

ICOMOS

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS
МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОВЕТ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ПАМЯТНИКОВ И ДОСТОПРИМЕЧАТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕСТ

ICOMOS Conference

**In Restauero:
Post-War Heritage of Art and Architecture in Central and Eastern Europe.
Integrated Approaches to Dissonant Monuments and Sites**

22nd and 23rd of July 2021; Historical Museum Iskra in Kazanlak (Bulgaria) and online

Among the most endangered groups of monuments in Europe are the comparatively young architectural and artistic testimonies of the post-war decades. Many contemporaries consider them aesthetically outdated and technically obsolete. They are often threatened by vacancy, decay and demolition, or already disfigured by inappropriate modernization or reconstruction. Today, the heritage of the post-war period is ignored or even rejected with shame, especially when it is associated with unpleasant historical events, developments and personalities; when it commemorates persecution and resistance, war and tyranny, oppression and expulsion, or even genocide.

This critical diagnosis applies in full force to the former socialist countries in Central and Eastern Europe. This heritage includes discreet and inconspicuous testimonies and sites as well as monumental works of architecture and of art that characterize squares and streets or even accentuate entire towns and landscapes. Using terms such as *dark heritage* or *difficult heritage*, *contested heritage* or *conflict heritage*, *unloved monuments* or *uncomfortable monuments*, *dissonant heritage* and *totalitarian heritage*, international scientific research and ICOMOS have in recent years taken on the increased processing of this controversial category of heritage in Europe. This international meeting on the conservation and restoration of works of art and architecture from the socialist period in Central and Eastern Europe aims to follow on from these efforts.

The occasion of this event are the completed projects “Conservation Management Plan” and “Emergency Mosaics’ Stabilization for Buzludzha Monument” in Bulgaria, funded by the Getty Foundation and carried out between 2019 and 2021 by ICOMOS experts together with the *Buzludzha Project Foundation*. The conference will also consider further conservation and restoration projects on post-war modernism in Central and Eastern Europe. It will include comparable examples funded by the Getty Foundation as part of the “*Keeping it Modern*” initiative, which was launched in 2014 and ended in 2020.¹ Furthermore, the symposium is intended as a relevant contribution to the action field “*Integrated Approaches to Dissonant Heritage*” of the partnership “*Culture and Cultural Heritage*”, initiated by the Urban Agenda of the EU in 2018 and now ongoing.²

The symposium will focus on currently planned or recently carried-out measures of monument protection and monument restoration. Contributions should pay special attention to technical and methodological issues of conserving testimonies of post-war art and architecture; to a critical reflection of the intended or implemented measures; as well as to the involvement of the local and supra-regional public in the preparatory and accompanying communication of the conservation work. Contributions addressing the potential of political education and the tourist marketing of controversial monuments and sites for society are also expressly welcome. The event aims to

¹ https://www.getty.edu/foundation/initiatives/current/keeping_it_modern/index.html

² https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/en/system/files/ged/master_final_action_plan_culture_cultural_heritage.pdf

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improve the awareness of the potential of socialist heritage for urban communities in small and medium-sized towns as well as in peripheral regions.

After a welcome and introductory section, the **conference programme** will probably be divided into four half-day sections, each with three to four papers under the following headings (working titles):

1. Modern mosaics and architectural surfaces – conserving and restoring controversial post-war heritage
2. Interventions – heritage acceptance and heritage appropriation through contextualisation and commenting
3. Dissonant monuments of art and architecture in citizen dialogue and in tourist marketing
4. Listing and budgeting dissonant heritage. Legal and funding tools

The two-day symposium is planned as a hybrid event, live and with meeting venue and presentations in Kazanlak (Bulgaria) as well as online with four half-day web seminars. Experts from Bulgaria and Germany as well as from other Central and Eastern European countries are expected as speakers.

The conference languages will probably be Bulgarian, English and German.

Participation is free of charge, registrations are required.

The Mayor of Kazanlak, Galina Stoyanova, has taken on the patronage of the ICOMOS conference. The organizers are the ICOMOS National Committees of Bulgaria and Germany, the hosts are the City of Kazanlak and the Buzludzha Project Foundation in cooperation with the National Academy of Arts in Sofia, the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy in Sofia, and the Technical University of Munich. Partner organizations are: the Getty Foundation, the German Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community (BMI) as coordination point of the partnership Culture and Cultural Heritage of the EU Urban Agenda, as well as Europa Nostra and the ICOMOS International Scientific Committees on 20th Century Heritage (ISC 20C), Cultural Routes (ICTC) and Small and Medium Towns (CIVVIH).

A documentation and multilingual publication of the conference papers is planned in the series "ICOMOS – Journals of the German National Committee".

CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

Presentations for the colloquium should not be longer than 15 minutes; interested parties are invited to send an abstract of the planned contribution (max. 3,000 characters, incl. spaces) and a short CV (max. 500 characters, incl. spaces) by **May 31st, 2021** at the latest to:

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