions. She has published extensively in the field of the relationship between museums and society, with a focus on migration, coloniality, and memory (<https://unibg.academia.edu/AnnaChiaraCimoli>). She is the co-editor of the online magazine *Roots & Routes. Research on Visual Culture* and the curator of the *Museologia presente* book series at Nomos publishing house. She is the President of the C.A.S.V.A. Foundation, which promotes the knowledge of the visual culture and architecture archives of the 20th century preserved by the Municipality of Milan.

Ileana Parvu

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Ana Lupas: Working with Peasant Communities in 1970s Romania

In the first half of the 1970s, Romanian artist Ana Lupas undertook two participatory actions, which can be seen as an expansion of her artistic practice. Born in 1940, she was trained and initially active in the field of tapestry. As she recounts, she left the city of Cluj, where she lived (and still lives), to engage in collaborative projects with the peasant community of Mărgău, a village in Transylvania.

My paper proposes examining these two actions by Lupas in connection with the following conference topics: “Collaborative and Co-Creative Art Forms”, “Critical Views on Participation”, and “Historical Perspectives”.

Lupas’s work with the peasants of Mărgău aimed to revive rural skills and traditions that were disappearing in the wake of the agricultural collectivisation begun in Romania in 1949, following the Soviet model. However, the way she engaged with this community is not without ambiguity. Drawing on archival research and an examination of contemporaneous publications, my contribution will attempt to unpack the multiple dimensions of Lupas’s participatory actions.

While critics in the 1970s emphasised the collective nature of Lupas’s work, these projects were also, at the time, presented as the product of an individual artist, referred to in Romanian in the masculine singular. Furthermore, most of the artworks derived from these two participatory actions – mainly produced after 1989 – no longer reflect their collaborative character, reverting instead to a model of authorship centred on the artist as sole creator.

My paper will examine a series of questions related to the work Lupas carried out in Mărgău during the 1970s. I will explore whether the collaborative aspect was genuinely central to both actions, or whether it was strategically emphasised – perhaps as a means of circumventing censorship.

Other questions arise from the asymmetry in the relationship between the urban artist, already a recognised figure, and the peasants who participated in her actions yet remained anonymous. Did Lupas invoke the notion of “patriotic labour”, which Romanians were expected to perform outside their paid employment, to persuade the peasants to contribute to her projects without compensation?

Finally, I will attempt to assess the social dimension of art within the Romanian artistic landscape of the 1970s. While Lupas is celebrated today as a forerunner of socially engaged art, it is important to ask whether, in 1970s Romania, it was even possible to produce art that was not socially engaged.

Ileana Parvu is a professor of history and theory of contemporary art at the Geneva University of Art and Design and a Privatdozentin at the University of Basel. She has presented her research on Romanian art of the 1970s at international conferences, including those organised by the UK-based Association for Art History and the CIHA. Her essays on the subject have been

published in peer-reviewed journals such as *ArtMargins* (“Reenactment, Repetition, Return. Ion Grigorescu’s Two Dialogues with Ceaușescu”, *ArtMargins Online*, January 26, 2018: <https://artmargins.com/reenactment-repetition-return/>) and *RIHA Journal* (“Another Realism: Ion Grigorescu, Photography and Document in 1970s Romania”, *RIHA Journal*, 2024: <https://journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/rihajournal/article/view/100491>). She has also contributed chapters to edited volumes, including: “Craftsmanship from the World Before. Artisanal Skills in Ana Lupaș’ Participatory Actions” in I. Parvu (ed.), *A Show of Hands: Crafting Concepts in Contemporary Art* (Berlin, De Gruyter, 2024); and “Wiederholte Anfänge. Textilkunst und kollektive Aktionen bei Ana Lupaș” in Angela Matyssek and Franciska Nowel Camino (eds.), *Wann fängt Kunst an? Das ‘variable’ Frühwerk in der Gegenwartskunst* (Munich, Edition Metzel, 2025). Her forthcoming book on Ana Lupaș, titled *Les fils renoués: Ana Lupaș, de la tapisserie aux actions collectives*, will be published this year by Sombres torrents (Rennes).

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Secretary to the People: Recent Case Studies from Sheryl Oring's *I Wish to Say*

In 2004, artist Sheryl Oring (b. 1965) first donned a red, white, and blue outfit of a 1960s-styled secretary and performed her ongoing social practice project *I Wish to Say*. She asked members of the public, “If I were the president, what would you wish to say to me?” She typed their responses verbatim with a typewriter onto a 4×6-inch postcard. Oring uses carbon paper to make a second postcard. She mails the original to the White House in Washington, D.C. and archives and exhibits the copy. To date, she has typed over 5,000 postcards in her attempts to “activate democracy.” Oring’s project authors a more feminist record of history; for more than two decades she has collected a diverse range of individuals’ personal concerns from their lived experiences – the types of stories that often do not make it into textbooks or other official narratives of history. This type of historical record, along with the social change and democratic participation encouraged by *I Wish to Say*, has taken on heightening urgency in today’s changing political landscape of the United States.

As an art historian who studies contemporary performance and photography, I first served as a typist for Oring’s *I Wish to Say* in 2012 when she put out a public call for performers to expand her secretarial pool. Since then, I have published and presented my scholarly analyses of *I Wish to Say* and have also typed with Oring over half a dozen times. Each time, I am moved by the messages that people entrust with me. For this presentation, as a participant-observer I will provide an overview of *I Wish to Say*. Then I will offer three case studies of the recent exhibition of and programming around *I Wish to Say* for different types of institutions. These include: 1) a 2024 exhibition and academic programming I curated for my university; 2) a 2025 exhibition and programming held at the Free Library of Philadelphia’s public downtown location; and 3) an exhibition and high school curriculum created for a private high school. By facilitating specific programming in each of these institutions, Oring and her collaborators best meet the mission that governs each organization and shapes their different audiences. Doing so invites the public to collaborate on the content of *I Wish to Say* as participants experience Oring’s and her secretaries’ act of radical listening.

Corey Dzenko, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Art History in the Department of Art and Design at Monmouth University (New Jersey, United States). She focuses her research on contemporary art and photography in terms of the politics of identity and place. She was a Visiting Fellow in Art History at the University of Nottingham, presents her work internationally, and has published articles in *Burlington Contemporary*, *Men and Masculinities*, and *Afterimage*. She co-edited *Contemporary Citizenship, Art, and Visual Culture: Making and Being Made* (Routledge, 2018). Recently she curated the 2024 exhibition *I Wish That I Had Spoken Only of It All: Twenty Years of Sheryl Oring’s “I Wish to Say”* for Monmouth University’s DiMattio Gallery. Currently she is working with Oring on the book project *Secretary to the People: Civic Engagement Through the Art of Sheryl Oring* for Intellect Books (forthcoming in Fall 2026).

Jasmin Kolkwitz

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Participatory Strategies and Practices in Rasheed Araeen's work *Shamiyaana – Food for Thought: Thought for Change* (2016–2017)

Participatory approaches have become a defining feature of contemporary art. While tendencies toward participatory strategies were already evident in the action and performance art of the 1950s and 1960s, a so-called participatory turn (Milevska) has since taken place. This shift is marked by artists and institutions increasingly seeking to transform audiences into engaged participants—or even collaborators. The aesthetic experience associated with this transformation is typically characterised by the convergence of reception and production. Since the early 21st century, large-scale exhibitions and major art events have emerged as key venues for participatory artistic and curatorial practices. These often aim to engage not only professionals but also broader audiences, including local communities and marginalised groups. Participatory art encompasses a wide spectrum –from material to immaterial forms – and displays a high degree of diversity in how audiences are involved, ranging from symbolic interaction to real political participation.

This paper critically examines *Shamiyaana – Food for Thought: Thought for Change* (2016–2017), a work by Rasheed Araeen (b. 1935, Karachi; based in London since 1964), realised in Kotzia Square, Athens, Greece, as part of *documenta 14*. Created specifically for the Athens segment of the exhibition, the piece functioned as an installation in public space but came fully to life through the daily communal meals shared with the public. It thus constituted a walk-in, functional, and social sculpture that relied fundamentally on active audience participation. In the politically polarised context of the European debt crisis, which in Greece also manifested as a deep social crisis, Araeen's work created a platform for both regional and transregional publics. It vividly demonstrated how the people excluded from cultural life due to existential hardships, such as refugees and homeless people, and the “art elite” could gather under one roof.

The paper explores how the artist addressed and activated the audience, the specific modes of participation that were realised, and how participants perceived the artistic experience. Accordingly, the analysis focuses on the work's structure, its activation strategies, and the forms of participation that emerged through its process. Furthermore, the paper explores the work's socio-political and symbolic dimensions. Drawing on participant observation, qualitative interviews, and a quantitative audience survey, the research yields empirical insights that reveal not only the participatory functions of *Shamiyaana* but also the differentiated experiential dimensions it elicited among diverse audiences.

The discussion centres on both the degree and the nature of participatory engagement in this particular case.

Jasmin Kolkwitz, MA, is a doctoral candidate at the Institute of Art History at the University of Marburg, Germany. Until March 2025, she also worked as a research associate and lecturer at the Institute of Art History. Previously, she was a member of the editorial team of the journal *Rundbrief Fotografie. Analoge und digitale Bildmedien in Archiven und Sammlungen* and a research associate at the German Documentation Centre for Art History – Bildarchiv Foto Marburg. Her research interests focus on contemporary art, exhibition history and curatorial practice, socially engaged and participatory arts, audience research and interdisciplinary methods. In her PhD thesis (supervised by Prof. Hubert Locher/Prof. Rachel Mader), submitted in November 2024, she deals with *documenta 14* and participatory practices within the exhibition. She conducted a field study in 2017, employing expert interviews and visitor surveys in both Athens and Kassel.

Xiangyin Gu

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Speaking the Unspeakable: Participation, Haunting, and the Politics of Collective Memory

This paper explores how participatory art, when liberated from traditional institutional frameworks, can create ambiguous and unresolved spaces where affective intensity and political significance intersect without closure. Focusing on The Centre for the Less Good Idea, initiated by William Kentridge in Johannesburg, I argue that such practices embody a distinctly decolonial form of collective creativity, resisting both monumental representation and institutional containment.

At the Centre, performances emerge through improvisation, poetic fragmentation, music, and visual gestures, creating a dramaturgy defined by interruption rather than explicit narrative. Trauma is not represented or resolved but instead allowed to leak, echo, and remain partially unsaid. This generates what I describe as the gap between the affective and the political: a structural tension where collective memory neither resolves into clear political messaging nor retreats into purely private feeling.

Such hybrid “grey zones” – between participation and spectatorship, expression and silence – become crucial spaces for engaging politically charged topics that conventional institutional discourse often struggles to address openly. Rather than asserting authoritative narratives or ideological clarity, these collaborative performances sustain uncertainty and mutual vulnerability. This approach becomes especially powerful in post-apartheid South Africa or post-Cultural Revolution China, contexts where the official narratives either overwrite personal memories or suppress collective mourning altogether. Here, participatory ambiguity is not weakness but ethical necessity.

Consequently, participation as explored at the Centre is best understood not as a pedagogical model but as a form of praxis. Rejecting hierarchical exceptionalism, it embraces what might be described as the “good-enough”: collaborative formations that resist mastery, rehearse without fixed outcomes, and embrace productive imperfection. By deliberately refraining from closure, participants inhabit a shared and generative space of possibility, forging meaningful collective encounters around histories too sensitive or contested to be captured within traditional institutional frameworks.

Ultimately, this paper argues for the transformative potential of participatory art, specifically in its capacity to dwell in unresolved tensions and collective uncertainty. It is within this critical gap – between the felt and the spoken, the private and the public, the affective and the political – that art can meaningfully engage histories still too raw for conventional representation.

Xiangyin Tom Gu is a doctoral researcher at the Royal College of Art, London. His practice-led research investigates memory studies through the Freudian psychoanalytic concept of screen memory, specifically exploring how layered, temporally complex memories shape understandings of historically sensitive contexts in post-Cultural Revolution China. Gu’s work critically reconsiders the relationship between affective intensity and political narratives, interrogating

the interplay of images and texts as sites of repression and revelation. By focusing on how older memories can obscure or “screen” more recent historical experiences, his research illuminates the double-layered repression – both psychoanalytic and political – embedded within familial and collective archives. Central to his method is a rigorous close reading that allows the unspeakable and aseptic knowledge to emerge in spaces traditionally obscured by institutional or ideological constraints. Bridging psychoanalysis, visual culture, and political aesthetics, Gu’s research challenges conventional narratives of memory, trauma, and history, ultimately seeking new possibilities for articulating silence and ambiguity. His academic practice proposes innovative theoretical frameworks and artistic methodologies for engaging ethically and affectively with unresolved historical tensions.

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From Factory to Festival: Space, Art, and Community in Sesvete

This paper discusses how ruins of deindustrialised sites can be reimagined and reactivated as spaces for social cohesion through public events. In such contexts – in which spaces bear the marks of economic decline, social fragmentation, and power struggles – cultural, artistic, and activist interventions are often framed as alternative ways for individuals and communities to engage with their surroundings. This analysis centres on the cultural project “Q’ART u tvom KVARTU”, held in May 2025 at the site of the former Sljeme industrial complex in Sesvete, a neighbourhood in Zagreb. The event is part of the broader platform “Projekt Ilica: Q’ART Community ART&CARE”, which has included festivals on Ilica Street since 2017 and, since 2023, events in various Zagreb neighbourhoods. “Projekt Ilica: Q’ART” defines itself as an initiative that “integrates contemporary art, community, and radical inclusivity with the aim of social regeneration”. The paper explores how this integration is realised in the specific context of Sesvete.

As part of ongoing ethnographic research, the authors have followed a three-day festival, including its planning process and the responses that followed. This case study, focused on the former Sljeme factory and the various visions for its future, is situated within a broader research project that traces Zagreb’s postindustrial transformations (HRZZ-IP-2022-10-2473). It analyses the roles attributed to the festival by its organisers, its physical transformation of the site, and its potential to signal or challenge future uses of the space. It is grounded in anthropological approaches to postindustrial transformations and draws on theoretical frameworks from the anthropology of public events and the anthropology of space and place. Special attention is paid to community engagement by addressing how local cultural institutions, artists, schools, NGOs, grassroots initiatives, entrepreneurs, and local inhabitants participate in the festival, how they build connections and interpret the space and its significance for Sesvete.

Petra Kelemen is an associate professor at the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. She is currently participating in the project The Transformation of the Postindustrial City: Space, Community, and Work funded by the Croatian Science Foundation. Her research interests and teaching focus on: cultural policies, heritage-making, intangible cultural heritage, festivals and other public events, and the anthropology of tourism.

Sanja Potkonjak is a full professor at the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. She is a team member of the project The Transformation of the Postindustrial City: Space, Community, and Work funded by the Croatian Science Foundation. Her research interests include postindustrial anthropology, studies of discard and waste, and environmental humanities.

Nevena Škrbić Alempijević is a full professor at the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. She is currently leading the project The Transformation of the Postindustrial City: Space, Community, and Work funded by the Croatian Science Foundation. She served as the president of the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF) for two terms. Her research interests focus on postindustrial and urban anthropology, social memory, place and space, cultural regions and island studies, as well as festivals and other public events.

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Growing Together: Giuliano Mauri's *Cattedrale Vegetale* and the Poetics of Participatory Nature

This proposal explores *Cattedrale Vegetale* (*Vegetal Cathedral*), a visionary environmental artwork by Italian artist Giuliano Mauri (1938–2009), as a case study of a participatory approach to public art that redefines the relationships between nature, community, and spiritual space through ecological time and collective responsibility. *Cattedrale Vegetale* consists of large wooden frameworks designed to host growing trees that, over time, take the shape of a gothic cathedral. Realised in several locations across Italy, the project offers a unique perspective on participation. While it does not involve co-design or collaborative authorship in the conventional sense, it introduces a slower, long-term form of engagement. Communities, institutions, and individuals are invited to maintain the structure, care for the growing trees, and witness its transformation over decades. In doing so, they become stewards of the artwork, blurring the boundaries between spectator and participant. This proposal argues that *Cattedrale Vegetale* exemplifies a form of “ecological co-creation”, in which natural elements, time, weather, and decay become co-authors of the work. It challenges fixed notions of artistic control, permanence, and individual authorship, emphasising instead interdependence, shared stewardship, and the agency of non-human actors. The proposal situates Mauri's work within broader discourses of cultural democracy, environmental engagement, and the re-enchantment of public space. The project fosters inclusivity and care-based participation, inviting diverse communities to interact with nature not only as viewers but as active co-inhabitants of a living artwork. Ultimately, this proposal presents Giuliano Mauri's *Cattedrale Vegetale* as a living monument to slowness, transformation, and shared responsibility – an artwork not made to endure unchanged, but to grow, evolve, and be reimagined by and with the communities that host it.

Diletta Haberl is a PhD candidate in Art History at the Department of Human Sciences, Università degli Studi dell'Aquila. Her doctoral research focuses on the accounts of foreign travellers who explored central and southern Italy during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, particularly those who ventured beyond the canonical Grand Tour routes. Her project investigates how travellers engaged with medieval heritage across regions such as Abruzzo and Umbria, combining art historical analysis with cultural and mobility studies. She holds both a BA and an MA in Art History from Università degli Studi La Sapienza of Rome. Her MA thesis examined the interdisciplinary work of the German artist Herta Ottolenghi Wedekind zur Horst, exploring the intersections of poetry, sculpture, and textile design in early twentieth-century Italy. Her research interests include the reception of medieval art in the modern era, word and image studies, and artistic practices that blur the boundaries between disciplines and media. She has participated in international conferences and contributes to cultural initiatives that promote art historical research and dissemination of its results. Her academic work is characterised by a transhistorical and comparative approach, with a particular focus on travel writing, artistic geography, and the transmission of visual culture across time and space.

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How Art Can Change a Neighbourhood – a Case Study of the Work of 11_11

The 11_11 organisation launched its activities in 2012 when the vacant spaces owned by the local government's 11th district were transformed into artist studios. This has evolved into its current line of work, carrying out major urban cultural revitalisation programmes in Budapest. 11_11 is a non-profit organisation operating under the umbrella of Eleven Blokk Art Foundation and its limited company, the Centre for Culture and Urban Design. Focusing on culture, contemporary art, communication and policy-making, its mission has been to create a platform for art organisations, NGOs and residents, and facilitate their efforts to turn the Hungarian capital city into a more sustainable and liveable place.

The organisation has created artists' studios and one non-profit gallery in thirteen spaces, mostly basements and cellars, in the 11th and 8th districts. Prior to that, these spaces had been underused for decades. Low costs made it a win-win solution for the involved artists and the municipalities. Based on physical contact between cultural spaces and their surrounding area, 11_11 has become a cultural organisation working at the intersection of contemporary art and urban regeneration.

In defining its role, 11_11 started gathering knowledge about the neighbourhood in which it is located. It organised neighbourhood festivals for residents and launched an oral history programme about the progressive/underground music and art scene of the district, which was significant in the entire country from the 1960s to the 2000s. These research and documentation projects have contributed to the development of the area's identity.

Based on this experience, 11_11 was commissioned to conceptualise and realise 'Margit Quarter', the revitalisation programme for the centre of Budapest's 2nd District. In addition to the high number of cultural venues and organisations, the neighbourhood is burdened by heavy traffic, air pollution and a high number of vacant commercial spaces. 11_11 could effectively help the local municipality to solve many of the problems and set up a programme aimed at creating a liveable and sustainable environment for companies and residents. This programme focuses on implementing cultural and art events, renting out empty spaces and establishing an upscale community in the target area.

Daniel Ongjerth studied at the Pázmány Péter Catholic University and the Free University in Berlin. Since 2005, he has been involved in the cultural revitalisation of Budapest's vacant spaces of all sizes and shapes, and in doing so, he has established links between cultural activities, visual arts and urban revitalisation programs. From 2009 to 2012, he was one of the founders and creative directors of the Fogasház Cultural Centre. Since 2012, he has been working on the Bartók Quarter project for the revitalisation of the area around Bartók Béla street, an area significant not only in the 11th district but in the entire Hungarian Capital. From 2015 to 2022, he served as director of INDA Gallery. In 2020, he co-founded the Centre for Culture and Urban Development / 11_11 and became the director in charge of the revitalisation of the centre of Margit Quarter in Budapest's Second District. In recent years, he has co-authored numerous plans for cultural and community-based city development projects in Budapest, including plans for specific districts.

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MSU Youth Club – Actively Engaging Young People in Museum's Programmes

In an age where contemporary art institutions face growing challenges in remaining relevant to younger generations, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb (MSU) has developed a dynamic and sustainable model of youth engagement through the MSU Youth Club. Established in 2016 as part of the international Translocal: Museum as Toolbox project, the MSU Youth Club continues to thrive beyond the project's original scope, serving as a platform for the active involvement of young people aged 17 to 27 in the museum's programming and institutional life. The paper presents the methodologies, experiences, and long-term outcomes of the MSU Youth Club as a participatory educational model that empowers youth through collaborative learning, creative production, and critical dialogue.

By shifting from passive audiences to active co-creators, the Club members take part in curatorial activities, artistic production, organisation of public events, guided tours, podcast hosting, video content production, and peer-led discussions with artists and experts. Projects such as *From a Different Angle* and *Art Works! – European Culture of Resistance and Liberation*, *Museum Practicum* and the *Tobogan* podcast series illustrate how young people not only interpret but also reshape museum narratives from their perspectives. Through continuous mentorship, horizontal decision-making, and interdisciplinary practice, the Club cultivates a sense of ownership and responsibility toward institutions while fostering deeper connections with contemporary art and culture. The model promotes inclusion, autonomy, and innovation, proving particularly effective in demystifying contemporary art and making it accessible to broader youth audiences.

The paper will shed light on key insights from two different perspectives: that of a mentor working closely with the MSU Youth Club for nearly a decade, and that of a Club member participating actively in the Club's programs for over seven years, addressing challenges, strategies for meaningful youth participation, and the transformative potential of co-created museum experiences. They argue that by allowing young people to define the terms of their engagement, institutions not only revitalise their practices but also shape more democratic, responsive, and socially engaged futures for museums. This presentation is therefore intended for museum professionals, educators, and cultural workers interested in youth-led initiatives, participatory methodologies, and institutional transformation from within. The case of the MSU Youth Club highlights the power of genuine intergenerational collaboration in reimagining the museum as a vibrant space for dialogue, creativity, and community.

Ana Škegro (Zagreb, 1987) is an art historian and a curator currently working as Senior Curator, Head of the Experimental and Research Department and Head of the Media Art Collection at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb. She has worked as a freelance curator, exhibition producer, and program manager on various projects since 2013. From 2017 to 2021, she worked as a curator of international projects and Head of the Education Department at the Museum. She has (co)curated and organized numerous exhibitions and projects, including Artistic Actions and Performances – Summer at MSU (2017–2022), HT Award for Croatian Contemporary Art (2014–2018), The Search for a New Reality (2018–2019), Forest to Go (2021–2022), Attention, Landscape! (2022), Sean Scully: Passenger (2022–2023), The Visible Ones – performative program (2023–2025), The Smell of Freshly Chopped Wood (2024–2025), Jan St Werner: Vibraception (2024–2025), SintArt 18 (2025). In 2016, she founded the MSU Youth Club, which she continues to mentor through collaborative and co-creative projects such as From Another Angle, Art Works! and the Tobogan podcast. She participated in EU-funded projects Translocal: Museum as Toolbox (2014–2016), Voyage Inside a Blind Experience (2017–2019), Beam Up (2020–2023), Museum of the Commons (2023–2027), and The Arts of Resistance (2024–2025).

Celina Damjanović is a student of museology and archival studies at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. She actively contributes to the cultural sector by volunteering at cultural events and festivals such as the 25 FPS Festival, Zagreb Film Festival, and Organ Vida. She also worked on the digitisation of archival material at the Croatian State Archives and Kinoklub Zagreb, and assisted in different activities at the Jutro and BLOK associations. She was active in the Student Section of the Croatian Archival Society and co-authored a scientific paper on training AI models using archival materials. She speaks English and German, and dedicates her free time to dramatic arts. Since 2018, she has been a member of the MSU Youth Club, where she participates in various projects, including the production of podcasts, YouTube series, and international collaborations. Academically, she is focused on feminist and social issues. Her undergraduate thesis in information sciences explored women's museums, while her MA thesis in museology will deal with youth participation in museums, focusing on the MSU Youth Club.

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Reimagining the Museum: Participation and Inclusion in Vladimir Dodig Trokut's Antimuzej

This paper explores the participatory and inclusive dimensions of Vladimir Dodig Trokut's Antimuzej (Anti-museum), a long-developing artistic and museological concept initiated in the early 1970s and formally articulated during the 1980s. Rather than a conventional museum, the Antimuzej emerged as a critical counter-model – one that rejected institutional boundaries and proposed new, hybrid forms of cultural engagement that blurred the lines between art, archive, and social practice.

From its earliest, pre-nominative and exploratory phase, the Antimuzej embraced an open, decentralised logic of collecting and curating. Through exchanges of objects, collective authorship, and the invitation to audiences to become active participants rather than passive viewers, Trokut positioned the Antimuzej as an experimental platform for shared meaning-making. This participatory model not only challenged dominant museological paradigms but also redefined the roles of artists, curators, and audiences alike.

As the project evolved, it became increasingly invested in strategies that imagined the museum unfolding beyond physical enclosures. According to surviving documents, the Antimuzej was conceptually extended into the wider urban environment – into streets, marginal spaces, and spontaneous public settings. Although this phase remained largely unrealised in practice, it embodied a powerful conceptual gesture: a bold vision of radical inclusion, a museum dispersed into everyday life, embedded in the city itself, and enacted through informal, collective encounter.

Focusing on both the early gestational period of the Antimuzej and its imagined expansion into the civic realm, this paper reflects on how Trokut's model anticipates and challenges contemporary debates around participation, accessibility, and the democratisation of cultural space. By foregrounding user agency and rejecting fixed institutional hierarchies, the Antimuzej articulated a museological imaginary rooted in inclusion, dialogue, and shared authorship – one that remains relevant in ongoing conversations about the civic and social role of art. Its continued relevance lies in its potential to activate public space as a site of belonging and co-creation: a museum not built, but lived.

Dalibor Prančević, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Art History at the University of Split, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. His research focuses on twentieth- and twenty-first-century art and visual culture, with a particular emphasis on contemporary artistic practices. He began his career as a curator at the Meštrović Gallery in 2001 and has since remained active in both academic and curatorial fields. His scholarly work includes monographs on Ivan Meštrović and Frano Missia, as well as the edited volume *Manifestations of Modern Sculpture in Croatia* (2021). He led the Croatian Science Foundation project CROSCULPTURE and contributed to research on modern artist networks and collaborative practices. Alongside historical inquiries, Prančević is deeply engaged with contemporary artistic production, curating exhibitions and

writing on a range of relevant issues in modern and contemporary art. He has received international fellowships, including from the Getty Research Institute and the Fulbright Program, and regularly publishes texts on twentieth- and twenty-first-century art. In 2022, he was awarded the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences' annual prize for excellence in research.

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Democratizing the Exhibition? A Critical Case Study of the Seoul Museum of Art's Citizen Curator Program (2015–2022)

Museums worldwide are increasingly exploring participatory models to enhance audience engagement and relevance. The Seoul Museum of Art's (SeMA) Citizen Curator program, which was carried out primarily within its Nanji Residency from 2015 to 2022, stands out as a particularly ambitious experiment in this domain. Unlike many initiatives focusing on visitor feedback or co-creation of peripheral content, this program directly invited non-professional citizens into the core institutional function of exhibition curating. This paper presents a critical case study of this unique initiative, analysing its structure, outcomes, and eventual discontinuation.

This research primarily addresses the conference themes of “Institutional Practices and User Involvement” and “Critical Views on Participation”. It examines the Citizen Curator program as a radical example of institutional practice attempting to foster deep user involvement by challenging traditional expert boundaries within the museum. The study examines how the program embodies principles of cultural democracy by enabling citizens to participate directly in shaping exhibition narratives and engage with contemporary art.

Utilising a qualitative case study methodology, this research analyses available program documentation (guidelines and reports such as those available via SeMA's digital archive), exhibition reviews, relevant institutional communications, and the publicly stated rationale for the program's suspension after 2022, reportedly due to assessments of declining effectiveness or impact. The analysis focuses on understanding the operational model, the nature of collaboration between citizen curators and the institution/artists, and the curatorial outcomes produced.

While acknowledging the program's innovative potential in democratising curatorial authority and introducing diverse perspectives, this paper also critically examines the complexities and potential limitations inherent in such deep participatory models. It delves into the challenges related to sustainability, the difficulties in evaluating the “success” or “effectiveness” of participatory cultural projects, the underlying power dynamics between lay participants and institutional frameworks, and the implications for cultural production and curatorial standards. By analysing both the promise and the eventual halt of SeMA's Citizen Curator program, this study offers crucial insights into the practical and conceptual limitations facing institutions that attempt truly collaborative practices. It contributes to a nuanced discourse on participation, moving beyond celebratory accounts to explore the structural conditions necessary for meaningful and sustainable user involvement in core museum functions.

Heejung Ryoh is a PhD candidate in Film, Media, and Culture Theory at Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), Budapest. Her doctoral research examines participatory museum/art practices post-COVID, focusing on digital transformation, cultural democracy, resilience, and AI. She currently lectures on critical approaches to participatory museum practice at ELTE. She holds an MA degree in Art History from Sookmyung Women's University in Seoul (2006) and in Film

Studies from ELTE (2023). Following her Art History MA, she built a substantial career in South Korea as a curator and university lecturer, including seven years at Hanyang University's College of Education, where she taught Art History, Museum Studies, and Exhibition Planning, and a decade curating contemporary art, notably as Chief Curator at Gallery LOOP. Through its international network, she curated diverse exhibitions, including community-engaged participatory art projects, and contributed widely to art publications. She relocated to Budapest in 2021 as a Stipendium Hungaricum scholar, first completing her MA in Film Studies (with Honours) at ELTE before commencing her current doctoral studies, also supported by the scholarship. Her recent bilingual book, *Marginalised Female Characters and Micro Power in Korean Cinema* (2024), based on her Film Studies thesis, was a bestseller in the Korean Cinema category on Aladin, Korea's major online bookstore.

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Digital Museum Presence: Stories from the Museum Repository as an Example of Participation in Virtual Space

This paper explores the role of digital formats in enabling audience participation in museums, using the video podcast series “Stories from the Museum Repository”, produced since 2024 by the National Museum of Modern Art (NMMU) in Zagreb. The series features conversations led by curator Marta Radman with artists, art historians, and former museum directors, and her curatorial approach shapes the dialogical and inclusive nature of the content.

Framed within the conference theme “Technology and Participation”, the paper analyses how Stories from the Museum Repository functions as a form of participatory practice in virtual space. Rather than serving solely as documentation, the podcast creates a mediated space for cultural inclusion, democratizes access to knowledge, and encourages critical reflection on the museum’s role in contemporary society. Methodologically, the paper is based on qualitative content analysis. Seven episodes published to date are analysed to identify key themes, narrative strategies, and the potential for audience engagement. Special emphasis is placed on digital storytelling techniques (tone, structure, visual framing, social context) that enable accessibility, emotional resonance, and a sense of closeness. The analysis is supplemented by institutional materials and the museum’s communication practices. By connecting the series with the concepts of cultural democracy, participatory museology, and public history, the paper demonstrates how such initiatives become dialogical formats that expand the space of cultural production and consumption. Although not interactive in real-time, the podcast enables symbolic participation, identification, and circulation of knowledge beyond institutional boundaries.

In conclusion, the paper highlights the transformation of the museum’s role in the digital age – from a passive guardian of objects to an active mediator of meaning. It proposes further development of the format through audience involvement in content creation and interaction, thus enhancing its participatory value.

Lorena Šimić is a museum educator and curator at the National Museum of Modern Art (NMMU) in Zagreb. She holds an MA degree in Art History and Pedagogy from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. In her professional career, she has worked on various projects in museology, curatorial practice, education, and cultural production. She has a particular interest in developing participatory and interactive formats within museum institutions. She led the ULUPUH Gallery and worked as a curatorial assistant and educator on the exhibition *Picelj and Friends* at the Museum of Contemporary Art. Her first professional experience was gained through the Praktikultura programme at HDLU, where she participated in exhibition organisation and educational programmes, later working as a production assistant at the 36th Youth Salon (HDLU). She designs and implements educational programmes for children and youth, focusing on creative and collaborative methods. In her work, she seeks to develop museum content that goes beyond static presentation and involves the audience in processes of interpretation, creation, and dialogue – striving to position museums as open, living spaces for cultural exchange and learning.

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The Canoe Made of One/Two (?) Trees. A Case Study of a Communication Failure in Ethnographic Film

The Museum of Ethnography in Budapest showcases many ethnographic films about rituals, customs, and festivals that did not originate from the times when these practices were an integral part of people's everyday life. Rather, they were performed for the sake of the recordings. Such re-enactments became the definitive way of cultural heritage preservation. Of course, this method is functional and results in valuable filmic content for the audience; however, both the re-enactment and the film as artistic/artificial representations have potential traps as far as the "original" work of art, the ethnographic phenomena, is concerned. There are examples of communication failure, in most cases between the source community and ethnographers with expertise in research/filmic reproduction. The case study presented in this paper centres on the film titled *The Canoe*, made by Hungarian cultural anthropologist Lajos Boglár in 1966. It might not be the film itself, but rather the after-screening communication that is at the centre of the discussion. Based on the lessons learnt about the communication failure occurring when the film was made, the paper proposes the creation of a carefully devised screening plan and an amplified scope of reconstruction, which can provide opportunities for participating in filmmaking about the community for the community itself. The self-reflection in and by filmmaking can help extend the scope of contemporary museum pedagogy beyond the museum into the source of the ethnographic object/performance. Moreover, at the same time and within the walls of the museum, museum pedagogists can work with the audience, who can experience not only the ethnographic phenomena but also the method of (filmic) reconstruction/re-enactment.

András Müllner (1968) works as an associate professor at the Department of Media and Communication of Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest. Müllner is the head of the Minor Media/Culture Research Centre and the Roma Visual Lab university film program. He holds a PhD degree in Literary Studies (2001). His main research interests are neoavant-garde art and the visual culture, especially the representation of minorities. In recent years, he has edited several collections of essays on different subjects and authored five books. Funded by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office between 2019 and 2023, Müllner and his research team conducted research on participatory film as a visual research method, titled "The history and current practices of Hungarian participatory film culture, with an emphasis on the self-representation of vulnerable minority groups". Müllner is a member of the board of trustees of Artpool Research Centre, the Romano Instituto, and the organising committee of the Hungarian Society for Film Studies.

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Participatory Artistic Practices in Heritage Education: The Case of *Luka's Lines* and Endangered Wooden Architecture in Central Croatia (Banovina/Banja Region)

This paper examines the participatory visual arts project *Luka's Lines* (*Lukine crte*), held annually in Glina, Croatia, with the 2025 edition focusing on endangered vernacular wooden architecture in Central Croatia. Developed within the framework of secondary school extra-curricular education and implemented in collaboration with local stakeholders, the project offers a model of socially engaged, heritage-oriented participatory practice that integrates artistic expression with the safeguarding and revalorisation of neglected local cultural heritage.

Through a structured programme of field research, expert lectures, creative workshops, and public exhibitions, the project engages students, teachers, and community members in a collaborative exploration of local architectural traditions. It aims to strengthen intergenerational knowledge transmission, encourage critical engagement with cultural landscapes, and promote awareness of endangered heritage through creative reinterpretation of traditional wooden and clay motifs. The methodology combines ethnographic and experiential learning, including site visits, visual documentation, hands-on craft activities, and the development of a local glossary of heritage terms.

Situated within the theoretical discourse on cultural democracy, the paper reflects on how participatory artistic practices can decentralise cultural production, broaden access to heritage, and support youth as active cultural agents. Drawing on critical heritage studies and the principles of the Faro Convention (Council of Europe, 2005), which affirms the rights of individuals and communities to participate in heritage processes, *Luka's Lines* (*Lukine crte*) has been analysed as an example of bottom-up, place-based engagement with heritage in a rural setting.

Particular attention has been given to the ethical and methodological challenges of participatory practice in educational contexts, including questions of representation, authorship, and the sustainability of collaborative initiatives. The project's emphasis on co-creation, situated knowledge, and community participation aligns with contemporary approaches that regard heritage not as a fixed canon, but as a dynamic and evolving cultural process.

By analysing the development and outcomes of *Luka's Lines* (*Lukine crte*), this paper offers insight into the potential of participatory visual arts to foster cultural citizenship, enhance inclusion, and support locally grounded renewal. The case study is contextualised within broader debates on the marginalisation of rural and vernacular heritage in Croatian cultural policy and demonstrates how collaborative artistic practices can serve as efficient tools for social agency and heritage democratisation.

Ana Rizmaul holds a degree in Art History and Comparative Literature, and a permanent position as a teacher of Visual Arts, Croatian Language, History of Croatian Cultural Heritage, and Aesthetics and Art. Since 2024, she has held the renewed status of Senior Teaching Advisor. Due to a specific distribution of her teaching hours, she has been working across four secondary schools for the past 24 years (Ivana Trnskoga Secondary School in Hrvatska Kostajnica, Topusko Secondary School, Glina Secondary School, and Viktorovac Secondary School in Sisak). She is an active member of the Association Terra Banalis and the vocal ensemble Petrusice from Petrinja. Through her work and various activities, she strives to create meaningful interactions between the schools where she teaches, the local community, and key institutions to revitalise cultural heritage and promote it as a generator of positive change in the Banija region.

Sanja Lončar, PhD, is Associate Professor at the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, Croatia. Her educational background includes art history, ethnology, and cultural anthropology (University of Zagreb), as well as international architectural regeneration and development (Oxford Brookes University, UK). Her research focuses on the history and anthropology of architecture, vernacular, marginalised and dissonant heritage, the social and cultural dynamics of space and place, and protection and preservation of cultural heritage. Her scholarly work explores the intersections of cultural history, heritage studies, and critical spatial theory, with a particular focus on rural and marginalised contexts in Croatia. She has published on topics such as the preservation of wooden architecture, cultural landscapes, and the politics of heritage in post-socialist and post-disaster settings. In addition to her academic work, she collaborates with civil society organisations and local communities on applied research and heritage initiatives. She is an active member of the Terra Banalis association and the Croatian section of ECOVAST (European Council for the Village and Small Town), contributing to interdisciplinary and participatory approaches to heritage conservation and regional development.

Janko Petrović, academic sculptor. Born in 1983 in Zagreb. He lives in Zagreb and works at the School of Applied Arts and Design, Zagreb. In 2002, he graduated with a degree in Arrangement and Stage Design from the School of Applied Arts and Design in Zagreb. In 2008, he earned a degree in Sculpture from the class of Professor Miro Vuco at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb. Since 2008, he has been a member of the Croatian Association of Artists (HDLU). He has exhibited in numerous group and solo exhibitions, selected highlights include: *Triennial of Croatian Medal Making and Small Sculpture* (2010), *10th Ivo Kerdić Memorial*, Gallery of Fine Arts, Osijek (2010), *Small Formats*, Marisall Gallery (2010), *10 by 10*, ULUPUH Gallery (2008), *11th University Exhibition*, Student Center, Zagreb (2007), *Triennial of Croatian Medal Making and Small Sculpture*, *9th Ivo Kerdić Memorial*, Gallery of Fine Arts, Osijek (2007), *Earth*, Branko Ružić Gallery, Slavonski Brod (2007), *Mosaic: From Concept to Realization*, City Museum, Vinkovci (2007). He has received several special recognitions and awards for his work.

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Archaeology and Childhood: A Project of Fruition without Perceptual and Cognitive Barriers

The European Commission stated in 2007 that “culture contributes to people’s well-being, social cohesion and inclusion.” The importance of culture for physical and psychological well-being is well established, as is the use of cultural heritage for social inclusion. Reflecting today on how to increase participation in public space and Cultural Heritage involves an intervention aimed at eliminating architectural barriers, understood no longer only as physical obstacles that can be a source of discomfort for mobility, but also as sense-perceptive, cultural and cognitive obstacles that do not allow anyone orientation, recognizability of places, understanding of content, participation in the historical and artistic heritage and thus the reason for its existence.

The expansion of access to cultural heritage is the primary objective of the PRIN PNRR national research project Culture, Its Perceptions. This initiative is coordinated by the Department of Architecture of the University of Ferrara, in collaboration with the Department of Applied Psychology at the University of Padua and the Department of Psychological and Communication Sciences at the University of Naples. The research specifically focuses on children with perceptual and cognitive disabilities, exploring strategies for enhancing their engagement with cultural heritage. It examined four case studies: a museum, a natural park, a historic urban centre, and an archaeological site. Within the conference topic “Art as Social Change”, we aim to present the findings from the intervention conducted at the archaeological park of Via Appia Antica in Rome.

It is a pioneering and experimental project, as accessibility within archaeological contexts remains underexplored in current design practice. In Italy, only 7% of archaeological sites are accessible in terms of perceptual and cognitive inclusivity (ISTAT 2019, 2022). The inclusive design approach adopted in this project involved interdisciplinary professionals and, crucially, the direct participation of children and their families. In developing a pathway suitable for all children, regardless of disability, the design was guided by the principles of Universal Design. Special attention was given to the integration of custom-designed orientation tools that are easy to understand and intuitively usable, free from sensory, cognitive, and linguistic barriers. Learning through play and discovery was identified as the most effective strategy for actively engaging a relatively underserved audience within cultural spaces. The ultimate aim is to promote social inclusion and support the democratisation of public space through equitable access to cultural heritage.

Benedetta Caglioti, researcher (RTDa) at the Department of Architecture, University of Ferrara, sector History of Architecture. She graduated with honours from the Department of Architecture at the University of Ferrara and graduated with honours from the School of Specialisation in Architectural Heritage and Landscape at Sapienza University of Rome. She received her II level Master in Architecture, Sacred Arts and Liturgy and PhD in History of Architecture, *cum laude*, from Sapienza University of Rome. She teaches History of Medieval Architecture and History of Contemporary Architecture at the University of Ferrara's Department of Architecture and Fundamentals of Restoration and Architecture on Pre-existences at the Department of Humanities of the same university. Her publications focus on architectural history and cultural heritage restoration. She is the Principal Investigator of the PRIN PNRR project Culture, Its Perceptions. Cultural Fruition of Heritage for Children with Perceptive and Cognitive Disabilities for an Ethically Sustainable Design.

Giorgia Sala, research fellow at the Department of Architecture, University of Ferrara, sector History of Architecture. She graduated with honours from Politecnico di Milano in 2015 and received her PhD in History of Architecture and Urbanism, *cum laude*, from Luav University of Venice in 2020. She is a research fellow at the Department of Architecture, University of Ferrara, and a researcher on the PRIN PNRR project Culture, Its Perceptions. Cultural Fruition of Heritage for Children with Perceptive and Cognitive Disabilities for an Ethically Sustainable Design. At the same university, she teaches History of Urbanism and assists in the course History of Contemporary Architecture. Her publications focus on architectural history.

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The Inclusion of People with Intellectual Disabilities in Art

The inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in the field of art represents a key step towards building a society of equal opportunities, in which every person, regardless of their abilities, is recognised as a valuable member of the community. Art, as a universal language of expression, provides people with intellectual disabilities with a platform for creative expression, communication and self-realisation. Through inclusive artistic practices, their visibility, self-confidence and participation in the cultural life of society are encouraged. This is about promoting the talents of individuals with intellectual disabilities who, with adequate professional support, can realise their potential in contemporary art.

The inclusive art gallery Art&CeRZe, founded in 2017 as part of the Rehabilitation Centre in Zagreb, and is dedicated to promoting artistic creativity among members of this marginalised group. Through projects and professional art education of professional artists and art program participants, cohesion within this art space is encouraged, thereby enabling greater visibility on the art scene. By organising exhibition programs and cooperating with relevant art institutions, the gallery provides this population with an opportunity to be visible on the Croatian art scene and beyond. Involvement in as many art events as possible, such as art shows and exhibitions, encourages greater interest and understanding of this type of art. The uniqueness of artistic expression and the authenticity of artistic style are important to recognise, nurture and adequately direct the creative process.

Despite positive developments, numerous challenges remain. People with intellectual disabilities often face institutional and social barriers that make it difficult for them to access artistic education and professional activities. The lack of financial resources, professionally trained staff and infrastructural support further complicates the implementation of inclusive programs.

Promoting the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in the arts is not only a matter of social justice, but also of cultural richness. Including these people in artistic processes contributes to the diversity of expression, fosters empathy and understanding and creates a space in which everyone has the right to express their uniqueness. The key to success lies in cross-sectoral cooperation, continuous education and the development of inclusive policies that ensure long-term sustainability and cultural equality.

Blanka Stančić Puhak was born in Zagreb. She graduated in Ceramics Design in 2001 from the University of Canterbury (KIAD), Rochester, United Kingdom. She received her Master's degree in 2008 at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design, Sculpture Department, Ljubljana, Slovenia. She completed a two-year education in Clinical Expressive Art Therapy in Zagreb. She is currently a 3rd-year PhD student in Educational Sciences at the Faculty of Education in Maribor, Slovenia, researching Inclusion in Art of People with Intellectual Disabilities. For many years, she has been promoting artistic creativity among adults with intellectual disabilities at the Rehabilitation Centre in Zagreb. She is the conceptual initiator and manager of the first inclusive art gallery in Croatia. She works as an art therapist and assistant at the University of Applied Health Science in Zagreb, where she teaches Creative Processes in Occupational Therapy. She is a member of the Croatian Association of Visual Artists in Zagreb. She actively participates in scientific and professional conferences and education.

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Art in Motion: Collaboration and Circulation of Communities in Representing Migration

This paper presents a critical and interdisciplinary exploration of how contemporary art addresses the social and political realities of migration, with a particular emphasis on participatory and collaborative practices involving migrants, refugees, and other marginalised groups. Through qualitative content analysis of curatorial approaches and case studies from the Balkans' context, I show how artists, cultural institutions, and communities collectively reshape cultural narratives and develop platforms for visibility and inclusion.

My research highlights how artistic practices rooted in migrant, multicultural, and diasporic experiences shape artistic expression and curatorial strategies. These practices foster intercultural dialogue, layered storytelling, and nuanced reflections on belonging, loss, and memory. Here, participatory art emerges as both a tool for representation and an instrument of self-empowerment and cultural articulation of diasporic voices.

The theoretical framework combines postcolonial, participatory, and feminist perspectives, while my methodology analyses concrete examples of co-creation and curatorial partnerships. My findings highlight how participatory art serves as a bridge between different cultural identities, illustrating the ways in which artists engage migrant communities in performances, installations, and participatory works that recover erased histories and confront exclusion. Their work resonates with what Svetlana Boym describes as “diasporic intimacy” – an emotional geography that transcends physical homelands.

Projects bridging ethnic divides through collaboration and multicultural symbolism, fostering new social imaginaries, include the “Migrants’ Museum” curated by Šejla Kamerić in Sarajevo, the murals co-created by the collective KURS with migrants in Belgrade, and the initiative “Borderline” in Skopje, which involved both local and migrant artists.

I will examine how different artistic media (murals, installations, performances) are used as tools of expression and engagement while drawing out the similarities and differences between these forms across the three cities (Sarajevo, Belgrade, Skopje).

The artistic practices I analyse question the value of permanence versus transience, shifting from static, institutional frameworks to flexible, collaborative, and mobile forms of expression. Participatory art, particularly with migrant and diasporic groups, creates socially and symbolically significant spaces of cultural exchange that may not be permanent in physical terms, but hold enduring meaning in social and cultural landscapes.

The emphasis of my paper is on social outcomes (visibility, empowerment, dialogue, and bridging cultural identities) rather than quantitative measurement. My analysis affirms that the true value of artistic work lies not in permanence but in its capacity to generate dialogue, connect communities, and mirror the complex realities of a world in constant motion.

Sandra Uskoković, a scholar of historic and contemporary Mediterranean and Eastern European art and heritage, is a full professor at the University of Dubrovnik, Croatia. She holds an MA in American Studies (Historic Preservation) from the George Washington University, USA, and

a PhD in Art History from the University of Zagreb, Croatia. She worked as a research fellow at ICCROM, UNESCO and US/ICOMOS, and received grants from the Getty Trust. Uskoković has published four books on heritage and architecture. Her last book, *Anamnesis: Art Dialogues in Public Space*, which opens questions about postsocialist Anthropocene, was published by UPI2M Books in 2018. She also has written and published numerous conference papers and research articles in her home country and abroad. A visiting scholar at universities in Europe, Asia, and North America, her research interests include critical heritage studies, modern architecture and contemporary art, urban and cultural studies, and performative arts. She is an expert member of ISC20 and the Association of Critical Heritage Studies. During her sabbatical leave in Autumn 2022, she was a visiting scholar at Koc University in Istanbul (KUASIA) and in 2023, at Humboldt University, Berlin, concluding with a Visiting Research Fellowship at University College London.

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Working with a Community Using the New Patrons Methodology

Prostor is a creative hub in the Spinut neighbourhood in Split managed by the Culture Hub Croatia association (CHC). Since its opening in 2021, its programme has been focused on community-based and participatory projects. In 2022, interested neighbours approached the team with the idea of revitalising a neglected green area in the immediate vicinity of the CHC's building and proposed to CHC to participate in designing an artwork for that area. Since the meadow is located right next to the buildings and the children's playground, they believed it could become a nicer place, potentially for local community gatherings. In 2023, CHC became part of the New Patrons platform in Croatia and started to organise activities and smaller pilot projects that served as tests for different situations, while encouraging communication about art in public space. Programme "Livada" thus became a broader project, with which CHC wanted to involve artists in the creation of an artwork related to the neighbourhood in a participatory manner. In 2025, the project involved forming a working group of local commissioners who initiated cleaning campaigns, developing the project idea, and searching for the most suitable artist to commission – all in accordance with the New Patrons methodology. This case study presents approaches to community engagement, the commission of an artwork, as well as challenges and opportunities regarding community participation in general.

Jasmina Šarić (b. 1989, Split) has an MA in Art History and Philosophy from the University of Split (2013) and an MA in Curating Art, Management and Law from the University of Stockholm (2019). In 2021, she completed the post-master's program Commissioning and Curating Contemporary Public Art at the University of Gothenburg. Since 2013, she has been working as an independent curator in Croatia and abroad. From 2018 to 2021, she was a member of the artistic-curatorial collective Tails. She is a co-founder of the Culture Hub Croatia (2016) and, since 2021, the artistic director of the creative hub Prostor. Her work is based around participatory and community projects, collective work, public art and space as a site for curatorial research.

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Participation in Art – the Case-Study of the EU Project ALILAND (Art Living Lab to Repair the Land)

The ALILAND project has focused on the idea of repairing territories that have been damaged by economic activities, which, once no longer profitable, were abandoned, leaving behind environmental and social consequences. It explores the consequences of the mining industry in Barruelo de Santullán (Palencia, Spain), industrial versus local agriculture in Wietstock (Ludwigsfelde, Germany), and energy-driven landscape transformation in Šibenik (Šibenik, Croatia). The paper centres on the strategies of the local working group in Croatia, consisting of the Šibenik citizens who have engaged in the participative process of co-creating a work of public art dedicated to the brownfield of Crnica. The process relies on the methodologies of New Patrons, introduced by Francois Hers in France, which have taken strong roots in many European countries. Thanks to the EU project, ALILAND has become an opportunity to try out New Patrons' methodologies in Croatia, being one of the first projects of the kind to be carried out there. The strong participation component is a key element in the New Patrons methodology, and the paper is a kind of professional report on the possibilities and challenges that the project ALILAND will have faced by September 2025 (it started in January 2025).

Sonja Leboš, a Croatia-based cultural and urban anthropologist, holds a PhD in Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology (University of Zadar) and an MA in Cultural Anthropology and Spanish Language (University of Zagreb), Cultural Tourism (University of Bologna&UNIADRION) and Art Education (Freie Hochschule Stuttgart). Leboš is a cultural practitioner with broad interests in performative strategies of humans in space, a founder and chairwoman of the Association for Interdisciplinary and Intercultural Research (AIIR, www.uiii.hr) where she has initiated and conducted a number of interdisciplinary research-based programs and platforms since 2002, tackling urbanology, politics of remembrance, and relational tactics among art, architecture, design, and time-based media. She has been a Program Coordinator at AIIR since 2019, Researcher and Production Manager at grey(area – space for contemporary and media art (www.sivazona.hr)) from 2014–2021. Regular contributor to *Vizkultura* and *Vox Feminae*, which, together with *Kulturpunkt*, are the leading independent media platforms in Croatia. Mother of one.

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Challenges in the Implementation of New Patrons Projects in Zagreb – the Case-Study of the Let's Renew a Well Project

Let's Renew a Well project is inspired by the initiative of the residents of the Zagreb community of Gornji Stenjevec to renovate public wells in their neighbourhood. It was launched by the Open Art Drive art organization in October 2023, with two public forums: at the first, residents were invited to choose a public well for renovation, and at the second, students from the Faculty of Architecture in Zagreb presented architectural solutions for the chosen well, based on the wishes and needs expressed by the residents. The students' sketches and drawings were publicly presented as an incentive for the authorities to pay due attention to the residents' initiatives, which, if supported by the city administration, can be the basis for specific implementation solutions and, ultimately, their realisation. The presentation will focus on the steps that have been taken to date to realise the project, the possibilities and obstacles posed by current legislation for the realisation of such projects.

Maša Štrbac, member of the art organisation Otvoreni likovni pogon, art historian, member of the New Patrons Croatia platform. Collaborator on the study New Patrons Croatia, OLP, 2020 – 2021. At the end of 2023, within the framework of the New Commissioners HR platform, she launched the Let's Renew a Well project, which, through cooperation with the Faculty of Architecture and the Gornji Stenjevec Local Board, aims to support the initiative of the residents of Gornji Stenjevec to restore public wells in the settlement. She is a member of the Art in Our Neighbourhood program team, within which she has been promoting the New Patrons methodology through public discussions with citizens in Zagreb neighbourhoods in 2025. She is a mediator in the Dream Theatre – a Scene for Everyone, a project in which the group of commissioners consists of beneficiaries of the Zagreb Rehabilitation Centre.

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