

CHEurope

Critical Heritage Studies and the Future of Europe_Towards an integrated, interdisciplinary and transnational training model in cultural heritage research and management

Report on the JRS no. 3 '**Curating public debates on urban heritage futures**' organized by UHasselt in Hasselt & Genk from April 23rd to 27th, 2018

Participants:

ESRs: Khaled Elsamman, Katie O'Donoghue, Lukasz Bugalski, Mela Zuljevic, Vittoria Caradonna, William Illsley, Nermin Elsherif, Maria Lika Hattori, Hannah Smyth, Nevena Markovic, Carlotta Capurro, Marcella Jaramillo, Janna Oud Ammerveld

Supervisors: Kristian Kristiansen, Gian Giuseppe Simeone, Ingrid Holmberg, Mats Malm, Elisabeth Punzi, Rodney Harrison, Andrew Flinn, Maria Pia Guermandi, Rob van der Laarse, Liesbeth Huybrechts, Jaap Verheul, Gertjan Plets, Felipe Criado Boado, César Parcero-Oubiña, Anne Lanceley, Beverley Butler

Key lecturers: Liesbeth Huybrechts, Martijn De Waal, Marc Jacobs, Per Linde, Maria Engberg
Presentations and workshops: Jan Boelen, Leen Gos, Leen Roels, Marijn Van De Weijer, Roel De Ridder, Vlad Ionescu, Liesbeth Huybrechts, Per Linde, Maria Engberg, Leen Beyers

Topic of the seminar:

UHASSELT organised the JRS no. 3 in late April 2018 in Hasselt and Genk on the topic of 'Curating public debates on urban heritage futures'. The main focus of the seminar was to reflect on the notion of 'curating the city' in relation to urban heritage and the future of spatial heritage in contemporary urban contexts. In particular, we are interested in discussing different curatorial strategies which deal with complex heritage projects by supporting the role of heritage as a platform for civic engagement.

We looked into the following questions and issues: How can we curate the public debate on complex research material and proposals for urban heritage futures; a debate that navigates in between different spaces, contexts, formats and media? In doing so, how can we reflect upon and support the role of heritage as a platform for transitions to take place (on the level of society, space, culture, technology, economy, etc)? How can participatory curatorial strategies mediate between a heritage site and the (exhibition or digital) space where we publicly debate its prospects, as well as in between the site's past and its future?

Program

ESRs presentations:

13 ESRs discussed their current progress in 25 minute slots allocated for their presentations and feedback from the supervisors.

Key lectures:

The seminar program included 4 key lectures (a lecture by Maria Lind was cancelled with a short notice due to the lecturer's difficulties to arrive on the scheduled date). The lectures were the following:

(1) Liesbeth Huybrechts on Monday, April 23rd 2018 on the topic of 'Urban Interfaces Mediating Participatory Design Public Realm'. Liesbeth discussed the approaches of participatory design

and 'scripting' to the public realm and presented research projects where common values are searched for by visualising, confronting, organising and materialising different scripts.

(2) Martijn De Waal on Tuesday, April 24th 2018 on the topic of 'Heritage as platform'. The lecture was followed with a lively discussion engaging with critical approaches to the notion of a platform as well as issues such as cultural appropriation and commodity.

(3) Marc Jacobs on Wednesday, April 25th 2018 on the topic of 'Creative Heritage Studies and Policy Reframing'. The lecture was followed by an interesting discussion on authorized heritage discourse vocabulary and possible interventions within policy frameworks.

(4) Per Linde and Maria Engberg on Thursday, April 26th 2018 on the topic of 'Collaborative Fableing of Cities'. The lecture included presentation of several projects these two designers work on dealing with the issues of decoloniality, migrant heritage, urban politics, etc. It was followed by a motivated discussion by the students who expressed high interests in the projects, which was continued during the afternoon workshop on 'fableing'.

Workshops:

(1) 'Participatory Design & Heritage' workshop was organised on Wednesday, April 25th under the guidance of UHasselt's researchers (Marijn Van De Weijer, Roel De Ridder, Vlad Ionescu, Liesbeth Huybrechts). The goal of the workshop was for the ESRs to start discussions on common values in their research projects by working grouped around the 5 working packages. The methodology used asked for the students to identify key concepts in their research (in order to work towards a shared language/vocabulary) and key actions which can make these concepts operative (working towards common/shared values in the public realm).

(2) 'Collaborative Fableing of Cities' + CHEurope Exhibition workshop led by Per Linde, Maria Engberg and Liesbeth Huybrechts on April 26th: The maps with concepts and actions developed within each package during the first workshop were the starting points for the students to start working on their 'fables'. Fables are seen as a methodology to communicate and publicly debate our research by using fiction as a means of staging the story and activating the heritage material (such as archives, maps, oral history, etc.) we are working with. Students worked in groups (per working packages) to develop 5 fables and identify their key heritage material, the setting, the public issue to discuss and to finally construct a fable by using these key elements. During the exhibition workshop, we continued working on fables to identify possible ways of presenting them and expanding on the material we can use to convey our research projects during the Situated Actions exhibition at Z33 in August 2018, within the PDC conference (pdc2018.org).

Presentations:

(1) Jan Boelen, the artistic director of Z33, spoke about this contemporary art and design center and the challenges of curating within institutions which aim to provide a 'third space'

(2) Leen Roels and Leen Goes of Mijn Erfgoed from Genk spoke about the work of their heritage cell, their projects and the aspects of diversity and participation in their work.

(3) As part of the 'Participatory Design and Heritage' workshop, Liesbeth Huybrechts and Vlad Ionescu spoke about the concept of 'minimal commons' and how it relates to their research projects, while Marijn Van De Weijer and Roel De Ridder discussed how they reflect on public values in their research on industrial heritage and churches as public spaces in Flanders.

(4) The head research curator of MAS museum in Antwerp, Leen Beyers, spoke about the research and curatorial projects of this museum, the current and planned exhibitions and how the institution collaborated with the wider publics.

Site visits:

(1) On Wednesday 25th we visited the C-mine complex in Genk, led by Vlad Ionescu and Mela Zuljevic

(2) On Friday 27th we visited the MAS museum in Antwerp where we saw two exhibitions ('World Port' and 'Life and Death') and had a talk with Leen Beyers, the head curator