

Study Week GAP-Project: Marking Space (Cologne/online, 18–22 Jul 22)

Cologne, Universität zu Köln / Online, Jul 18–22, 2022

Rafael Ugarte, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz - Max-Planck-Institut

Study Week GAP-Project (Graffiti Art in Prison): Marking Space: The Wall as Heterotopic Place

THE PROJECT

Graffiti Art in Prison

The GAP – Graffiti Art in Prison project connects the graffiti in Palazzo Chiaramonte (Steri) in Palermo with artistic expression in prisons today. GAP revolves around scientific research, teaching activities, artistic programs, and social engagement. This interdisciplinary structure will impart innovative training and new educational pathways in order to benefit university scholars and enhance their interventions in civil society.

During the 17th and 18th centuries, the Steri was the site of the Tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition and its prisons. The graffiti, a palimpsest of writings and drawings painted on the cell walls, are a corpus of inestimable historical, artistic, and anthropological value. These documents form both the core of the project and its point of departure to other sites of inquiry. The project addresses both historical and contemporary graffiti and wall paintings in relation to prisons, psychiatric hospitals, concentration camps, and other spaces characterized by conditions of deprivation, separation, and lack of freedom.

This project confronts issues of artistic production and reception in spaces of confinement. It engages the (in)visibility of prison environments, the wall as a relational tool, strategies of self-representation in murals, and the reuse of prisons as spaces for the display of contemporary art. In addition, the project explores how graffiti raises relevant cultural and methodological issues. Such topics include the boundaries between freedom and censorship and between art and vandalism. Furthermore, the project analyzes the complex variety of theories and practices associated with graffiti as well as its value as a practice of political protest and system critique.

Six Intensive Study Weeks for PhD students from different backgrounds and countries form the project's itinerary. The format adopted for the ISWs consists of lectures, seminars, discussions and site-specific visits. An interdisciplinary approach will allow doctoral students to address their topics from various perspectives and employ different methodologies. Several workshops will enable participants to physically experience prison environments working together with artists and prisoners. One of the project's aims is to expose inmates to contemporary art practices through artistic programs and various forms of creativity.

WEEK DESCRIPTION

Marking Space: The Wall as Heterotopic Place

Third Intensive Study Week organized by Gabriella Cianciolo Cosentino (Universität zu Köln), Christine Kleiter (Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut) and Federica Testa (Kun-

stheoretisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut)

This week deals with carceral spaces (prisons, panopticons and beyond) and partition walls as heterotopias, places “outside all places and yet locatable”. After tracing a theoretical and methodological frame, the focus is put on penitentiary architecture, a space designed to control the body and the mind, and on art as a way to transform and transcend this environment. The wall can isolate, separate, exclude and oppress. However, when painted, engraved and appropriated through the graphic sign, it can become the exact opposite, the instrument of communication, the element that connects. The chosen chronological arch and geographical context are deliberately broad and include case studies from antiquity, the Middle Ages and the early modern period as well as contemporary graffiti and street art.

PROGRAM

This event will take place in a hybrid format. To participate online please register in advance via Zoom:

<https://uni-koeln.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEtF-msqjwoH9J6I2Ud4E0MF7M2XAbDSfTM>

Speakers marked with an asterisk (*) will take part from remote.

MONDAY 18th JULY – Theoretical and Methodological Frame

Morning session (Universität zu Köln, Seminargebäude 106, Room S23 / online)

9.30 Institutional Greetings

Susanne Wittekind (Universität zu Köln)

Gerhard Wolf* (Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut)

Gabriella Cianciolo Cosentino (Universität zu Köln), Introduction

10.15 Ilaria Hoppe (Katholische Privat-Universität Linz), Graffiti and the Discourse of Resilience

11.00 Coffee Break

11.30 Martin Langner (Georg-August-Universität Göttingen), Gladiators and Demons. Ancient Graffiti as Expressions of Popular Culture

12.15 Karl Hughes (Technische Universität München), Signature Event Codex

Evening lecture (Universität zu Köln, Seminargebäude 106, Room S23 / online)

18.30 David Freedberg* (Columbia University), Crime, Punishment and Torture: The First Mediatic Interventions

TUESDAY 19th JULY – Carceral Space and Penitentiary Architecture

Morning session (Universität zu Köln, Seminargebäude 106, Room S23 / online)

9.30 Ravinder Binning (Ohio State University), Toward a Deeper History of Panoptic Architecture

10.15 Mirco Vannoni (Università degli Studi di Palermo), Space, Power, Representation. Panoptic Architecture and Asylum Spaces

11.00 Coffee Break

11.30 Francesca Giofrè* (Università di Roma La Sapienza), The Italian Prison. A Methodology to Read and Plan Space for and with Users

12.15 Lola Kantor-Kazovsky* (Hebrew University of Jerusalem), The Invenzioni Capric di Carceri

by G.B. Piranesi: Architecture and Imagination

Afternoon session (EL-DE Haus, Appellhofplatz 23-25)

14.30 Laura Barreca (Università degli Studi di Palermo), Anti-monuments. Art in Public Space

15.15 Ascensión Hernández Martínez (Universidad de Zaragoza), The Management of Difficult Heritage. A Challenge for the 21st Century

16.00 Visit of EL-DE Haus, NS-Documentation Center of the City of Cologne

WEDNESDAY 20th JULY – Urban Space and Mural Art

Morning session (Universität zu Köln, Seminargebäude 106, Room S23 / online)

9.30 Franziska Wilcken (Technische Universität Kaiserslautern), Before the Killing. Reading Medieval Pilgrim Graffiti at the Holy Sepulchre in Görlitz with Victor Hugo and Jean Baudrillard

10.15 Maddalena Spagnolo* (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II), From Ephemeral to Permanent. Writing and Drawing in the Public Space in Early Modern Time

11.00 Coffee Break

11.30 Sven Niemann (Universität Paderborn), INGRID – Archiving Graffiti in Germany

12.15 Hana Gründler (Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut), Memories of (Urban) Landscape, Fantasies of Freedom. Vladimír Boudník and the Walls of Prague

Afternoon session (Eigelstein 10)

15.00 Street art tour in Eigelstein guided by Sascha Klein (artmx e.V.)

THURSDAY 21st JULY – Liminal Space and Walls

Morning session (Universität zu Köln, Seminargebäude 106, Room S23 / online)

9.30 Avinoam Shalem (Columbia University), Graffiti on Living Walls. Writing on Trees and Cactuses

10.15 Ulrich Blanché (Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg), Which Wall? About the Motivations to do Paintings on the Berlin Wall and Their Spectators

11.00 Coffee break

11.30 Pilar Biel (Universidad de Zaragoza), Public Space and Urban Art. The Wall as a Place of Conflict

12.15 GAP Students, round table

Afternoon session (Kolumba, Kolumbastraße 4)

17.15 Visit of Kolumba Art Museum guided by Johannes Stahl (suggested activity)

Evening session (Universität zu Köln, Seminargebäude 106, Room S23)

20.00 Film screening Harald Naegeli – Der Sprayer von Zürich, a documentary by Nathalie David

FRIDAY 22nd JULY – Imaginary Space and Freedom

Morning session (S-Bahn Bahnhof Ehrenfeld, exit Bartholomäus-Schink-Straße)

10.00 Tour in Ehrenfeld guided by Johannes Stahl and the students of the Universität zu Köln

Afternoon session (Universität zu Köln, Seminargebäude 106, Room S23 / online)

14.30 David Mesguich (artist), Fence Stories

15.15 Johannes Stahl (Ruhr-Universität Bochum), Cards from Cologne

16.00 GAP Students, round table & concluding remarks

CONTACT

Gabriella Cianciolo Cosentino (Scientific Coordinator GAP): gciancio@uni-koeln.de

Reference:

CONF: Study Week GAP-Project: Marking Space (Cologne/online, 18-22 Jul 22). In: ArtHist.net, Jul 9, 2022 (accessed Apr 7, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/37099>>.