



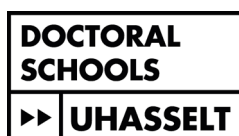
BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Symposium

Lived Interiors narratives and memories

29th — 30th April 2025

UHasselt, Campus Old Prison
Martelarenlaan 42, 3500 Hasselt, Belgium



THE SCOPE

Interiors occupy a unique space between permanence and change. They are at once ephemeral — adapting to the needs of their users — and enduring — carrying forward the traces of lives lived within them. Yet, the term “historical interior” in the context of reuse or restoration conjures the image of a still room belonging to a specific period, untouched by time. In contrast, a lived interior embraces the continuous interaction between the past and present, where each historical layer informs and enriches the current space. Lived interiors act as repositories of stories; they link past lives to the present, weaving a fabric of continuity that elevates the space with a sense of belonging. This symposium focuses on this lived aspect of the interior and its translation into real practices.

As the layer of architecture that is most intimately experienced by users, the lived interior accumulates and evolves, resulting from the layered authority of designers and users. These accumulated memories and narratives manifest tangibly in the soft layers of interiors — such as furniture, objects, and materiality (woodwork, carpentry, earthen reliefs, etc.), and intangibly in the embedded practices and social rituals occurring within. Despite being charged with meanings and associations, the fragility of these layers means that they are often challenging to preserve and carry forward in restorative practices, leading to a loss of cultural depth.

Centered around the thematic track of “Narratives,” this symposium explores how (personal and collective) memories embedded in lived interiors are central to understanding their historical and cultural value and how they can be preserved, represented, and activated in contemporary design practices.

Three key areas are identified:

- a. Reading and Representation - How do we read and unravel the narratives embedded in the lived interior? What sort of lexicon begins to emerge when unraveling them? What tools or methodologies can represent these narratives - drawings, models, creative writing, sound, etc?*
- b. Activating Memory - The traces left by former users—fragments, patinas, oral histories, and written records—offer a way to engage with the memory of interiors. How can these elements be preserved and activated in design to create spaces that connect past and present meaningfully?*
- c. Designing with Memory - How do we design spaces and objects that allow us to encapture the memory of the place? How do we, as practitioners, create room for user appropriation, juxtaposition of material traces, and dynamic interrelationships (between users, materials, and context)?*

PROGRAMME

Symposium - Lived Interiors : Narratives and Memories

UHasselt, Campus Old Prison, Martelarenlaan 42, 3500 Hasselt, Belgium

29 APRIL 2025

DAY 1: PhD SEMINAR AND POSTER SESSION

10:00		
	Welcome	
	PhD Seminar	
10:10		
	The Şile House: Reading and Translating Memory, Heritage, and Space	Zeynep Selvi, Hasselt University
10:30		
	Nested Memories	Vincenza Elisabetta Tafaro, Northumbria University
10:50		
	Coffee Break	
11:10		
	Architectures of caretaking: Reinventing migrants’ patrimonies amid collapse	Stefan Gzyl, TU Delft
11:30		
	Post-war church interiors: on the duality between materialization and representation	Chiara Kuijpers & Femke Van der Meulen, KU Leuven
11:50		
	Valuing Narrative Through the Painting	Malinde Valee, Hasselt University
12:10		
	Lunch	
13:30		
	Roundtable Poster Discussion	
15:00		
15:30		
	Z33 Guided Tour	
17:00		

30 APRIL 2025

DAY 2: KEYNOTE AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

09:30	
	Welcome
09:45	
	Keynote 1
	The House as Stage and Archive of Life Susanne Pietsch, TU Delft
10:45	
	Coffee Break
11:10	
6	

11:10	Session 1 Concept Of Lived Interiors And User—Maker Relationship	
	A Pattern Language for Lived Interiors: The case of Harat-al-Aqr	Nusrat Ritu, Hasselt University
	Fleeting Spaces, Eternal Thoughts: Nanda Vigo and the Paradoxes of Domestic Interiors	Groaz Silvia, Univeristy of Liège and ENSA Paris-Est
	Reconstructing a Memory Palace: The Many Lives of Joe Price's Shin'enkan	Paula Lupkin, University of North Texas
	A haunted house? Memories of the 20th century. Strategies to build a present and afford a future	Tobias Zepter, Office for Architecture in Berlin and Meissner, Hesse
12:30	Lunch	
14:00	Session 2 Charged Heritage (contested, colonial, religious)	
	Exploring narratives on the Reuse of Contested Heritage: Dealing with Contemporary Conflicting Values	Sara Eloy, University of Antwerp
	The Implications of Narrative: The UK Experience of Lived Church Interiors	Dr Nigel Hugh Walter, University of York; Archangel Architects
	Layered memories in Mozambique's modern interiors: navigating decolonisation and everyday living	Patricia Noormahomed, ArchLabour
	The Narrative and Meaning of a Rural Home in Wartime Ukraine	Kateryna Malaia, The University of Utah
15:30	Session 3 Experimental Methods To Represent/Manifest Memory In Interiors	
	Inside out – textile as a spatial memory basis	Karen Lens, Hasselt University
	Narratives of collectivity: representing histories of the Evergreen Brickworks	Julia Jamrozik, Toronto Metropolitan University
	In Absentia. Designing the absent city within the American domestic interior	Patrizio M. Martinelli, Northumbria University
	Casting Memory: Inside Walmer Yard	Laura Mark, University of Newcastle
16:50	Coffee Break	
17:15	Closing Remarks	
17:30	Keynote 2	
	Building Stories to Live In: Writing, drawing, making, and experimental preservation of historic interiors	Edward Hollis, University of Edinburgh
18:30	Dinner	
20:00		

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

30 April 2025, 09:45-10:45

Susanne Pietsch

TU Delft, The Netherlands

Susanne Pietsch is an architect and interior architect based in Rotterdam. She is interested in architecture as an expression of collective action and material culture, particularly the aspect of craftsmanship and actual physical participation in the creative process. Her projects operate at the intersection of design, research and the production of architectural projects, interiors, exhibitions, furniture and objects.

Susanne is co-author of the publications *Walls that Teach – On the Architecture of Youth Centres* (Jap Sam, 2014) and *The New Craft School* (Jap Sam, 2018). She teaches at the Architecture Faculty of TU Delft in the Group of Interiors Buildings Cities, where she supervises students in all MSc courses and coordinates parts of the program. Her teaching emphasizes sensitivity to context, an approach to design through narrative, and the value of collaboration.



30 April 2025, 17:30-18:30

Edward Hollis

University of Edinburgh, Scotland

Hollis originally trained as an architect, and worked on the adaptive re-use of historic buildings in Sri Lanka and Edinburgh. He is now University of Edinburgh Professor of Interior Design and author of several books of building stories: 'The Secret Lives of Buildings' (2009) 'The Memory Palace: A Book of Lost Interiors' (2013) and 'How to Make a Home' (2016).

He is currently working with researchers at ParisPanthéon1 and the Complutense University, Madrid in the JPICH-funded project 'Cultural Heritage at the Metropolitan Periphery', and is programme director for Edinburgh University's new PhD programme in Cultural Heritage.

This research was undertaken in relation to Hollis' PhD in Practice Research at RMIT Melbourne, Australia, titled 'Building Stories: Retelling Pasts and Presents and Building Unpredictable Futures for Stories and Buildings'. His supervisors were Professors Suzie Attiwill and Nicholas Boyarsky.



The House as Stage and Archive of Life

Susanne Pietsch

TU Delft, The Netherlands

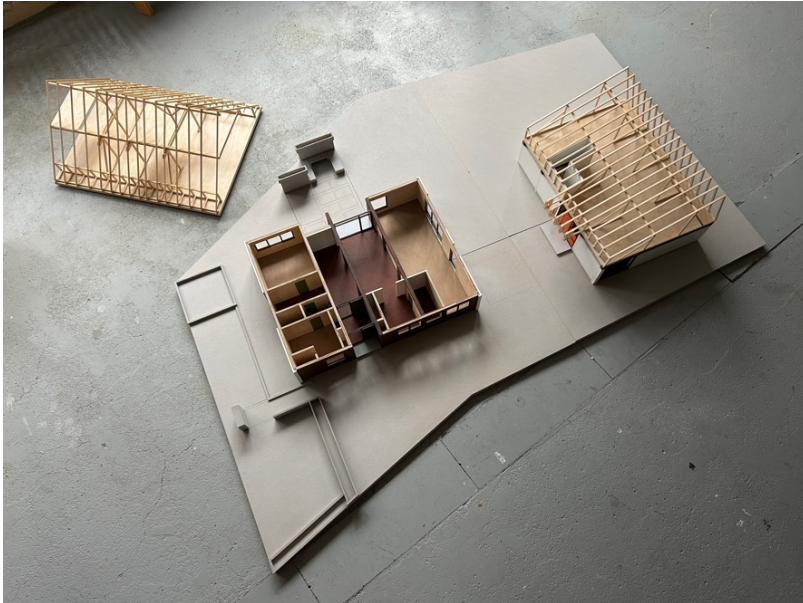
The interiors of two buildings, designed and largely self-built by my parents in a village in southern Germany in the 1970s, form the basis of this study: a house made of custom-designed prefabricated wooden elements and an office building combining masonry with lighter materials. Created with limited means and shaped by the individual vision of living and working in close proximity to each other and the surrounding environment, these spaces also reflect key ideas of their time: functional openness, a connection to nature and a growing awareness of the scarcity of resources.

Over the decades, these interiors were repeatedly adapted, reinterpreted, and repurposed, with the various phases of life, the changing needs of the residents, and contemporary influences being inscribed into the spaces. The architectural framework provided the necessary flexibility, while specific interior elements played a key role in their use. Custom-made elements grew with the house and successive generations of loose furniture filled the rooms according to the respective fashion, but also remained in the house when new pieces arrived.

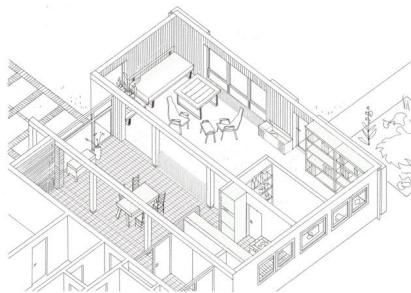
The project is a subjective inventory of the houses, their spaces and objects. It attempts to understand what ideas shaped their conception, what the various changes consisted of, what motivated them and what span of life they encompassed. It examines the lasting traces that each of those moments left behind and tries to reveal the sensory aspects that the surfaces, colours and qualities of the objects and materials brought with them.

Large-scale models make the spatial conception and adaptability comprehensible in miniature format, whilst photographs and drawings illustrate the different phases of use. The study is to be supplemented by experimental representations that link spatial characteristics with temporal sequences and memories. It is an attempt to reveal and translate the cultural and personal meanings inherent in the house. On one hand, to demonstrate their further development potential through the documentation of their evolution, as well as to extract and translate the information inscribed in them and possibly transport it into other contexts.

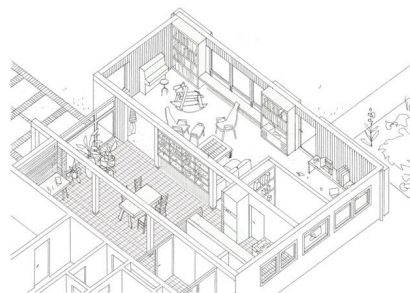
Susanne Pietsch is an architect and interior architect based in Rotterdam. She is interested in architecture as an expression of collective action and material culture, particularly the aspect of craftsmanship and actual physical participation in the creative process. Her projects operate at the intersection of design, research and the production of architectural projects, interiors, exhibitions, furniture and objects. Susanne is co-author of the publications Walls that Teach – On the Architecture of Youth Centres (Jap Sam, 2014) and The New Craft School (Jap Sam, 2018). She teaches at the Architecture Faculty of TU Delft in the Group of Interiors Buildings Cities, where she supervises students in all MSc courses and coordinates parts of the program. Her teaching emphasizes sensitivity to context, an approach to design through narrative, and the value of collaboration.



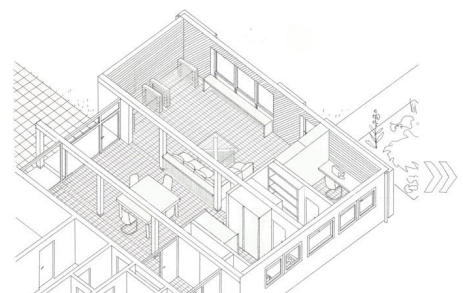
1:25 model of the house and the office, modelmaking: Susanne Pietsch with Tolga Kologlu



1973



1977



1982

Excerpt from the evolution of the interior of the house, drawing: Susanne Pietsch



My friend Martin and I listening to stories from the record player, photo: Peter Pietsch

Building Stories to Live In:

Writing, drawing, making, and experimental preservation of historic interiors

Edward Hollis

University of Edinburgh, Scotland

This symposium asks how we can read, unravel, and represent narratives embedded in the interior.

But far from being ‘as found’, already embedded there, narratives – stories – are constructions: we make them up. As such, they are written as well as read, designed as much as represented, unravelled – that is, built- rather than unravelled. Indeed, narratives are, and make, interiors. Stories possess structures, and are lived, lived in, living.

When we narrate interiors, therefore, we are already reactivating, redesigning, rebuilding them, even if our stories do not physically touch the walls, floors or furnishings. We are creating, if not doubles or replacements, at least images that, somehow re-member them (that is, put them back together again) if not, quite remembering them precisely.

This paper will explore the possibilities of this approach through two projects in which Ed Hollis has attempted to narrate historic interiors built in colonial India in the nineteenth century.

One, abandoned decades ago, is no longer lived in, although its decaying glass linings reveal complex layers of occupation, human and animal. The others, originally executive bungalows, are now being lived in very different ways to those for which they were originally designed.

All of them teeter on the brink of decay and disappearance, and no plans for their preservation are in place. These projects of narration were undertaken as experiments, of a sort, in that preservation: not in physical form, but as stories.

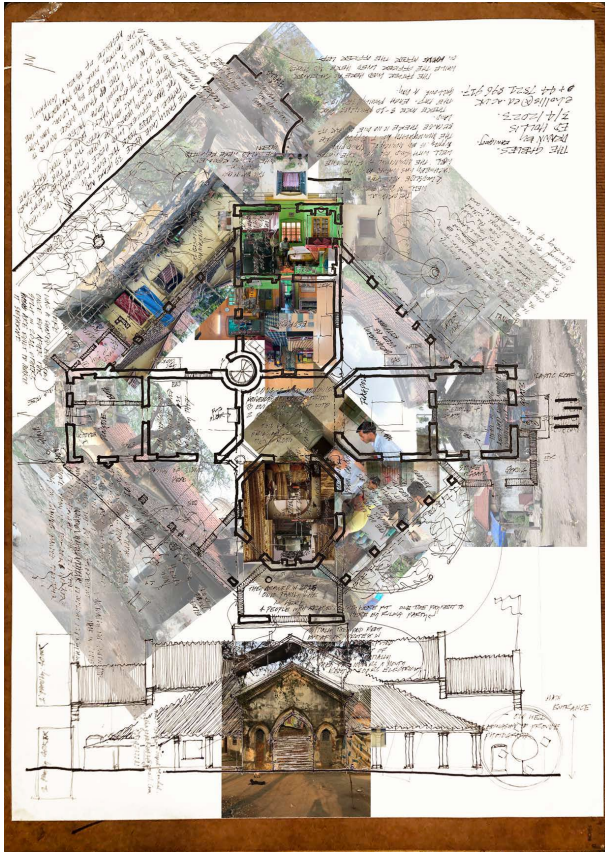
Hollis used design techniques to elicit and record, to structure and construct, and to share interior narratives. These techniques included measured and photographic survey, conceptual diagramming, and materialisations through films, drawings, and printed textiles.

Storytelling practices were interwoven with these ‘design’ techniques, including collaborative and individual interviews and conversations; the iterative practices of creative writing; recorded and performed voiceover; and collective storytelling sessions. The drawings were used to help structure these verbal activities.

There is no singular, final ‘result’ to these experiments. Rather, diverse objects, images, words, sounds, and gestures help build living stories about – and as – these lived interiors that are intended to be as multivocal, as complex, as shifting as they are.

Hollis originally trained as an architect, and worked on the adaptive re-use of historic buildings in Sri Lanka and Edinburgh. He is now University of Edinburgh Professor of Interior Design and author of several books of building stories: ‘The Secret Lives of Buildings’ (2009) ‘The Memory Palace: A Book of Lost Interiors’ (2013) and ‘How to Make a Home’ (2016).

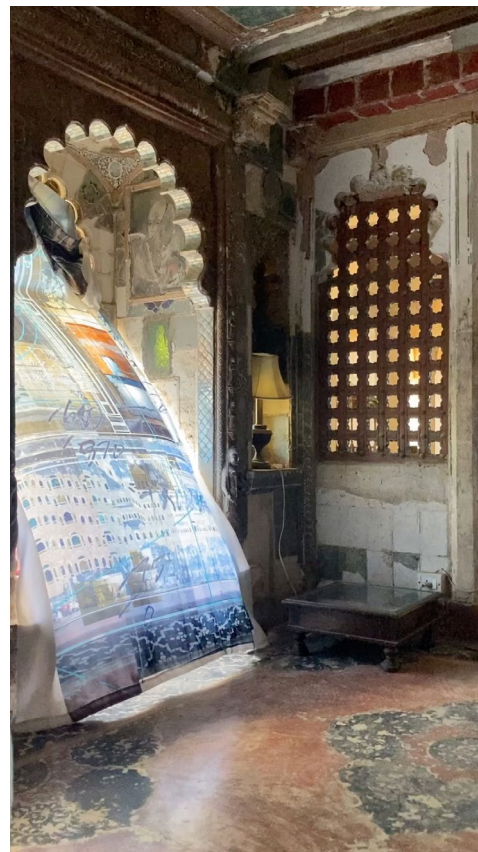
He is currently working with researchers at ParisPanthéon1 and the Complutense University, Madrid in the JPICH-funded project ‘Cultural Heritage at the Metropolitan Periphery’, and is programme director for Edinburgh University’s new PhD programme in Cultural Heritage. This research was undertaken in relation to Hollis’ PhD in Practice Research at RMIT Melbourne, Australia, titled ‘Building Stories: Retelling Pasts and Presents and Building Unpredictable Futures for Stories and Buildings’. His supervisors were Professors Suzie Attiwill and Nicholas Boyarsky.



1: 'The Gables' drawn by the author, 2023



2: Discussing the drawing photograph by the author, 2023



3: Refabricating a Glass Room photograph and installation by the author, 2023

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

A Pattern Language for Lived Interiors: The Case of Harat-al-Aqr

Nusrat Kamal Ritu

Hasselt University, Belgium

Analyzing ‘lived interiors’—spaces rich with narrative, memory, and ongoing adaptation—often presents challenges for conventional adaptive reuse frameworks. These frameworks, typically assuming formal design intentions, may prove less applicable for contexts where reuse emerges organically, driven by residents’ pragmatic needs and tacit knowledge rather than architectural typology. This research addresses this through the case study of Harat-al-Aqr in Nizwa, Oman, a historical quarter whose value derives precisely from its continuously inhabited quality, making it a fitting embodiment of the ‘lived interior’ concept central to this symposium.

Harat-al-Aqr, a 1200-year-old settlement of earthen buildings and winding alleys, faced significant decline after the 1970s due to migration. Its revival began around 2010, initiated not through top-down masterplanning, but via community-led efforts aimed at mitigating urban decay and supporting local livelihoods. Initial reuse projects included converting interconnected mud houses into inns to host incoming tourists to a nearby fort. Several mud houses were combined with minimal alterations, preserving their scale, layout, and materials. With no internal circulation between the individual buildings, inn guests navigated alleyways to access communal spaces and provisions. Thus, adjacent alleys became functional extensions of the interior experience, fostering daily exchanges between visitors and locals and weaving new narratives into the existing social fabric. This organic process, yielding a layered mosaic of restored structures and evocative ruins amid an inhabited neighborhood, called for an analytical lens attuned to use patterns rather than static design strategies.

To adequately capture this lived reality, Christopher Alexander’s Pattern Language methodology was employed and adapted. This approach moves beyond form to identify recurring socio-spatial solutions—‘patterns’—that reveal how the community navigates heritage, social bonds, and practical needs. It focuses on the relationships and processes that give the place its character and resilience, effectively helping to document the embedded narratives and memories manifest in spatial practices. The analysis led to the identification of a distinct ‘Pattern Language’ for Harat-al-Aqr’s reuse, including patterns such as: (i) Living Roofs, where terraces transform into primary social arenas that nod back to historical practices and foster communal rituals; (ii) Mutual Dependencies, that highlight how the relationships between decaying structures and new interventions, and between residents and visitors sustain the quarter’s authenticity; and (iii) Domestic Streets, Public Dwellings, that reflect the fluid perception and appropriation of space where public alleys become semi-private extensions of adjacent functions.

This contribution demonstrates the pattern language’s utility as a methodological tool. Focusing on emergent use patterns offers a way to read and articulate the complex narratives and memories inherent in lived interiors, contributing a valuable approach to understanding and engaging with heritage spaces that defy conventional analysis.

Nusrat is a PhD researcher at Hasselt University, investigating the adaptive reuse of lived interiors through a pattern language. She completed her master’s in Interior Architecture from Hasselt University in 2022 and her bachelor’s in Urban Planning and Architectural Design from the German University in Oman (affiliated with RWTH Aachen) in 2018. She has worked as a research and teaching assistant, a conference coordinator, and a graphic designer prior to her master’s. As a Bangladeshi who grew up in Oman and studied in Europe, her background plays a significant role in her research trajectory.

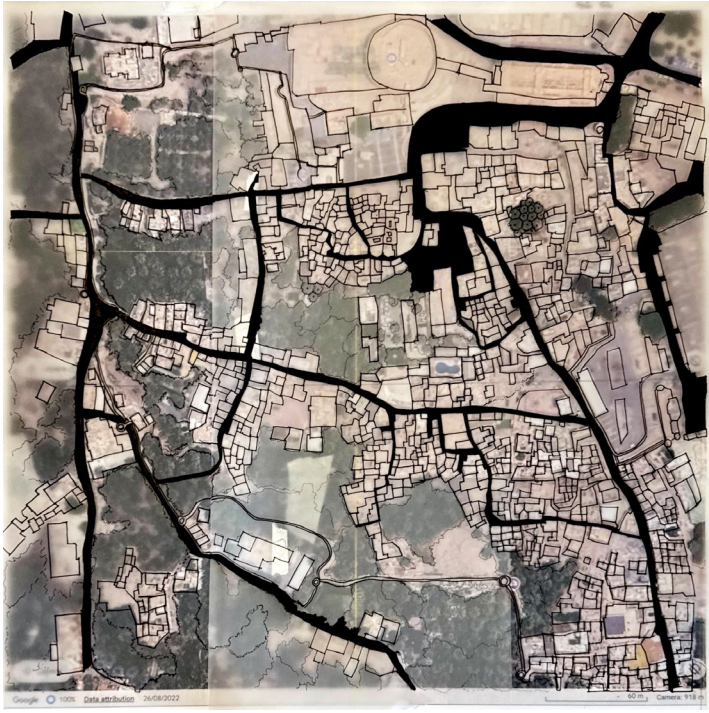


Figure 1: Harat-al-Aqr within its expansive urban context, shaped by earthen clusters that blur distinctions between interior and exterior spaces, creating a unified, holistic expression of interiority. Author (2024)



Figure 2: (Left to right) – Private date plantations, reconstructed elements added to historical layers, new reinforced concrete constructions, and decaying historical structures. This site diagram and elevation of the Anat Cafe in Harat-al-Aqr illustrate the city's layered history, where multiple historical periods are always visible across the urban landscape.



Figure 3: The 'Living Roofs' pattern manifest in Harat-al-Aqr. Here, the city wall walkway doubles as the rooftop for homes underneath, adaptively reused as a vibrant social hub that blurs public/private boundaries and extends interior life outwards. (Source: Anat Cafe Instagram)

Fleeting Spaces, Eternal Thoughts: Nanda Vigo and the Paradoxes of Domestic Interiors

Silvia Groaz

Univeristy of Liege, Belgium and ENSA Paris-Est, France

Domestic interiors serve as intimate extensions of their inhabitants, meticulously crafted to reflect personal histories and experiences. This view lies at the core of the work of architect, artist, and designer Nanda Vigo (1936–2020), who envisioned interiors not only as total works of art but as total psychological environments. Vigo embodies through color, materials, and unconventional spatial definitions the personalities of her clients. Her design strategies—ranging from reflective surfaces and tactile soft carpets to immersive chromatic canvas—sought to radically transcend traditional boundaries between real and perceived space, dismantling disciplinary and physical limits.

Against any disconnection of architecture from its interiors or the detachment of interiors from their architectural framework, Vigo redefined the very nature of the domestic project. She pushed it beyond the segmented definitions of interior architecture, arredamento (furnishings), or industrial design, to recompose it into the all-encompassing notion of “environment”. At a time when this term was deliberately employed to promote the idea of a total work of art, Vigo extended its meaning from art installations to domestic spaces, in order to convey unified and transformative experiences. Her vibrant yellow interiors evoked the warmth of the southern Italian sun for a client in gray Milan (fig. 1); her black environments were designed to heighten the experience of an art collection illuminated by candlelight (fig. 2); and her bed baptized as a “nativity room” was placed in the living area of collector’s house in Vincenza (fig. 3). Each project became a seamless fusion of space devices and personal narrative, tailored to the lives of its inhabitants.

However, this profound personalization raises critical questions about the preservation and legacy of such spaces. If an interior is conceived as a deeply personal “suit” tailored to its inhabitant, what happens to this intimate connection when the original inhabitant is no longer present? Vigo’s interiors have often undergone drastic changes: some were dismantled or abandoned, while others were even demolished to erase the memory of their previous owners, while a few are now being converted to house-museums as the only conceivable solution to preserve their integrity.

This paper, drawing on extensive archival research, interviews with multi-generational owners, and conversations with craftsmen, explores the tension between the perennial ambition of interiors and their inescapable ephemerality. Ultimately, it interrogates whether such deeply personalized spaces can transcend their origins to find new meanings and occupants—or whether they are destined to remain fleeting, temporal expressions. By situating Vigo’s work within this broader narrative, the paper challenges to reconsider the very nature of permanence in interiors, and confront the paradox between their materiality and legacy over time. As Vigo remarked, “if the work of art dissolves into the passage of time, its thought echoes endlessly in the flow of ages”.

Silvia Groaz (PhD, EPFL 2021) is a professor of History of Architecture at ENSA Paris-Est in France and the University of Liège in Belgium. Her research has been supported by prestigious institutions, including the Swiss National Science Foundation, The Getty Research Institute, the Istituto Svizzero di Milano, and the Italian Ministry of Culture’s. Formerly the curator of the Archizoom architecture gallery at EPFL, she is the author of New Brutalism: The Invention of a Style (EPFL Press, 2023) and is currently editing a forthcoming book on the architecture of Nanda Vigo (Birkhäuser, 2026).



Fig. 1 Nanda Vigo, Casa Gialla, Entrance, 1970



Fig. 2 Nanda Vigo, Casa Nera, Bedroom, 1970



Fig. 3 Nanda Vigo, Attico Hassan,
Conversation Pool (living room), 1970

Memory Palace: The Many Lives of Joe Price's Shin'enkan

Paula Lupkin

University of North Texas, The United States

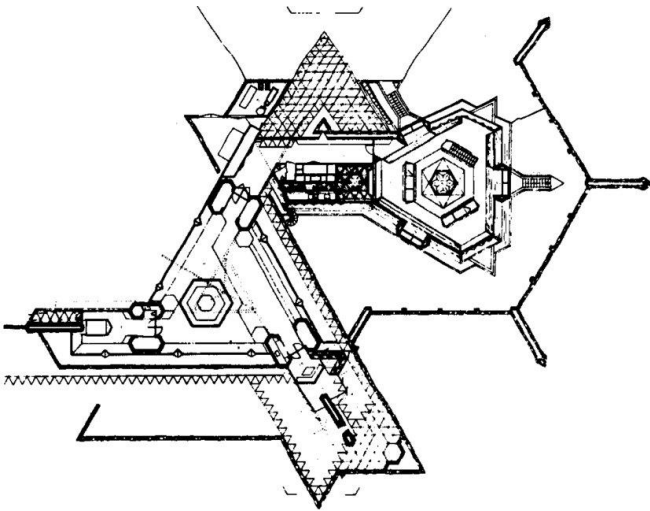
The evolution of Joe Price's Shin'enkan house, designed by Bruce Goff in Bartlesville, Oklahoma is explored through its transformation from a bachelor pad to a family home, reflecting a deep collaboration between architect Bruce Goff and client Joe Price, along with his wife, Etsuko.

The first phase captures Joe's personal style and modernist aesthetic, characterized by bold geometric shapes and an emphasis on privacy and individuality. In the second phase, the addition of a Japanese-inspired bath below a gallery pool marks a significant cultural and aesthetic shift, integrating Etsuko's heritage and blending Eastern traditions with Western modernism.

This phase is further characterized by a sophisticated interplay of intimacy, privacy, and cultural hybridity, as symbolized by a voyeuristic photograph of Joe gazing down at Etsuko in the bath. The final phase, a private retreat for Joe, brings the project full circle, reinterpreting the bachelor pad in a more subdued, introspective form, embodying Joe's transition from solitude to family life.

Through photographs, letters, and films, the house serves as a dynamic memory palace, housing personal histories and offering a tangible representation of the shifting identities of its inhabitants. Despite its destruction by fire in 2006, Shin'enkan remains a poignant case study in architecture as a living archive, revealing the intricate relationship between space, identity, and memory.

*Paula Lupkin is a historian of design, architecture, and cities. She received her Ph.D. in art history from the University of Pennsylvania, in 1997 and taught at the Illinois Institute of Technology, the University of Illinois, Chicago, and Washington University in St. Louis before moving to the University of North Texas in 2012. As faculty in the Department of Art History, Dr. Lupkin teaches undergraduate- and graduate-level courses in the history of modern interiors, architecture, and design. Recent work on historic interiors includes *Shaping the American Interior: Contexts, Structures, and Practices* (Routledge, 2018), co-edited with Penny Sparke, and "The Telegraphic Interior: Networking Space for Capital Flows in the 1920s" in *Interior Provocations* (Routledge 2021). Her contribution to an Art Institute of Chicago exhibition publication, "Electronic Enclosure: Bruce Goff and the Postwar Bachelor Pad" will be published this year by Yale University Press. Lupkin recently completed a three-year term as President of HIG (Historic Interiors Affiliate Group of the Society of Architectural Historians), which she organized with Anca Lasc and Marc Hinchman in 2020.*



Plan of the Shin'enkan complex, Bartlesville, Oklahoma 1966-1968



Photograph of the Joe Price Studio conversation pit, bar, and television, designed in 1957.



Japanese screen and fountain in the museum gallery of the 1966 addition to Shin'enkan.



Film stills that capture the “playground” the conversation pit became once children arrived. Joe Price at left, Etsuko Price in middle, and Bruce Goff on the right. Climbing above is daughter Shinobu Price. “We Don’t Like Your House Either: The Architecture of Bruce Goff” 2015, produced by students from the Architectural Association



A haunted house?

Memories of the 20th century. Strategies to build a present and afford a future.

Tobias Zepte

Office for Architecture in Berlin and Meissner, Hesse, Germany

February 2005, the house in Zehlendorf, Berlin stands in its unkempt garden, covered with a thin layer of snow. A clumsy steel ramp serves as the entrance.

A metal bed in the large room on the ground floor rests its wheels on dirty carpeting. The wallpaper comes loose. The house has been empty for two years, since the owner passed away. The neighbours did not know much about her.

Memories are not always happy and narratives untold when we enter a building and start to work.

The paper presents intuitive design strategies to deal with a physical reality that felt like ingrained trauma.

Surface and structure

Surfaces are the carrier of lives lived. Some easily replaceable and hard to keep, like wallpaper or layers of paint, others as part of the buildings structure, ask for repair or exchange, hard to replace and necessary to keep.

Surfaces offer choices and opportunities, and the logic and poetic of the choices is considered.

Structure and History

This is not a history paper. The story of the house comes second. Dealing with the “Umbau” we did not know much of the history. We had a feeling. But feelings are a reality too.

The paper tells what is known about the inhabitants of the house and their lives in Berlin’s disturbing 20th century.

Has the feeling of trauma the house evoked been more of a perception of reality than a reaction to dampness and decay?

We will not be able to tell.

The paper connects the physical traces in the house, the feelings evoked and the known history of its inhabitants to show an incomplete picture.

This picture will be held against the design strategies and the resulting new life in the house.

Structure and usage

A building defines spaces through constructed structure.

How does the neutrality of the structural spaces connect with the specificity of the usage? How does this connection change when the usage changes?

And how does this reinterpretation deal with the past of a building and open it up for the future?

Directions and connections

Spaces in a building relate to each other and to the outside. These connections define the nature of the spaces and can be changed to redefine them and to appropriate the space for the new usage. The narrative goes on.

Tobias Zepter studied Architecture in Berlin and Delft. He worked with Hilmer & Sattler and Modersohn & Freiesleben before setting up a practice in Berlin in 2003. Besides projects in and around Berlin, he worked from 2008 to 2014 and 2018 – 2022 on projects in Cochin and Mumbai, India in partnership with Modersohn & Freiesleben and with Sebastian Treese respectively. Between 2017 and 2022 he also worked on smaller projects near Suhum, Ghana. Since 2020 a large part of his work takes place on a farmstead in the north of Hesse, Germany. He is interested in finding ways to make the building site a place of collaborative interaction.

„Man kann alles verwenden, was man verwenden kann“ (Josef Frank) Not more, not less.



Exploring narratives on the reuse of contested heritage: dealing with contemporary conflicting values.

Sara Eloy

University of Antwerp, Department of Interior Architecture, Belgium

Shared Architectural Heritage (SAH) refers to the heritage built during the dominance of European colonisers on colonised countries. Nowadays, most authors present a decolonisation narrative that clearly states how controversial and often unhuman that period was and concurrently highlight its impact in several dimensions (Fredholm, 2015; Lagae, 2008; Roosmalen, 2009). Although facing such a reality, it is also clear that a successful decolonisation process would not include the removal of all traces of colonial material. Instead, it involves preserving colonial sites by acknowledging their contentious history, actively engaging with diverse and challenging perspectives, uncovering the layers of history tied to these locations, and addressing structural inequalities through sustained efforts to strengthen local communities (Chang & Chiang, 2012).

Within SAH there is a vast and exciting building stock representing an architectural resource that demands reusing, refurbishing and adapting.

This paper will address critical and comparative reflections on contested SAH by discussing its interiors and the narratives involved in their reuse. The focus is on dealing with contemporary conflicting values when activating the memories entailed in these buildings. For that sake, this paper will present a critical overview of narratives, architectural practices, and past and current studies on the reuse of SAH.

The roças of São Tomé and Príncipe and their surrounding communities are selected as a case study for unfolding reflections on their reuse. These estates, established during the Portuguese colonial period (mid-19th to mid-20th century) were primarily used for coffee and cocoa production (Seibert, 2024). Today, part of this architectural and landscape heritage serves various purposes: local initiatives; government use (like the reception house in roça Agostinho Neto, Figure 2); and private international venture (such as the luxury resort in roça Sunday, Figure 1). However, most of these roças are abandoned or occupied by local communities lacking access to adequate housing (Figure 3).

Permanence and change hold different meanings when it comes to the (re)use of these interiors. In luxury resorts and government houses, nostalgia for formerly prosperous periods is strategically emphasised by reusing soft interior layers, such as colonial furniture, woodwork, and floor coverings (Figures 1 and 2). In contrast, the interior remains of neglected buildings are used to meet everyday needs (Figure 3). While these lived interiors serve as repositories of stories, connecting past lives to the present, the narratives they evoke differ among users and may stir painful memories.

This study focuses on the roças to explore how interior elements convey significant meanings in diverse reuse narratives and how to address buildings whose traces of the past embody a controversial history. The ultimate aim of this research is to develop sustainable strategies for the adaptive reuse of architectural heritage in such contested contexts.

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Sara Eloy is an Associate Professor in Interior Architecture at the University of Antwerp (UA), specialising in adaptive reuse. Her research focuses on digital heritage, adaptive reuse, and the integration of digital technologies - such as virtual and augmented reality and shape grammars - into architectural design and heritage preservation, with a particular emphasis on colonial architecture. Eloy leads the Henry van de Velde research group at UA. She has also curated exhibitions related to cultural heritage and digital humanities, including The Roças of São Tomé and Príncipe – The Read and the Photographed (2022) and Fair and Inclusive City: Perspectives for the Future of Roças of São Tomé and Príncipe (2023).



Figure 1 (top left) – Desk and two chairs from the Portuguese colonial period used for guest in the lobby of Hotel Sundry, isle Príncipe in STP. Photo by Sara Eloy, 2018.

Figure 2 (top right) – The living room desk and four chairs from the Portuguese colonial period were used for guests in the main room of the reception house of Roça Rio de Ouro (now Roça Agostinho Neto) currently belonging to the government of STP. Also, in the photo, inlaid hardwood flooring with contrasting wood tones in geometric shapes. Photo by Sara Eloy, 2021.

Figure 3 (bottom left) – The entrance hall of the house of the owner of Roça Boa Entrada, currently squatted and in ruins, isle São Tomé in STP. In the photo, ceramic tile-clad flooring with decorative motifs, painted walls with flat framed panel detailing, and part of the woodframes staircase. Photo by Sara Eloy, 2021.

The Implications of Narrative: The UK Experience of Lived Church Interior

Dr Nigel Hugh Walter

University of York; Archangel Architects, England

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This paper explores the role of narrative in lived historic interiors. It is common to describe buildings in terms of biography (generally understood to be completed), or to discuss the individual narratives and memories attached to, or hosted by, historic buildings. However, narrative can also play a more fundamental and far-reaching role as a metaphor describing the very nature of built heritage. This narrative approach to conservation has developed in the context of an argument about the legitimacy of change to historic buildings (Araoz 2011), and in particular the way the conservation system deals with change to historic churches.

Parish churches are perhaps the exemplar of historic buildings that have developed over time and which display the traces of previous generations. The challenges of falling church attendance are familiar across many countries; rather than wholesale closures, the response in the UK has been to keep these buildings alive by encouraging the reintroduction of community uses, while maintaining their role as centres of worship and mission. Such uses often involve at least some degree of change to historic interiors (Fig. 1).

The narrative approach sees historic buildings as intergenerational, communal, ongoing narratives ('ICONS') – that is, as the creation of a temporally extended community (Fig. 2), not only stretching back in time but also forwards (Walter 2020a; 2020b). Narrative offers a gathering together of elements of past, present and future into what Paul Ricoeur has described as a 'thick present' of the sort this symposium aims to discuss (Ricoeur 1980). Under this approach, a historic building can be likened to a communally written novel, to which we are asked to add a further chapter. For that chapter to work and for the narrative to 'live', we must understand the preceding story as fully as possible, be creative in this generation, and leave plot lines open to allow future generations to add their chapters.

Central to this approach is an understanding that historic buildings are not primarily completed works of art, but that change is in their nature and they continue to live (Gadamer [1960] 1989, 156; Brand 1994). This calls for a rethinking of heritage significance from a 'subtractive' understanding (where all change is loss) to a 'generative' one that allows for change (Walter 2024). Narrative is the cultural form that explores continuity of identity through change. The narrative approach to conservation provides a theoretical framework within which the limits of appropriate change can be assessed and managed; change is thus transformed from a threat to the significance and identity of historic buildings to an essential means of safeguarding and strengthening them. The narrative approach transforms buildings from a backdrop to human action to themselves being a character in the dramatic production that is culture.

This presentation discusses the narrative approach to conservation, using examples of English medieval churches that have seen repeated episodes of change. However, the relevance of this approach is not limited to churches, and I am keen to explore the application of this theoretical framework to other forms of historic interior.

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Nigel Walter is a Specialist Conservation Architect based in Cambridge, UK specialising in the care and alteration of historic churches. He is a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects (FRIBA) and holds a PhD in Conservation from the University of York, where he is a Research Associate. His academic research focuses on living heritage, defined as the nexus – literally the binding together – of people and place; from this he has developed a narrative-based approach to conservation that addresses living buildings. He is Secretary General of TheoPhilos, the ICOMOS ISC for Theory and Philosophy of Conservation and Restoration.



Fig 1. Church of St Nicholas, Great Wilbraham, Cambridge (Archangel Architects)



Fig 2. Church of St Mary, Ely (Archangel Architects)

Layered memories in Mozambique's modern interiors: navigating decolonisation and everyday living

Patricia Noormahomed
ArchLabour, Portugal

The period preceding the decolonisation of most African countries left a large volume of modernist buildings and infrastructures as a result of late colonial investments on the continent. At the time of independence, these became too valuable assets to be dismantled, so they were reappropriated for the purposes of the new regimes. Decolonisation thus not only involved the replacement of the entire colonial administrative apparatus but also the transformation of modern infrastructures, with significant architectural alterations. Through this process of postcolonial occupation, modern spaces have accumulated various, often conflicting, memories, including the memory of the 'creators' – the colonial society –, the recollection of the inheriting society and its remembrance of a past of domination and social exclusion, and the memory of contemporary inhabitants that have reinterpreted the original meanings of colonial objects through their everyday practices.

This paper discusses the meanings and interactions of these layered memories by examining the transformations that have taken place in the interiors of the modern housing of Mozambique due to adaptations made by the inhabitants to accommodate their diverse ways of living. Following Mozambique's independence from Portugal in 1975, the country witnessed a significant exodus of the population of European origin, leaving their homes vacant. Abandoned houses were nationalised in 1976 and subsequently reoccupied by segments of the local population that had, during the colonial era, been confined to living on the urban peripheries. Since then, the socio-economic profile of the residents has evolved, as have their needs, aspirations and ways of using and identifying the space.

To reveal the changes that the inhabitants have made to Mozambique's domestic interiors and the collective imaginaries built in this process, this paper focuses on the lived interiors of the single-family houses promoted by Sociedade Imobiliária e de Administração Lda (SIAL) in the city of Matola during the 1970s. Drawing on the inhabitants' oral accounts and comparing the original designs with the signs of occupation they have introduced into the space, the paper examines how various memories have been layered into the SIAL neighbourhood throughout Mozambique's (post)colonial history and how these memories have been (re)negotiated over time. The aim is to deepen the understanding of Mozambique's modern housing as more than just a remnant of Portuguese colonialism. Instead, the paper emphasises the dynamic and hybrid nature of this legacy and the potential value of reusing it for the country's sustainable development.

Patricia Noormahomed is a postdoctoral researcher in the ERC-funded project ArchLabour at Dinâmia'CET-Iscte. She is an architect with a PhD in Architectural Heritage from the Polytechnic University of Madrid. She held a Swiss Excellence post-doctoral fellowship in Urban Studies at the University of Basel and was a lecturer at Wutivi University in Mozambique. She was also a visiting researcher at Habiter – Study Centre of the Free University of Brussels and a researcher in the FCTfunded projects "ArchWar" and "WomArchStruggle". Her research interests are 20th-century architecture, urban housing, built heritage, architectural modernism, and colonial and postcolonial history.



Figure 1. SIAL neighbourhood. Matola, Mozambique. Type C and Type A dwellings.
Source: Patricia Noormahomed, 2023.

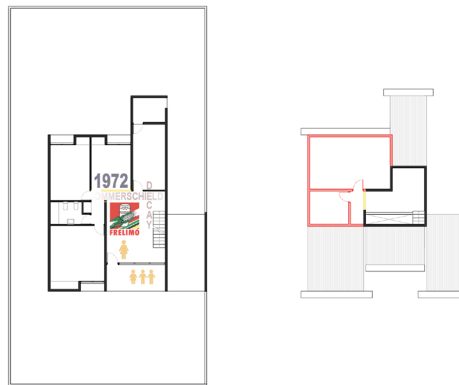


Figure 2. SIAL neighbourhood. Matola, Mozambique. Layered memories within the Type C dwelling.
Source: Patricia Noormahomed.

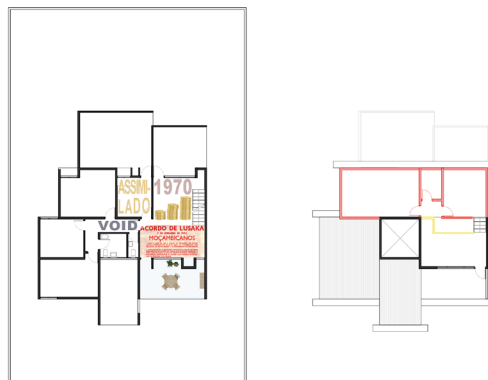


Figure 3. SIAL neighbourhood. Matola, Mozambique. Layered memories within the Type A dwelling.
Source: Patricia Noormahomed.

The Narrative and Meaning of a Rural Home in Wartime Ukraine

Kateryna Malaia

University of Utah, The United States

This paper investigates the narratives and meaning of rural domestic interiors in the lives of Ukrainian urbanites and the transformation these narratives underwent since the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion in 2022. The Russian war is no mere territorial conquest, but a war of cultural and memory obliteration. Through scorched earth tactics Russians turn Ukrainian villages and towns into null territory, a non-place without memory or belonging. This threat is widely recognized in Ukraine, driving change in popular attitude to rural homes: often taken for granted prior to the full-scale war, village homes now came to materialize the way Ukrainians know their land, igniting grassroots preservation and reconstruction efforts.

Ukrainian rural homes are a locus of memory for urbanites. Just like urban homes, rural domestic interiors are not static; since 1991, many homes acquired bathrooms, expanded with attics, and grew tall fences. But the lived spaces of rural homes have often retained their features, hardly as unrecognizably transformed as Ukrainian urban homes after the remodeling boom in the 1990s and 2000s (Fig. 1). Moreover, despite the rapid urbanization of the 20th and 21st century, many Ukrainian urbanites have maintained close ties with rural locations. Children often spend time in villages with their grandparents, since families kept close intergenerational bonds.¹ This phenomenon—of serene rural childhood is widely reflected in literature, both pre- and post-independence. A Ukrainian autobiographic classic, *Enchanted Desna* (1956) by Oleksandr Dovzhenko in broad ethnographic strokes narrates his childhood in Chernihiv region village Sosnytsia. In *Night Swimming in August* (2016), post-Soviet author Serhii Osoka contrasts his protagonist's urban childhood defined by school obligations and parent conflicts with the freedom and joy of village weekends and holidays, where the old house of his great grandmother, like a treasure chest, holds the seeds of heirlooms she will plant in the spring.

To investigate the place of rural interiors in the imagination of Ukrainian urbanites this paper relies on architectural archives, Ukrainian fiction and autobiographic texts, interviews with rural and urban dwellers, and data gathered by current grassroots preservation and restoration projects. This study is a part of my larger project *Housing Rural Ukraine* that investigates the Soviet-era construction of rural Ukrainian homes and the changes they underwent during the tumultuous 20th and 21st centuries.

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Kateryna Malaia, PhD is an architectural historian and an Assistant Professor of Architecture at the University of Utah. She researches housing under pressure and in times of change. Malaia's writing appears in East/West: Journal of Ukrainian Studies, PLATFORM, Architectural Histories, and the Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians. Her first book, Taking the Soviet Union Apart Room by Room: Domestic Architecture Before and After 1991 (NIUP/Cornell UP) was published in 2023. Her book Mass Housing in Ukraine: Building Typologies and Catalogue of Series (co-authored with Philipp Meuser) was published by DOM Publishers in September 2024.



Figure 1. A single-family home in Dykan'ka village, Poltava region in the 1940s. Image from Iurii Khokhol, "Vykorys-tannia typovykh proektiv zhytla v sil'skomu budivnytstvi," *Arkhitektura i budivnytstvo* No. 1 (1954), 20.



Figure 2. Makariv village in Kyiv region, photograph by the author.



Figure 3. Interior of a house in Saranchuky, Ternopil' region, Olx.ua, <https://www.olx.ua/d/uk/obyavlenie/prodam-budynok-v-sel-saranchuki-ternoplska-oblast-termnovo-IDXdoFp.html>

Inside out – textile as a spatial memory basis

Karen Lens

Hasselt University, Belgium

Monumental tapestries transport visitors to lush, evergreen gardens in the Hof van Busleyden in Mechelen (B), immersing them in a Renaissance world that feels both imaginary and familiar. The vibrant colors, diverse materials, and intricate details evoke narratives embedded in textiles—stories woven into fabric that connect us through a collective memory. Historic interiors were often literally dressed up with fabric to connect the intimate spaces with tremendous stories. At the same time, the colourful fabrics provided climate control in draughty and partly heated rooms in palaces, as well as more humble family homes. According to Gottfried Semper, textiles not only recall architecture's origins but also provide shelter and protection, reinforcing their fundamental role in shaping our built environments.

This power of textiles extends beyond tapestries to architectural scenographies. In the 20th century, architects such as Lilly Reich & Mies van der Rohe, Carlo Scarpa, and Lina Bo Bardi integrated textiles into their exhibition designs, drawing inspiration from historic interiors, medieval drapery, and vernacular tent structures while innovating with materials and techniques. Yet, the influence of these textile-driven scenographies on their architectural work remains largely overlooked. Despite textiles being one of the oldest means of creating a “second skin”—a protective, communal space—architectural history and education rarely acknowledge their role in shaping spatial memory.

This text seeks to highlight textiles as carriers of memory in architecture, not only among leading historical architects but also in contemporary practice. As an architect, researcher, craftswoman, and educator, I explore how young and not-so-young designers reimagine spatial creation through textiles in order to investigate how these works balance memory through technique and narrative while looking toward the future—often thanks to collaborations that challenge conventional architectural approaches. Through the examples, I want to indicate tools to reintegrate textiles as memory carriers into our interiors via design and design education.

Karen Lens is a designer with a keen interest in sustainability. Adaptive reuse is, therefore, an essential aspect of her designs within (interior-)architecture and textiles. These interests translated partly into her PhD study, Adaptive reuse of monastic heritage Cloth maker's moulage as alternative thread to an architectural master plan. This dissertation is an interdisciplinary work based on research (by design), (interior) architecture, adaptive reuse, fashion and tailoring. As a member of Trace she employs the same interdisciplinary approach when she teaches design and theoretical studios/courses to (interior) architecture students in both bachelor and master.



Fig.1 Garden Vista with Turkey, from The Galleries – Manufacture of Willem De Pannemaker, Brussels, 1564, in Hof Van Busleyden 2025, Mechelen (Wool & Silk – Kunsthistorische Museum, Vienna) @ Karen Lens

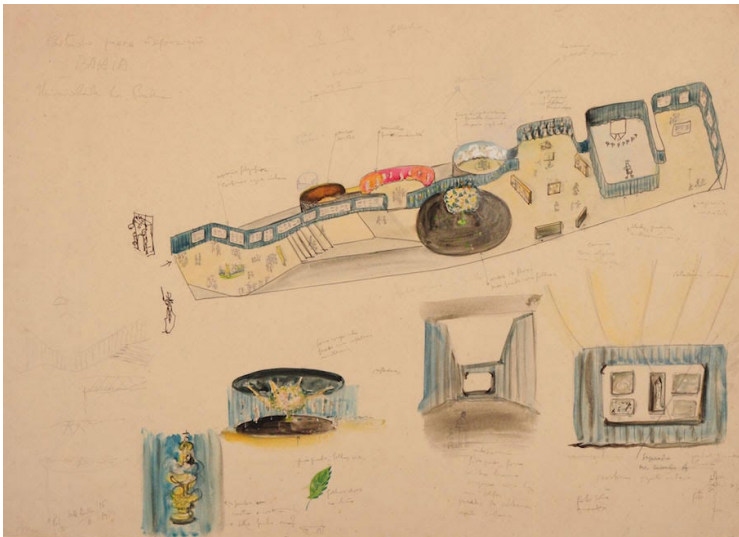


Fig.2 Drawing of Lina Bo Bardi showcasing the scenography for the 5th Biennial de Bahia no Ibirapuera (1959) with both art and vernacular objects – in cooperation with theatre director Martim Gonçalves Eros @ Picture by Henrique Luz © ILBPMB – consulted on <https://linabobarditogether.com/2012/08/26/1959/> - 30 01 2025



Fig.3 Petra Blaisse and her team Inside Outside based their flexible design Vooruit in Gent (B) on pictures of progressive performances at the old Café – consulted on <https://www.insideoutside.nl/Grand-Cafe-VooruitGhent-Belgium>

Narratives of collectivity: representing histories of the Evergreen Brickworks

Julia Jamrozik

Toronto Metropolitan University, Canada

This presentation brings together initial findings from a research/creation grant, focused on the representation of narratives of buildings that are both examples of social infrastructures and of adaptive reuse. Against the backdrop of the climate crisis and rising inequality, social infrastructures play a key role in providing spaces for collectivity: as multi-programmatic and polyvalent spaces they serve as essential amenities and aim to defy capitalist logics. This research/creation aims to understand and represent the architectural and social histories of social infrastructures as a way of demonstrating the complexity of interrelations that they support. Further by understanding the layered histories of existing buildings and by elevating the practice of their adaptive reuse, the research/creation aims to address long-term care and ecological imperatives.

The case study presented is Evergreen Brick Works, an environmentally focused community and cultural centre in Toronto, Ontario, Canada re-adapted between 2008-10 by du Toit, Diamond Schmitt, ERA, LGA Architects, and Claude Cormier. The site is a renaturalized clay quarry and the former brick factory buildings were converted into both interior and exterior spaces for community activities, education, exhibitions, dining, ice skating and markets (farmers', antiques and crafts). Notable features include the original brick kilns and raw, industrial covered outdoor spaces.

While background research, including archival research, is an important starting point for the work, the primary focus here will be on presenting a social history and contemporary experience of the spaces, to learn about how the building complex came into being and for whom, how it was designed and how it has been used. To this end, the research/creation draws on oral history methods (both literally and figuratively) to gain a deeper understanding of the place through existing recordings. In this process the architecture is presented from the perspectives of designers, organizers, and occupants. Elevating the social histories of architecture is a way of acknowledging the many voices and hands that contribute to its creation and renewed use over time.

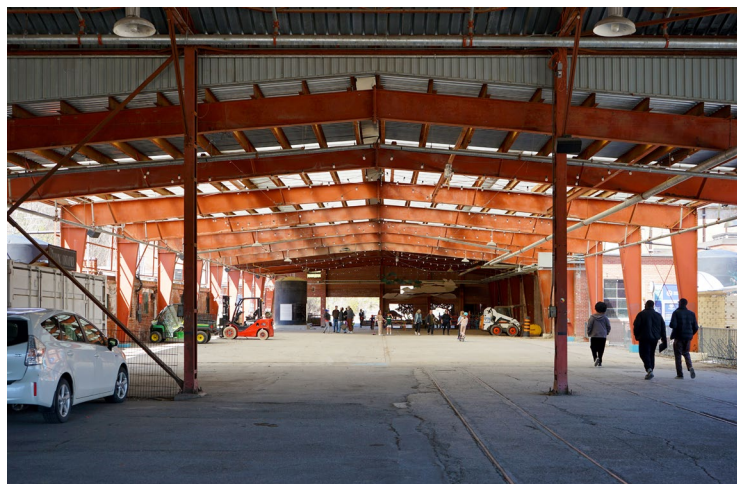
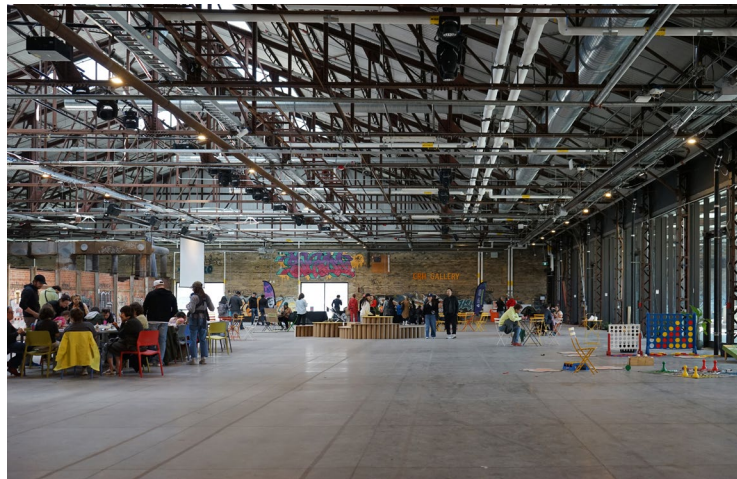
The methodology of the research/creation is focused on synthesis through visual means using diagramming, drawing, and collage. Thus, the testing and the development of a graphic language of representation of social narratives is an essential objective of the work.

The complexity of the architecture, coupled with the polyphonic voices of its many inhabitants over time offer the possibility of new forms of recording and representation of architectural narratives.

This presentation draws on research supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

Julia Jamrozik is an Associate Professor in the Department of Architectural Science at Toronto Metropolitan University. She is a designer, artist, and educator.

Her multidisciplinary practice with Coryn Kempster (www.ck-jj.com) tackles projects at a variety of scales, from temporary installations to permanent public artworks and architecture. They are the authors of "Growing up Modern: Childhoods in Iconic Homes" (Birkhäuser, 2021). Their work was recognized in 2018 with the League Prize by The Architectural League of New York. Formerly, Julia was an Assistant Professor at the University at Buffalo, worked as an architect at Herzog & de Meuron and taught architectural design studios at the ETH in Zurich.



In Absentia. Designing the absent city within the American domestic interior

Patrizio M. Martinelli

Department of Architecture and Built Environment

Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne, England

The deep connection between architecture and the city has long been explored by architects and scholars, from Alberti and Palladio's concept of the city as a large house, house as a small city to Aldo Rossi and Aldo Van Eyck, who grounded their theories and designs in this analogy. Beyond theory, urban fragments or entire urban facts have often been transformed into houses or housing systems. The Diocletian Palace in Split exemplifies this shift in scale, use, and meaning, while the theatre type originated as an architectural interior reimagining urban spaces like piazzas and surrounding buildings. In such cases, the presence, literal or metaphorical, of the city in the architectural interior is central.

This study examines how this analogy persists even in absentia, where the urban element in the city-architecture equation is missing and must be reinvented, evoking its memory through spatial devices, composition, and lived experience. Drawing from architectural theory, historical analysis, and spatial interpretation, I investigate how this memory is integrated into architectural interiors. In particular, I focus on domestic interiors as sites where memory, as Gaston Bachelard argues, dreams, and thoughts shape lived experience, and where the interior, as the urban space, becomes the stage and backdrop for the everyday performances of life inside the house, and metaphor of the public-private relationship of the city environment.

The case studies analyzed belong to a rural or semi-rural American context, far removed from urban centres, where the city is missing, forgotten, or even rejected. These houses were designed between the 1950s and 1990s by architects with strong ties to European architectural and urban culture, subtly responding to that contexts and sites and even to the modernist orthodoxy that often dismissed historical memory.

The Miller House (late 1950s, Indiana), designed by Eero Saarinen, is conceived as a village (as Kevin Roche recalls), with rooms arranged around a central piazza, the sunken conversation pit, reminiscent of an urban public gathering space. Its structured garden, designed by Dan Kiley, further reinforces the idea of an ordered, gridded urban plaza. The Miller House (1990s, Kentucky) by José Oubrerie reimagines the absent city as a vertical citadel, enclosed by a protective wall and composed of layered spatial sequences that evoke the complexity of an urban microcosm. Lastly, George Ranalli's 1980s renovation of the Callender School (Rhode Island) transforms the existing structure into a domestic setting that metaphorically reconstructs the city. Through analogy and architectural montage, the architect assembles inhabited façades and interior piazzas, a domestic reinvention of theatrical spaces that allude, in absentia, to the essence of the city.

These projects do not merely reference urban forms; they act as mnemonic devices, where the architect reconstructs a lost urban experience, demonstrating how architecture can preserve and evoke the city even when it is physically absent.

Patrizio M. Martinelli, PhD and qualified architect, is Assistant Professor of Interior Architecture and Architecture at Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne (UK). His research and creative work, published in monographs and international journals, and showcased in exhibitions in UK, Europe and USA, focuses on modernism, domestic and urban interiors, adaptive reuse, montage and the concept of theatricality of interior space.



Image: Patrizio M. Martinelli, In Absentia: The City Within the American Interior, 2025

Casting Memory: Inside Walmer Yard

Laura Mark

University of Newcastle, England

Through the use of poetic written lines and jesmonite casts, I have been exploring different moments and memories of Walmer Yard.

Walmer Yard is a development of four houses which sit around a courtyard in Notting Hill, designed by the acclaimed architect Peter Salter. Once completed back in 2018, it was turned into a house museum and became the home of the Baylight Foundation – a charity focused on the experience of architecture. As keeper of Walmer Yard from 2013 until 2023, I was appointed to direct, develop and strategise what the Baylight Foundation would be.

While at Walmer Yard I made a series of casts. These were made of parts of interior walls where the texture isn't quite as the architects would have intended. Many visiting the building might not notice these or alternatively might see them as intended details. Some of them became intentional as the architect acted to disrupt the notion of an imperfection or mistake by bringing them to the fore, extending them and spreading the initially unintended finish to other areas of the walls. The casts and the words that accompany them explore what is significant about these unintended moments within the interior spaces of Walmer Yard, which as keeper and resident I saw every day. They also present opportunities to carry out a close reading of the building and its fabric. Through this close reading, I can recall stories of the building's occupation, creating an alternative narrative of Walmer Yard.

The casts also act as a way to retrieve and create memories – akin to a talisman. Through the careful making of the casts, I am able to reflect: the pressing of silicone into the texture of the wall, the slow removal revealing the walls indentations and marks, then the pouring of liquid jesmonite over the silicone moulding and the wait as the cast hardens to later reveal the remade surface of the wall. It is a slow and careful process but one which has its rewards as a new piece is revealed at the end, almost like a relic or a memento.

For others looking at the casts there is a somewhat public memory – the idea of trying to guess where in the interior they have been taken – yet for me, the reading is more personal. Like Proust's madeleines they dredge up long-lost memories of my time within the walls of Walmer Yard. They prompt a rush of memories and recollections that somehow spiral-out from the object itself. These moments and memories are ephemeral. They are not part of the architect's narrative of the building. These ephemeral moments are historically difficult to store in a traditional archive based on written or drawn materials or conventional modes of representation.

Through this paper I will explore how the casting of the building and the words placed aside these casts can act to record the interiors of the spaces and the moments and stories contained within the walls of Walmer Yard.

Laura Mark is an award-winning architecture critic, filmmaker and academic. Laura is currently undertaking a PhD at Newcastle University which looks at our experience of domestic spaces and the museumification of the home through an autoethnographic study of Walmer Yard. In 2024, she received a scholarship from Newcastle University and Cambridge University Press, and was appointed as editorial assistant on the academic journal ARQ. She also teaches at Sheffield School of Architecture. Laura is the former Keeper of Walmer Yard and she also previously ran the Baylight Foundation, where she curated a number of cultural programmes and projects which explored how we experience architecture.



Image 1. Walmer Yard Courtyard (Credit: Jim Stephenson)

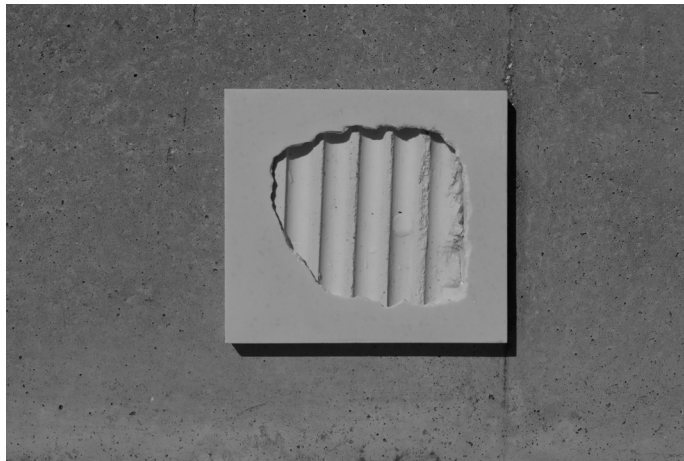


Image 2. Cast (Credit: Laura Mark)



Image 3. Walmer Yard bench (Credit: Helene Binet)

The Şile House: Reading and Translating Memory, Heritage, and Space

Zeynep Selvi

Hasselt University, Belgium

This paper explores the century-old family home of the Turkish architect, professor, and photographer Reha Günay in Şile, Türkiye, as documented in his book *Şile'deki Ev* (2021). Through a deeply personal lens, Günay examines the intersection of personal and collective memories embedded in the interiors of this vernacular structure, reflecting on how these memories shaped him, his way of life, and his architectural approach. Taking this house as a case study, I analyse how such deeply lived interiors can be understood as layered narrative spaces—where personal identity, memory, and spatial practice converge. My aim is to highlight how this reading may inform more situated design approaches in the field of adaptive reuse.

The house, a reflection of vernacular architectural traditions, serves as both a repository of family history and cultural memory tied to Şile's socio-environmental context. Günay's process of "reading" spatial and material layers of the home reveals a nuanced vocabulary of design elements—from the patina of everyday use to the seasonal adaptability of spaces and hand-crafted furniture passed down through generations. Following these traces, I reflect on how this journey offers cues for an alternative methodology: one grounded in slowness, memory, and material literacy. The interiors are interpreted as a narrative text, where every fragment—from architectural details to modest objects—carries stories of past inhabitants and their daily rituals. His process demonstrates how such narratives can guide adaptive reuse, restoration, and renovation decisions, helping determine what to preserve, what to adapt, and what elements to introduce.

Situated within the thematic tracks of the symposium, examining how Günay documented the home through drawings, reflections, oral histories, and artifacts. His decisions focused on preserving the home's memory while adapting it to contemporary needs, always respecting its lived essence. The work highlights the importance of craftsmanship, handmade artifacts, and traditional techniques in activating memory.

Günay's approach transcends nostalgia, instead engaging with the home's potential to combine traditional methods with the modern, always mindful of its topography, ecological, and social context. Though the renovation spanned nearly a decade—restricted to summer months—Günay considers it a living piece of himself, slowly evolving, aging, and learning alongside him.

By critically engaging with Günay's choices, I explore how an interior can become a site of both continuity and transformation—offering designers a space to negotiate between personal memory and collective heritage. It emphasizes "reading" as a lens to uncover layered narratives and demonstrates how this approach can inform sustainable and meaningful design methodologies.

Zeynep Selvi is a doctoral researcher at the TRACE research group, Hasselt University. With a background in interior architecture and a focus on adaptive reuse, her research explores the intersection of spatial narratives, memory, and design strategies embedded in traditional domestic vernacular interiors. Zeynep emphasizes the concepts of "reading" and "translating" cultural and architectural layers to uncover the poetics of lived spaces, drawing inspiration from her Turkish heritage and academic background.

By exploring the cultural, social, and environmental knowledge embedded in these spaces, she aims to bridge vernacular principles with contemporary design challenges. It aims to offer nuanced perspectives on the intersections of memory, identity, and sustainability in domestic spaces, reading vernacular interiors as cultural texts that reflect the distinctiveness of local traditions and the shared ecological challenges of habitation, fostering a deeper understanding of how we dwell together.

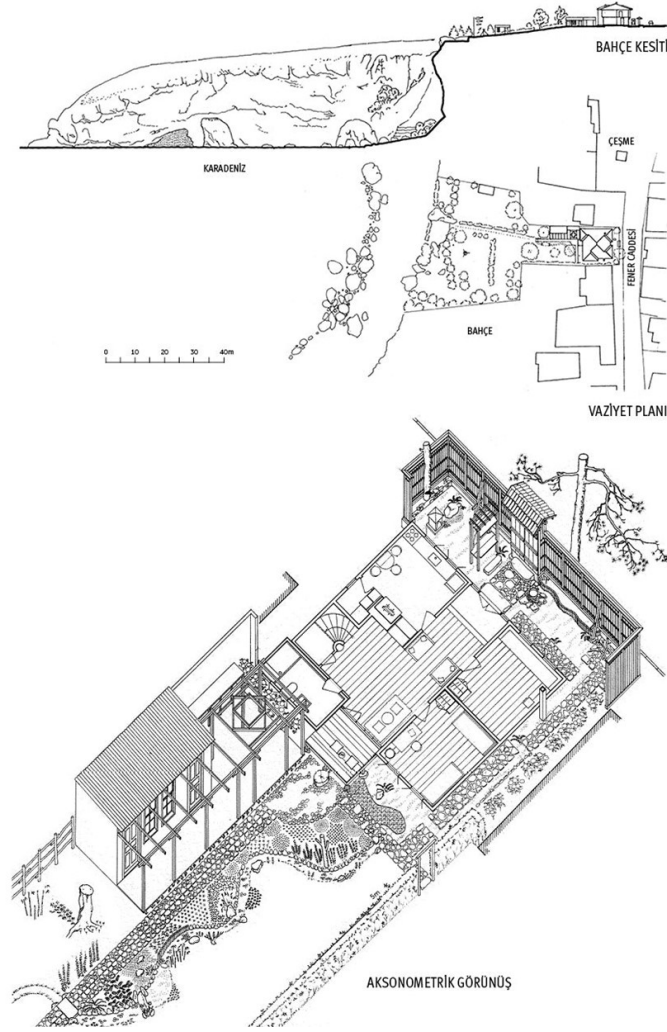


Figure 1. Garden section, situation plan & axonometric view. Drawings by Reha Günay. Şile'deki Ev, 2021



Figure 2. The kitchen on the ground floor, photograph by Reha Günay. Şile'deki Ev, 2021.



Figure 3. The Sofahallway on the first floor, photograph by Reha Günay. Şile'deki Ev, 2021

Nested memories

Vincenza Elisabetta Tafaro, Dr. Francesca Lanz

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This paper examines the adaptive reuse of the North Riding House of Correction in Northallerton, UK, exploring the challenges and opportunities of repurposing ‘uncomfortable heritage sites’ (Pendlebury et al., 2024)—buildings with strong architectural and typological connotations whose reuse demands sensitive negotiations and raises complex questions about public representation, strategic forgetting, selective remembrance, and the risks of heritage commodification, sanitization, and dark tourism (MacDonald, 2009), (Pendlebury et al., 2018), (Lanz and Whitehead 2019), (Gibbeson and Gill, 2022), (Lanz, 2024).

It explores how adaptive reuse engages with a site’s materiality and unspoken memories to envision a meaningful future. How can such sites be preserved while respecting their conflicting ‘traces’ (Anderson 2021)? How can they be reintegrated into urban life, fostering public engagement and community ownership?

Northallerton Prison, redeveloped between 2019 and 2022, is one of the UK’s most recent adaptive reuse projects involving a former 19th century prison. Unlike many other English prisons from the same period and decommissioned over the past 25 years, this intervention was distinguished by the local council-led partnership, which transformed the entire site into a multifunctional mixed-use space.

The project is examined through the lens of urban interiors, structured around three nested levels of interiority: (1) the enclosing prison wall, a once-impenetrable boundary now partially erased or repurposed; (2) The Square (Figure 1), formerly the Quadrangle and centre of incarceration, now reimagined as a civic gathering space; and (3) the former wing (Figure 2), now adapted into digital innovation offices and communal interiors.

Drawing from architectural observation, interpretive analysis, and spatial mapping of post-intervention design strategies—including material and atmospheric shifts—this case study -- with its strengths and shortcomings -- reveals how themes of representation, inclusion, and material juxtaposition emerge. These are not abstract ideals but are physically negotiated through design choices: the preservation or removal of bars, graffiti, thresholds, the insertion of glazed walls, and corporate branding over historical tone.

Northallerton’s reuse, with its compromises and moments of resonance, exemplifies the contradictions of working with difficult heritage. The project highlights how memory is activated, muted, or externalised—through architectural strategy, governance structure ultimately underscoring the importance of critically engaging with memory as an opportunity for fostering meaningful connections between past and present.

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Dr. Francesca Lanz

With a background in architecture, primarily focused on interior architecture and adaptive reuse, Dr Lanz expertise expands to intersect different disciplines, including museography, exhibition design, and memory, museum, and heritage studies. Her research innovatively combines these diverse disciplinary approaches, theories, and practices to explore the role of the built environment and museums in contemporary societies, with a particular interest in neglected heritages and memories. This is evident in her work on cities, museums, migration, and the adaptive reuse of sites of difficult history, including prisons and asylums. This has resulted in numerous research project and publications, including the recently published research monograph on Mind Museums: Former Asylum and the Heritage of Mental Health, (2024, Routledge)

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Vincenza Elisabetta Tafaro is a RIBA chartered architect and Year 2 PhD candidate specializing in adaptive reuse of built heritage. She holds a postgraduate diploma with honours in Conservation and Restoration from the University of Genoa and a master’s in architecture from the University of Catania. Her thesis won the Rotary International Prize in 2012. Tafaro has a diverse background, including a fellowship at Turin Polytechnic and research at Newcastle University on reinforced concrete in conservation and building adaptability. Her professional experience includes freelance work and positions at the Beamish Museum and various design offices, covering all RIBA stages.



Figure 1 The Civic Square - North Riding original Courtyard
Credit Author



Figure 2 - Office and hub space in the former female cell wing
Credit Author

Architectures of caretaking: Reinventing migrants' patrimonies amid collapse

Stefan Gzyl

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The profound economic and political crisis affecting Venezuela has triggered an unprecedented migratory crisis. More than eight million people (26% of the country's population) have fled. In Caracas and other cities, emigration has left behind a vast material legacy accumulated during decades of economic prosperity and upward social mobility. However, this material world is not simply abandoned or left to ruin. Instead, it is the object of **caretaking practices** that maintain, repair, or transform migrants' patrimonies.

Caretaking is, like emigration, a socially transversal practice. Moreover, managing migrants' patrimonies has become an opportunity for professional reinvention and is part of the socio-economic ecosystem that has emerged amid collapse, where solidarity and trust-based practices thrive in the absence of legal frameworks of employment and in the blurred boundaries between formal and informal economies.

Caretaking includes everything from houses and cars to personal objects and libraries, plants, and pets. It engages the material world of emigration in creative ways, extending its life and opening it to new uses, responding simultaneously to migrants' material attachment and the challenges of the crisis. Caretaking is a balancing act between seemingly opposing forces: between the urge to preserve something 'as is' and the need to adapt it, between spatial transformation and its eventual reversibility, between the destruction of collective memory by State action and its protection by myriad civic endeavours. Through caretaking, actions like watering plants or salvaging books transcend their mundane dimension and prompt a critical exploration of what is being preserved, whether the "things" themselves or a "larger" order around them[1].

Methodology, outcome, and contribution

Despite its prevalence, caretaking is inwardly-oriented, shielded from exposure and protective of the patrimonies it looks after. Overcoming this limitation shaped the fieldwork in terms of methods and outcome. First, it required a form of systematic and repetitive encounter that eroded the layers of protection around spaces and practices, revealing the vastness of emigration's material accumulation and its continuous reinvention. This turned the fieldwork into an incursion, a precise and immersive exploration that only revealed fragments and snapshots.

The outcome of this incursion is a series of **episodes**, an accumulation of individual narratives that together construct a mosaic-like image of caretaking. Episodes emerge from a process of reflection and classification of the fieldwork and integrate visual and textual material, placing the reader close to the researcher's lived experience.

Through the narration of an episode (presented simultaneously with visual material) my participation explores how caretaking navigates the ambiguous territory between the preservation and reinvention of domestic spaces, what is lost and what endures in the process, and what this process tells us about architecture's possibilities amid societal collapse.

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Stefan Gzyl is a PhD researcher at the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, TU Delft. He holds a professional degree in architecture from Universidad Central de Venezuela and a Master in Architecture from Harvard University. He is Assistant Professor of Design at Universidad Central de Venezuela, where he was director of a design unit between 2016 and 2019. He is also co-director of Incursiones, a non-profit platform working on public space installations, infrastructure, and education programs. Incursiones have designed projects and public space workshops in Caracas, Mexico City, Santiago de Chile, Portland, and Rotterdam.



Fig. 1. Carlos Ancheta, who manages more than twenty apartments of friends and family, shows the objects stored in an improvised deposit inside a migrant's home. Photo by author.



Fig. 2. The Venezuelan Book Museum is located in a 1950s house. It contains a collection of more than three thousand titles 'rescued' from migrants' homes.

Post-war church interiors: on the duality between materialization and representation

Femke Van der Meulen, Chiara Kuijpers, Sven Sterken, Stephanie Van de Voorde
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During the post-war period, many church buildings were built across newly developed neighbourhoods in Western Europe. Inspired by the liturgical renewal of Vatican II (1962-1965) that aimed to restore a sense of community in these areas, post-war churches adopted an open floorplan, stimulating a flexible use of space and sense of community. The use of innovative construction methods enabled the large spans needed to create these open floorplans. Through these liturgical and technical developments, churches underwent a radical shift, leaving their building materials explicitly visible on the interior to represent the Church's progressive spirit. This led to experimental proposals in post-war church design, which evoked mixed opinions among the general public. Today, these opinions are often still tangible but have become more complex and layered over time, further encouraged by the ever-ongoing secularization of Western society as well as the additional narratives that came to light in contemporary discussions on the Church as an institute of power.

We would like to open the debate on how to assess past and present experiences of post-war church interiors and situate these next to the intrinsic qualities of the construction methods that helped shaping them. In the current discourse about the repurposing of post-war churches, it is their interior's use that shifts, while their materiality remains the same. As a starting point, we will unpack our own narrative of our search into the past of the Saint-Joseph Workman church in Mol-Ginderbuiten (1966-1968). The controversial design of Paul Meekels, with a large spaceframe structure, provokes much discussion today when it comes to the future use of the parish building. By relying on oral history and archival research, this presentation aims to retrace the past meaning of this 'futuristic' structure for the small community of Ginderbuiten and what remains of this perception today. In the end, we hope to discuss how the different narratives that come together in the construction methods of these post-war churches can strengthen strategies to revive and/or reuse their once lived interiors.

Chiara Kuijpers obtained her degree as a Master of Science in Architectural Engineering at the University of Ghent in 2022 with a master thesis on Flemish Béguinages. In 2023 she joined the Architectural Engineering Lab of the VUB, where she examines the construction history and heritage value of roof structures of post-war churches. This PhD research "Meaning and Material: Towards a Multidisciplinary Assessment of Post-War Church Roofs in a Context of Adaptive Reuse.", funded by FWO, is in collaboration with Femke Van der Meulen (KU Leuven) and under supervision of Prof. Stephanie Van de Voorde (VUB) & Prof. Sven Sterken (KU Leuven).

Femke Van der Meulen (°2000) is a PhD researcher at the Faculty of Architecture at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KU Leuven). In 2023, she graduated with a Master in Architecture (KU Leuven). After her graduation, she joined the research project "Meaning and Material" under the supervision of prof. dr. ir. arch. Sven Sterken (KU Leuven) and prof. dr. ir. arch. Stephanie Van de Voorde (VUB), funded by the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO). Together with fellow PhD researcher Chiara Kuijpers (VUB), she explores the possible defects, remediations, and spatial potential of roof structures of post-war churches.

Sven Sterken is a Professor at the Faculty of Architecture at KU Leuven. His research focuses on the architectural agency of institutional actors (such as the Catholic Church) and international organizations (EU, NATO, etc.). Recent publications include Territories of Faith. Religion, Urban Planning and Demographic Change in Europe, 1945-1975 (with Eva Weyns, Leuven University Press, 2021), and A History of Urbanism in Europe (with Sergio M. Figueiredo and Kees Doevendans, ACCO Leuven, 2022).

Stephanie Van de Voorde holds a Tenure Track position in Architectural and Construction History and Heritage at the Department of Architectural Engineering of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel. Breaking away with traditional perspectives in architectural history and heritage studies, her main research topics are related to 20th-century building materials and building culture, as well as modern heritage. Stephanie is co-founder of the International Federation for Construction History and an Expert Member of the Icomos International Scientific Committee on 20th Century Heritage (ISC20C).



The Sint-Jozef Ambachtsman church in Mol (1968) by Paul Meekels
©Femke Van der Meulen, 2024

Valuing Narratives Through The Painting

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According to Perez de Arce (1978), the incremental process which shaped the existing environment over time by gradually accumulating elements, confirms and reinforces a space. Therefore, the significance of space lies not in its emptiness, but rather in the concept of place that imbues it with value [1]. Existing buildings and their interiors, serving as a host, hold a strong sense of place shaped by their unique identity and the atmosphere they evoke. The interior is a carefully curated narrative, intertwining tangible and intangible elements that embody personality and intimacy. Therefore in interior architecture education, particularly in adaptive reuse, a simplistic design attitude that solely focuses on spatial organization and the unification of furniture and walls proves insufficient. There seems to be a tendency among students to prioritize the development of a functional place, rather than the continuation of a lived space. Existing interiors are often reduced to abstract geometric drawings, mere volumes occupied with air, overlooking refined details, the richness of materiality, the nuance of texture and color, the interplay of light and the deeper spatial meaning.

A nuanced understanding of these lived interiors is crucial, as is the need to respect them throughout the design process. Therefore, adopting a thoughtful and sensitive approach is essential. This contribution discusses an exercise of the research seminar *Genius Loci*, coordinated by Koenraad van Cleempoel, in which students cultivate an holistic perspective by integrating theory and practice through an in-depth analysis of a painting. The combination of reading and making fosters a thinking process in which students interpret the visual, emotional and symbolic dimensions of their chosen artwork. This research supports them in the ‘translation’ of the painting in which they introduce soft interventions or create a personal interpretation using both analogue and digital tools of representation. A central aspect of the exercise is maintaining a respectful dialogue with the original painting [2].

Through a qualitative analysis of selected student projects, this contribution examines recurring themes, reflections and interpretative strategies. It promotes active engagement with the existing as a means to gain insights and foster a personal design language. The research advocates for an open-ended approach, cultivated by an attitude of sensitivity towards lived interiors and their thoughtful reuse. Here, the painting serves as a metaphor for the lived interior, encouraging to interact in order to continue rather than to erase.

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Malinde Valee is a PhD assistant at UHasselt’s FacARK, where she explores model-making as a tactile methodology to facilitate a sensitive approach in adaptive reuse design. She combines her research with various teaching activities, primarily within studio Beelding. Malinde holds a Master’s in Architecture from UHasselt and completed her Education Master in Design Sciences in September 2024. Her professional experience includes a two-year architectural internship, freelance architectural work until December 2023, and teaching positions in part-time art education (DKO).



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