The Sailing Stones. Stone Trade in Waterscapes (Pula/online, 26–27 Jun 26)

Pula, Croatia / online, Jun 26–27, 2026

Cristiano Guarneri

"The Sailing Stones. Stone Trade in Waterscapes: The Adriatic Basin in Comparative Perspective" taking place at the Archaeological Museum of Istria, Carrarina Ulica 3, 52100 Pula (Croatia) and online via Zoom.

The conference explores the extraction, trade, and utilization of building stone in the Early Modern Adriatic basin and its interconnected river networks. The forum investigates a dynamic "waterscape" ecosystem where raw blocks, ready-made architectural elements, and raw materials like lime sand circulated across maritime and riverine routes. While rooted in the Early Modern Adriatic, the conference embraces a longue durée perspective, as well as broader comparative geographies. By bringing together diverse fields, the conference finally offers a multifaceted examination of how this floating trade facilitated a cross-cultural exchange of human skills, knowledge, and architectural models.
The conference is the final event of the FARE AdriContArch Project, held in connection with the exhibition "AB ANTIQUO: European Architectural Culture and Eastern Adriatic Antiquities", even of the ERC AdriContArch Project.

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PROGRAMME:

June 26, 2026

9.30 – Introduction to the conference by Darko Komšo (Director of Archaeological Museum of Istria), Jasenka Gudelj (Principal Investigator of AdriContArch FARE Project) and Cristiano Guarneri

Session 1: Stone Trade in Early Modern Adriatic Basin
Chair: Darko Komšo

10.00 – Cristiano Guarneri (Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia), Stone Trade in the Waterscape: The Adriatic Basin

10.30 – Gaetano Benčić (Zavičajni muzej poreštine/Museo del territorio parentino), Smantellare l'antico: spoliazione, riutilizzo e commercio della pietra da edifici antichi in età medievale e moderna. L'esempio di Parenzo e del Parentino

11.00 – Jasenka Gudelj (Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia), Juraj Matejev Dalmatinac (Giorgio da

Sebenico) and the 15th-century Adriatic Stone Trade

11.30 – Damir Tulić and Mario Pintarić (Sveučilište u Rijeci), Building with Local Stone: Circulation of Knowledge and Materials at the Construction Site of St. Vitus Cathedral in Rijeka

12.15 – Visit to the exhibition AB ANTIQUO. European Architectural Culture and East Adriatic Antiquities

Session 2: Stone Trade in Waterscapes: Comparative Cases
Chair: Cristiano Guarneri

15.00 – Jennifer Alexander (University of Warwick), Export, Import and Transport: The Stone Industry's Use of Britain's Waterways.
15.30 – Nele Luttmann (Trinity College Dublin), Maritime Networks and the Northern European Stone Trade in the Eighteenth Century: Comparative Perspectives

16.00 – Armando Antista and Domenica Sutera (Università di Palermo), Le vie del mare: rotte e approdi dei materiali lapidei tra la Sicilia e la Penisola Italiana in età Moderna

16.30 – Jonathan Foote (Aarhus School of Architecture), Copenhagen building stones in the era of Danish absolutism

17.15 – Visit to antiquities of Pula

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June 27, 2026

9.30-16.00 – Veseljko Bašić (Brijuni National Park), Working visit to the quarries of Istrian stone on Brijuni islands

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The conference is open to the public with no registration or fee.

However, in order to attend the conference online, please register at: https://unive.zoom.us/meeting/register/ugzxAYHvR4SVxhqB4yy_DQ

Reference:

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