

**INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL
OF MUSEOLOGY AND HERITAGE 2026**
T4EU REGIONAL HERITAGE WORKSHOP

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 Enhancing Integrated Heritage Approaches**, 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 (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.

The summer school is supported by the Slovenian National Commission for UNESCO and Transform4Europe (T4EU) European University Alliance.

CONTRIBUTION CATEGORIES

Case Studies –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, Nejc Kovačič, Katarina Toman Kracina – *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*
- Eman Khalifa – *Unprovenanced Black-topped Pottery Presentation and Interpretation*
- Nesrin El Hadidi – *Variables in Wood Conservation / Understanding Ancient Technologies before Conservation*

Workshops

- 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

- Hussein Hassan Marie Hassan Mahmoud – *Non-destructive Analysis and Conservation of Ancient Egyptian Polychrome Objects*
- Jacopo Rasmi – *Pirate Heritage: How Shadow Libraries Feed and Challenge Our Public Culture*

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	UNESCO Chair Welcome and Introduction – Zrinka Mileusnić, Neža Čebren Lipovec, Irena Lazar
11:30–11:45	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:45–12:15	Icebreaker activity: Getting to know participants, expectations and heritage interests
12:15–13:15	Case Study – Lecture: Pika Škerlj – <i>Conservation and Restoration Planning: Principles, Values and Ethical Considerations</i>
13:15–14:15	<i>Lunch break</i>
14:15–15:15	Case Study – Lecture: Eman Khalifa – <i>Unprovenanced Black-topped Pottery Presentation and Interpretation</i>
15:15–16:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
16:00–17:00	Online Lecture: Hussein Hassan Marie Hassan Mahmoud – <i>Non-destructive Analysis and Conservation of Ancient Egyptian Polychrome Objects</i>
17:00–17:30	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	Case Study –Lecture: 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	Case Study –Lecture: Franci Lazarini – <i>Jože Plečnik and His School in the Light of Interventions in Historic Architecture</i>
12:15–13:15	Case Study –Lecture: Nikolina Belošević – <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	Workshop: Ileana Toscano – <i>Dissonant European Heritage as Labs of Democracy: The ARCHETHICS Experience</i>
17:15–17:30	<i>Daily recap and reflection</i>

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	Case Study –Lecture: Petra Stipančić – <i>Situlae Festival – a Complex Interpretive Product</i>
11:00–12:00	Case Study –Lecture: Andrej Jazbec – <i>Presentation of Wall Paintings</i>
12:00–12:15	<i>Coffee break</i>
12:15–13:15	Case Study –Lecture: 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	Workshop: 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.

Time	Programme
09:00–09:30	<i>Morning coffee and introduction to the day</i>
09:30–12:30	Workshop: 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	Case Study –Lecture: Bernarda Županek, Nejc Kovačič and Katarina Toman Kracina – <i>A View from the Other Side: Integrating Conservation into Museum Interpretation</i>
14:30–15:30	Case Study –Lecture: 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	Case Study –Lecture: Nesrin El Hadidi – <i>Variables in Wood Conservation / Understanding Ancient Technologies before Conservation</i>
16:45–17:45	Online Lecture: 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	Certificate ceremony and reception

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.

The Musealisation of the Goriška Heritage: Challenges, Significance and Sustainability Aspects

The final day of the Summer School will take place in Nova Gorica and will focus on the musealisation of Goriška heritage in the context of the European Capital of Culture GO! 2025. Using the EPICenter project and the permanent exhibition *City on the Border* as key examples, participants will explore how heritage can contribute to the transformation of border regions, the creation of cross-border communities and the development of intercultural dialogue.

The programme will address the role of museums as spaces of dialogue, co-creation and critical reflection on shared pasts. Special attention will be given to participatory approaches, the involvement of local communities, sustainability in heritage management, and long-term cross-border cooperation between institutions in Nova Gorica and Gorizia. The day will also open questions related to the interpretation of complex and multifaceted border histories, including ethical dilemmas of representation and the preservation of heritage that may appear marginalised, hidden or difficult to integrate into dominant national narratives.

In collaboration with: GO! 2025 EPICenter

Time	Programme
10:00	Meeting point: EPICenter
10:15–10:45	Introductory Lecture: <i>Preserving Tangible Heritage in Multicultural Areas – Presentation with Case Studies</i>
10:45–11:15	Presentation: <i>EPK GO! 2025 and Heritage: The "Somestje" Concept</i>
11:15–13:00	Guided Tour: Exhibition <i>City on the Border</i>
13:00–14:00	Lunch break
14:00–14:40	Field Visit / Workshop: Tour of Europe Square and the Railway Station
14:40–15:00	Short break
15:00–16:30	Group Work and Discussion: Heritage, Border Narratives and Participatory Museology
17:00	Optional Visit: Tour of the DAG Digital Gallery in Gorizia