

# **INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL OF MUSEOLOGY AND HERITAGE 2026**

UNESCO CHAIR IN INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION  
FOR ENHANCING INTEGRATED HERITAGE  
APPROACHES  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
UNIVERSITY OF PRIMORSKA

**Programme**

1–5 September 2026

The 2026 International Summer School of Museology and Heritage, entitled **Conservation as Interpretation: Between Conservation, Museology, and Heritage Interpretation**, organized by the University of Primorska, Faculty of Humanities, within the framework of the **UNESCO Chair in Interpretation and Education for the Promotion of Holistic Approaches to Heritage**, will take place from 1 to 5 September 2026 and will be dedicated to reflecting on how **conservation, interpretation, and museology** intertwine in theory and practice.

**Heritage interpretation** is a meaning-making process through communication, participation, and experience. **Heritage presentation** is a range of methods of interpretation delivery for enhancing experience, raising awareness and understanding, and inspiring engagement with heritage.

The starting point of the summer school is the thesis that conservation intervention is not merely a technical or neutral decision but is often also an interpretive act: we choose which layers, values, and narratives will be preserved, emphasized, or pushed aside, and how these meanings will be communicated to the public. We focus on questions such as whether a presentation can be just a presentation, how the profession recognizes the interpretative dimension of conservation and how it implements it, how approaches differ between types of heritage, and how conservation practice deals with the complexity of multi-layered, sometimes dissonant or conflicting narratives.

We are particularly interested in alternatives and practices that enable an inclusive and pluralistic approach: preserving multiple layers while maintaining spatial coherence, clearly interpreting dissonances between layers, and ways in which museums, interpretation centers, and various interpretation spaces can contribute to this. We will also discuss the potential of artistic interventions (especially in public spaces) and digital tools (e.g., heritage GIS and digital layering of interpretations) as ways to reduce physical interventions in space and open up the possibility of multiple readings of heritage.

## CONTRIBUTION CATEGORIES

### Case Studies – Live Lectures

- Anja Mlakar – *(Re)Interpreting Sacred Landscapes: Heritage, Religion and the Making of Meaning*
- Franci Lazarini – *Jože Plečnik and His School in the Light of Interventions in Historic Architecture*
- Petra Stipančič – *Situlae Festival – a Complex Interpretive Product*
- Andrej Jazbec – *Presentation of Wall Paintings*
- Bernarda Županek and Nejc Kovačič – *A View from the Other Side: Integrating Conservation into Museum Interpretation*
- Pika Škerlj – *Conservation and Restoration Planning: Principles, Values and Ethical Considerations*
- Nikolina Belošević – *Stories Behind the Interlace – New Research on Early Medieval Sculpture of the Eastern Adriatic*
- Ana Laznibat – *Architectural Heritage of the Tobacco Industry in Dalmatia (1880–1918): Adaptive Reuse and Interpretation*
- Jana Puhar – *Interpretation as Meaning-Making: Museological Perspectives on Conservation and Heritage*

### Workshops

- Hussein Hassan Marie Hassan Mahmoud – *Non-destructive Analysis and Conservation of Ancient Egyptian Polychrome Objects*
- Alfarisi Maulana – *Digital Layering and Mobility: Interpreting Multilayered Religious Heritage*
- Ileana Toscano – *Dissonant European Heritage as Labs of Democracy: The ARCHETHICS Experience*
- Judita Lux – *Layers, Ruins and Futures: Designing Interpretive Strategies for St. Martin's Church*
- Maja Bricelj – *Who Decides the Fate of a Ruin? Exploring Heritage Futures*

### Online Lectures

- Jacopo Rasmi – *Pirate Heritage: How Shadow Libraries Feed and Challenge Our Public Culture*
- Eman Khalifa – *Unprovenanced Black-topped Pottery Presentation and Interpretation*
- Nesrin El Hadidi – *Variables in Wood Conservation / Understanding Ancient Technologies before Conservation*

## Programme

**Main venue:** Koper / University of Primorska, Faculty of Humanities, Titov trg 5, Koper  
 5 September: Full-day excursion to Nova Gorica

**Tuesday, 1 September 2026**

### OPENING, ORIENTATION AND CONSERVATION PRINCIPLES

The first day introduces the aims of the Summer School, the UNESCO Chair framework and the key themes of conservation as interpretation. After registration and the formal welcome, participants will take part in a short icebreaker activity to support group building and prepare them for the collaborative format of the school. The programme then moves towards material heritage, conservation ethics and object-based interpretation.

Time	Programme
09:00–10:00	<i>Registration and welcome coffee</i>
10:00–11:30	<b>UNESCO Chair Welcome and Introduction</b> – Zrinka Mileusnić, Neža Čebren Lipovec, Irena Lazar
11:30–11:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:45–12:15	<b>Icebreaker activity:</b> Getting to know participants, expectations and heritage interests
12:15–13:15	<b>Case Study – Live Lecture:</b> Pika Škerlj – <i>Conservation and Restoration Planning: Principles, Values and Ethical Considerations</i>
13:15–14:15	<i>Lunch break</i>
14:15–16:15	<b>Workshop:</b> Hussein Hassan Marie Hassan Mahmoud – <i>Non-destructive Analysis and Conservation of Ancient Egyptian Polychrome Objects</i>
16:15–16:30	<i>Coffee break</i>
16:30–17:30	<b>Online Lecture:</b> Eman Khalifa – <i>Unprovenanced Black-topped Pottery Presentation and Interpretation</i>
17:30–17:45	Daily recap and reflection

**Wednesday, 2 September 2026**

**ARCHITECTURE, SACRED LANDSCAPES AND MUSEUM INTERPRETATION**

The second day focuses on architectural, sacred and museum heritage. The contributions explore how meanings are created through conservation, research, religious and landscape contexts, architectural interventions and museum interpretation. The day combines case studies with a longer participatory workshop on dissonant heritage as a democratic space.

Time	Programme
09:30–10:00	<i>Morning coffee and introduction to the day</i>
10:00–11:00	<b>Case Study – Live Lecture:</b> Anja Mlakar – <i>(Re)Interpreting Sacred Landscapes: Heritage, Religion and the Making of Meaning</i>
11:00–11:15	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:15–12:15	<b>Case Study – Live Lecture:</b> Franci Lazarini – <i>Jože Plečnik and His School in the Light of Interventions in Historic Architecture</i>
12:15–13:15	<b>Case Study – Live Lecture:</b> Nikolina Beloševič – <i>Stories Behind the Interlace – New Research on Early Medieval Sculpture of the Eastern Adriatic</i>
13:15–14:15	<i>Lunch break</i>
14:15–17:15	<b>Workshop:</b> Ileana Toscano – <i>Dissonant European Heritage as Labs of Democracy: The ARCHETHICS Experience</i>
17:15–17:30	Daily recap and reflection

**Thursday, 3 September 2026**

**PUBLIC PROGRAMMES, MULTILAYERED HERITAGE AND HERITAGE FUTURES**

The third day addresses public heritage programmes, multilayered religious heritage, industrial heritage and future-oriented interpretation. It connects examples of festivals, wall paintings and adaptive reuse with a longer workshop on ruins and interpretive strategies, encouraging participants to reflect on how heritage sites can be reimagined through conservation, design and public engagement.

Time	Programme
09:30–10:00	<i>Morning coffee and introduction to the day</i>
10:00–11:00	<b>Case Study – Live Lecture:</b> Petra Stipančić – <i>Situlae Festival – a Complex Interpretive Product</i>
11:00–12:00	<b>Case Study – Live Lecture:</b> Andrej Jazbec – <i>Presentation of Wall Paintings</i>
12:00–12:15	<i>Coffee break</i>
12:15–13:15	<b>Case Study – Live Lecture:</b> Ana Laznibat – <i>Architectural Heritage of the Tobacco Industry in Dalmatia (1880–1918): Adaptive Reuse and Interpretation</i>
13:15–14:15	<i>Lunch break</i>
14:15–17:15	<b>Workshop:</b> Judita Lux – <i>Layers, Ruins and Futures: Designing Interpretive Strategies for St. Martin’s Church</i>
17:15–17:30	Daily recap and reflection

**Friday, 4 September 2026**

**PARTICIPATION, DECISION-MAKING AND FINAL REFLECTION**

The fourth day is dedicated to participatory decision-making, heritage futures and final reflection. The main workshop asks who has the right to decide the future of a ruin and encourages participants to work with different stakeholder perspectives. The day also includes live and online lectures that connect museum interpretation, conservation of organic materials and public culture. The programme concludes with evaluation, certificates and a reception.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Programme</b>
09:00–09:30	<i>Morning coffee and introduction to the day</i>
09:30–12:30	<b>Workshop:</b> Maja Bricelj – <i>Who Decides the Fate of a Ruin? Exploring Heritage Futures</i>
12:30–13:30	<i>Lunch break</i>
13:30–14:30	<b>Case Study – Live Lecture:</b> Bernarda Županek and Nejc Kovačič – <i>A View from the Other Side: Integrating Conservation into Museum Interpretation</i>
14:30–15:30	<b>Case Study – Live Lecture:</b> Jana Puhar – <i>Interpretation as Meaning-Making: Museological Perspectives on Conservation and Heritage</i>
15:30–15:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
15:45–16:45	<b>Online Lecture:</b> Nesrin El Hadidi – <i>Variables in Wood Conservation / Understanding Ancient Technologies before Conservation</i>
16:45–17:45	<b>Online Lecture:</b> Jacopo Rasmi – <i>Pirate Heritage: How Shadow Libraries Feed and Challenge Our Public Culture</i>
17:45–18:15	Final daily recap, participant reflection and evaluation
18:15–19:15	<b>Certificate ceremony and reception</b>

**Saturday, 5 September 2026**

**Full-day Excursion to Nova Gorica**

The final day is dedicated to a full-day excursion to Nova Gorica. The excursion will connect the themes of the Summer School with selected heritage sites, cross-border cultural contexts and current approaches to interpretation, conservation and public engagement.

**Application deadline:** 15 August 2026

**Application Form:** <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/1rp5cbnYdC?origin=lprLink>