

Session at IX AISU: Reading the city's histories (Bologna, 11-14 Sep 19)

Bologna, Sep 11–14, 2019

Deadline: Feb 10, 2019

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[NEW DEADLINE]

IX AISU Congress (Associazione Italiana di Storia Urbana), Bologna September 11-14, 2019

Session 4: Reading the City's Histories Through Visual Documents

Macro-session 6: Images, forms and narratives from the global city (Immagini, forme e narrazioni dalla città globale)

Every city contains multitudes, presenting a collective artifact made up of innumerable places and lived narratives. Most present-day cities also overlay multitudes, covering or transforming earlier iterations of themselves. Our knowledge of those older layers, of urban landscapes since recast, quickly surrenders to the mortality of personal memory. We then come to depend heavily on the persistence of physical artifacts that capture fragments of the past city, whether through survivals and traces in the present-day built landscape or through records – textual, visual, and sometimes even three dimensional – of those largely supplanted deeper layers of the urban palimpsest.

But the city is a big and complicated artifact, and every such representation must be a purposeful distillation, begging questions of the part and the whole, and of choice. Each favors some kinds of information over others, and all demand a considered examination of the lens adopted by their creators, retrospectively framing the visual document in the context of agency, motives, models, and expected function. At the same time, even as we are conscious of such filtering frames, we want to ask what they tell us about their subject, as they offer posterity some of our best evidence of these places in time. They allow us to better see and read the built landscapes they portray as patterns of forms, as socio-economic artifacts, as settings of living and working and gathering, of entrepreneurial ambitions and communal organization, across the globe and through history.

For this session, we especially invite contributions that look to and interrogate visual documents that capture lost aspects of the city of both distant and recent history at a range of scales – from detailed surveys of common building forms to purposefully selected sets of views, from closely transcribed plans and streetscapes of whole blocks and neighborhoods to maps of larger spatial networks and depictions of a city as a whole – that offer us insights on both that city and our own vantage point, in terms of our intentions and responses, in our looking at and to it.

We invite submission of abstracts between 1500 and 2500 characters to be submitted to session curator Anat Falbel, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (anatfalbel@ol.com.br) and conference organizers (congresso@storiaurbana.org) by February 10th, 2019.

Abstracts should be submitted using the form found at the bottom of this page (<http://www.storiaurbana.org/index.php/en/component/content/article/9-congressi/1186-6-4-reading-the-city-s-histories-through-visual-documents>).

Any questions should be addressed to Anat Falbel at anatfalbel@ol.com.br. Notification of acceptance will be made by 31 March 2019. Papers will be due 31 May 2019.

This session has been organized by the Interest Group “Urban Representations” of the European Architectural History Network.

Reference:

CFP: Session at IX AISU: Reading the city's histories (Bologna, 11-14 Sep 19). In: Arthist.net, Dec 14, 2018 (accessed Jul 13, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/19777>>.