Dissonances. Re-thinking difficult heritage (Lucca, 13–15 Jul 23)

IMT School for Advanced Studies Lucca, Piazza San Francesco 19, Lucca (Italy), Jul 13–15, 2023
Deadline: Apr 30, 2023

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LYNX - Center for the Interdisciplinary Analysis of Images, Contexts, Cultural Heritage
Summer School 2023: “Dissonances. Re-interpreting and re-assessing difficult heritage”
13-14-15 July 2023

Call for applications
Re-interpreting difficult heritage has been at the center of recent public and academic debate, through among others the Confederate monuments’ discussion, the Rhodes Must Fall and the Black Lives Matter protest movements, addressing issues of occupying public space and re-assessing the colonial, traumatic and difficult past. These phenomena also involve communities and scholarship worldwide, questioning the colonial and dissonant material traces and legacies that are still visible in public spaces (from small hamlets to global megalopolis), and urging cultural institutions and practitioners to come to terms with these issues. Which display processes and practices can be employed or designed by institutions preserving cultural heritage (museums, libraries, galleries, etc.)? How are scholarships of different orientations taking these instances into account? Which endeavours are art practitioners putting to work to deal with memories (collective, communitarian, personal) of traumatic, difficult pasts?
Starting from the notion of difficult heritage (Macdonald 2010, Carter & Martin 2019, Malone 2019), we are interested in addressing and analyzing, on a case-study basis, the dissonances that emerge from conflictual interpretations of spaces and contexts (monuments, street names, museums, archives, collections, buildings, etc.) across different historical periods and geographies.

The Summer School is centered around an interdisciplinary approach, aiming at creating a dialogue among different fields of research and areas of inquiry from the social sciences (sociology, art management, cultural economy, anthropology, law, etc.) and humanities (art history, archaeology, aesthetics, digital humanities, curatorial studies, museum studies, history, etc.).
Acknowledging the current growing interest in the decolonial option (Mignolo & Walsh 2018) as a lens through which we can scrutinize these cases, the Summer School does not limit itself to this theoretical framework but instead calls for multiple and diverse methodological approaches, questioning the very applicability of a single lens by centering the specificities of different case studies. The Summer School will offer the occasion to deepen those frameworks, propose new methodological approaches, and take inspiration from international case studies.

The call is open to PhD students and early-stage researchers interested in submitting their proposal on the following topics:
1) Doing and undoing cultural heritage. Decolonial, post-colonial, critical approaches to cultural heritage (broadly including museums, archives, archaeological sites) in Italy and/or internationally. This section includes, but is not limited to, the following areas of research:
- decolonise museums and cultural institutions
- decolonise collective memory through cultural heritage
- critical or decolonial approaches to archaeology
- decolonial approaches to archival practices

2)Taking care of public spaces. The use and reuse of public space (including monuments, toponymy, public architectures, etc.) confronting public actors, political demonstrations, international movements, and artist-activist interventions. This section includes, but is not limited to, the following areas of research:
- reuse/re-interpretation of difficult buildings or monuments, including actions derived from public policies (such as those implemented by local, national and supranational institutions, etc.)
- re-naming and re-assessing places through different strategies, from local to a national/supranational levels (e.g. toponymic interventions, urban guerrilla, performances in public space)

3) Community creation and the public(s). Education, community building and engagement through artistic and curatorial projects reflecting on difficult heritage. This section includes, but is not limited to, the following areas of research:
- heritage-making and community engagement
- art-based practices in decolonising collective imaginaries
- artistic practices as educational platforms/projects

The Summer School will be held in English. The program will be constantly updated, so please check our website and social profiles. Website: https://lynxsummerschool23.imtlucca.it/
For any further information about the Summer School, please email lynxsummerschool23@gmail.com

Reference:

ANN: Dissonances. Re-thinking difficult heritage (Lucca, 13-15 Jul 23). In: ArtHist.net, Mar 16, 2023 (accessed Oct 30, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/38786>.