

Cultural Heritage Management & Conservation Conference



Plenary Speakers

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University Park Campus

Rene Bonifacio (University of Nottingham) Kathryn Birch (University of Nottingham)
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Embracing Impermanence: Allowing for a Heritage of Otherness and Instrumentality

Mike Robinson



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Heritage, as an invention of modernity, continues to draw attention as a useful category in which we can conveniently place the remains of the past. We do this selectively, attempting to rationalise our decisions regarding what, where, when and why we ascribe value to objects, buildings, rituals and practices so as to protect, preserve and conserve them. So much so, heritage, as a process, has developed its own heritage; its own traditions and norms that often appear unchallengeable. But of course, the category of heritage is challenged by various manifestations of change - social, cultural, political, economic and technical - that reveal its fragility. In this presentation, I explore some of the ways in which the landscape of heritage is being re-sculpted and eroded by waves of change ranging from popular culture and geo-politics and how this opens up greenfield sites for research.

More about Mike...

Mike Robinson is Professor of Cultural Heritage at Nottingham Trent University and Professor Emeritus at the University of Birmingham, where he was the Director of the Ironbridge International Institute for Cultural Heritage and Board member of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust. He is Non-Executive Director for Culture at the United Kingdom’s National Commission for UNESCO and was an advisor to the UNESCO World Heritage Programme in Sustainable Tourism and principal consultant to the UNESCO World Heritage European Journeys Project. He is also an author and editor with over 30 books covering various aspects of the relationships between heritage, culture and tourism, including 3 volumes dealing with World Heritage and communities. He has supervised over 30 PhD to successful completion and examined a similar number.

Mike is Panel Chair for technical evaluations of the UK’s Tentative List for World Heritage and has worked with UNESCO offices in China, Southeast Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East and various parts of Europe. He also works closely as an expert with the Council of Europe’s Cultural Routes Programme and the European Heritage Days Programme. Mike has worked on heritage, museum and tourism related projects in over 40 countries with UNESCO, European Commission, Council of Europe and various State Agencies and NGOs. His most recent work has been in developing heritage-based tourism in the former Aral Sea region of Uzbekistan and on ‘third-line’ construction heritage in China.

**‘Senza pregiudizio, senza nostalgia’
(Without prejudice, without nostalgia):
music-making as de-exoticist cultural heritage management –
the case of Clementino and Neapolitan dialect rap**



Dr Helen Hammond

University of Roehampton

This presentation proposes that Neapolitan dialect rap regulates the management of cultural heritage, thereby assuming, in effect, the mantle of those institutional supports and cultural agents conventionally charged with this responsibility. Its focus is on O' vient (The Wind), the 2013 track which saw Neapolitan dialect rap artist Clementino break through into the Italian mainstream. O' vient's credentials as cogent anthem of Neapolitan dispossession; as a protest song of the Italian South possessive of demonstrable national reach, are tracked by this paper. The intertwined concepts of cantautore (singer-songwriter); canzone d'autore (song with literary significance); and centri sociali (autonomous social centres), providing the local, Neapolitan context for O' vient and without exact English equivalents, are unpacked.

O' vient's regulation of local heritage according to progressive criteria is evident in its decisive role in the ongoing bonificazione (reclamation) campaign regarding the polluted post-industrial complex in Bagnoli. Contamination had consigned this site, located in west Naples and adjoining an area unusually rich in multi-millennial heritage, out of bounds to local residents.

Attention turns to how Clementino's heritage activism critiques the perpetual exoticisation of Naples by a 'modernist', typically oltremontane (i.e. Northernist), gaze. Clementino's artistic practice, encapsulated in his 'senza pregiudizio, senza nostalgia' tag, aligns with those historians similarly working to de-exoticise Naples. The resulting synergies are rooted in a common cause to release Naples from stereotypical characterisations of its history which bleed detrimentally into the present. The Neapolitan dialect revival epitomised by O' vient is considered critical in this regard.

Finally, this paper proposes that O' vient's progressive history work manifests equally in – to paraphrase Hayden White – the content of its form. Powerful vectors connect both O' vient and its visualisation as music video, this paper argues, to the rhetorical structure of the baroque oratorio. As a musical form, baroque oratorio is not only invested in the same social justice work that rap and Clementino advocate for; it's also steeped in Italian opera. As neo-baroque oratorio, O' vient implicitly acknowledges Naples' status as baroque capital not only of Italian opera but of European music, so going some way to free the city and its heritage from exoticism's exceptionalist bind.

More about Helena...

Helena Hammond is currently Honorary Senior Research Fellow in the School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Roehampton, where she was Senior Lecturer in Dance from 2011-2022 and

convened, during those years, Performance of Heritage: Dance in Museums, Galleries and Heritage Sites, core module of the *Choreomundus: Dance Knowledge, Practice and Heritage* Erasmus+ Mundus International Masters programme.

Helena's research is especially centred in music theatre and allied media as knowledge production, particularly where the theory and practice of history are concerned. Her publications in this area include in *Ballets Russes: The Art of Costume* (2011), the catalogue to accompany the National Gallery of Australia's centenary Ballets Russes exhibition, her chapter contribution receiving the Fulbright Association's Selma Jeanne Cohen Award for dance research that 'advances historical knowledge and understanding generally'; 'Dancing against History: (The Royal) Ballet, Forsythe, Foucault, Brecht, and the BBC' (2013), "'So you see the story is not quite as you were told": *Maleficent*, Dance, Disney, and Cynicism as the choreo-philosophical critique of neoliberal precarity' (2017), both articles in the journal *Dance Research*; 'Dancing with Clio: History, Cultural Studies, Foucault, Phenomenology, and the emergence of Dance Studies as a Disciplinary Practice', in *Dance Fields: Staking a Claim for Dance Studies in the Twenty-First Century*, eds. Ann R David, Michael Huxley, and Sarah Whatley, Dance Books, 2020 and 'W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (commentary and extracts)', in *Narrative Science Anthology II*, ed. by Andrew Hopkins, Mary S. Morgan and Mat Paskins, publication outcome of the London School of Economics/European Research Council *Narrative Science* project, 2023.

Helena gained her doctorate, investigating images of kingship and the contestation of political power in eighteenth-century Naples, from the Faculty of History, University of Oxford. As a Neapolitanist, she participated in the AHRC-funded project *Exoticising Vesuvius: Formations and Representations of Naples, c.1500-present* and contributed 'Landed identity and the Bourbon Neapolitan State: Claude-Joseph Vernet and the politics of the *siti reali*' to its publication outcome, *New Approaches to Neapolitan Culture, c. 1500-1800: The Power of Place*, eds. Helen Hills and Melissa Calaresu, Ashgate, 2013. Helena's contribution to a forthcoming collection on maritime interests in the early modern world considers how representations of the port and trade in music theatre and visual culture functioned as integral components of the burgeoning discipline of political economy in Naples, home to Europe's first chair in political economy established at the University of Naples in 1754.

Managing and conserving cultural heritage – a linguist's contribution



Miriam Meyerhoff

*All Souls College
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In 2011, I started to document the language Nkep, spoken by about 1000 people in the village of Hog Harbour (Vüthiev) in northern Vanuatu. The Vanuatu Cultural Centre approves overseas research and their contracts require that researchers “give back” to the community they are working with, and to the nation of Vanuatu as a whole. In this talk, I will give an overview of the ways that language documentation in Hog Harbour has drawn me into several projects and activities that contribute more or less directly to cultural heritage. These include editing oral histories into a documentary, collecting traditional stories, compiling a dictionary and teaching materials, and identifying hundred-year-old photographs in a London library that were taken of aspects of village life that people have now largely moved away from.

More about Miriam...

Miriam Meyerhoff is a sociolinguist, which means she studies language in use. She's especially interested in how synchronic language variation is related to linguistic and social change over time, and how contact between speakers of different languages and dialects plays a role in this. She's been doing fieldwork in Vanuatu since 1994.