

HERITAGE IN FOCUS

WEDNESDAY

27 NOVEMBER

2024

MUSIC AND FILM
SPACES
IN DANGER

HERITAGE IN FOCUS

SERIES OF EVENTS

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN GOETHE-INSTITUT ATHEN AND THE HUMBOLDT FORUM

GOETHE.DE/ATHEN/HERITAGE

GOETHE-INSTITUT ATHEN
14-16 OMIROU ST., 10672 ATHENS

HERITAGE IN FOCUS

The idea of "heritage" is currently experiencing a real surge in interest in academia, politics, cultural institutions, and the media. While in the past it was chiefly associated with aspects of private law, such as inheritance law, and, in the broader social context, with the preservation of architectural monuments, the word "heritage" has taken on a whole new range of meaning in recent years, and its use has expanded accordingly. This is partly due to UNESCO, which has redefined the term and in recent years has significantly extended the provisions that are in place to protect human "cultural heritage". Cultural traditions, customs, and food were given protected status twenty years ago: from the Byzantine chants of Greece and Cyprus to Berlin's club "culture", which was once considered avant-garde and subversive but is now under threat.

In parallel to this and encouraged by public debates, there has, in recent years, been growing academic interest in "heritage": the question of what is meant by "heritage" is now the subject of much discussion among history scholars and in the realms of cultural science, ethnology, and museum studies; this raises further questions about nation building, restitution, and provenance, and about how to deal with (post)colonialism and the overexploitation of people and nature. To give an example: in connection with the climate crisis and postcolonial debates – relating, for instance, to non-human agency – do rivers, forests, and other natural landscapes have rights of their own, and shouldn't they also enjoy protected status as non-cultural heritage? And don't mineralogical and natural history collections also tell (cultural) stories of relationships of dependency and human exploitation? At the same time, there are also some early dissenting voices that are critical of an expansive focus on the past – which they regard as "nostalgic" – and in turn contribute to an analytical examination of the topic.

The *Heritage in Focus*, organised by Goethe-Institut Athen and the Humboldt Forum, looks at the question of "heritage" from four different angles, with a special focus on Germany and Greece. Based on the major shift in recent years in how the term is interpreted and a growing interest in the subject, there will be four panel discussions looking at topics such as intangible heritage and urban heritage and at the range of issues connected with nature and heritage as well as the question of nation building as it relates to finds of antiquities and restitution. The results of this series will be presented in 2026-27 as part of the focus on "heritage" at the Humboldt Forum.

MUSIC AND FILM SPACES IN DANGER

On 27 November, the event series will focus on the topic of intangible cultural heritage. Berlin's club culture (which was added to the UNESCO list of intangible cultural heritage in 2024) and the Athens cinema scene will be used to examine the effects of phenomena such as gentrification and overtourism – both fuelled by the increasingly commercial marketing of a defining aspect of cultural heritage – on the social fabric of cities. The death of clubs, the loss of cultural venues, and the standardisation of cultural offerings have now become buzz phrases, but they also elicit a powerful artistic response.

Following the screening of the film *Berlin Utopiekadaver* [Berlin Eviction] and a discussion with director Johannes Blume, the panel, chaired by cultural journalist Cathryn Drake, will focus on the dynamics of gentrification and the constantly mounting pressure coming from investors, as well as the growing commercialisation of international tourism. Marcel Weber, chairman of the Clubcommission Berlin, and artist Linda Paganelli (who currently has an exhibition on gentrification at the Stadtmuseum Berlin) will join in the discussion with Athens-based architect and artist Sofia Dona, Maria Komninos, film scholar and president of the Greek Film Archive, and archaeologist and cinema owner Peggy Ringa. Together they will develop scenarios for how cities and their residents and communities can respond to these challenges, and how artists and activists can articulate their ideas and position themselves. The evening will conclude with a DJ set with DJ Irakli (Germany) and Ablaze Meursault (Greece).

The other events will concentrate on architectural heritage and its sociocultural implications, starting with the eventful history of the Humboldt Forum and the major Ellinikon Smart City project in Athens; in April 2025, the major issue of nation building based on finds of antiquities and with the question of restitution will be examined. The programme will conclude with the topic of "non-human agency" and the handling of our natural heritage and the rights of nature along with the increasing visibility of this subject in global public discourse. In the accompanying programme, film screenings, and director's talks (including one with Heinz Emigholz) will offer further artistic insights and formats for exchanging ideas.

THE FILM

BERLIN UTOPIEKADAVER [BERLIN EVICTION]

**JOHANNES BLUME
2024
95'**

A wave of evictions grips Berlin. The squatting scene dissolves, and its members feel like they are supposed to leave the city. The film portrays a subculture through different generations. People open up, talking about their fights against oblivion, but they also stress how important it is to dance and cry together.

A cab driver drives through the city, talking about its rapid changes and the real estate boom. He is himself a punk and a famed character in the Autonomous scene. The stops on the journey are the most important places, such as Rigaer Straße, Liebigstraße, das Tontenhaus, Potse, Drugstore, Syndikat, Meuterei, and Köpi, all struggling for survival. Young people like the Potse and Drugstore collectives fear for their self-determined lives. Women from Liebigstraße describe how important their house project was as a space for the LGBTQIA+ community. The last evictions have not yet been processed, and the next ones are already imminent: the Potse autonomous youth centre has to hand in its keys, and negotiations for the Köpi Wagenplatz are already underway. We look through the protagonist's eyes at the world of the squatter scene. Together with them, we go to rallies, concerts, demonstrations, KÜFas (kitchen for all), and through their private and professional lives. Again and again, a loud voice rings out from the megaphone and declares war on the city of the rich.

THE DIRECTOR

Johannes Blume was born in Berlin. He dropped out of school and worked for several years behind the bar in one of the city's smaller theatres. He gained practical experience as a production assistant and assistant director on a range of different films. He regularly made shorts and experimental works and undertook film commissions for cultural and socio-ecological companies and projects. In 2013, he changed tack and moved away from practical work to pursue his academic interests: he took his school-leaving exam (*Abitur*) and studied philosophy and film studies at Freie Universität Berlin. Since graduating in 2019, he has worked as a director and writer. His medium-length documentary *Strawalde* (60 min.) was well received; he made his first feature-length documentary *Berlin Utopiekadaver* (95 min.) together with *Filmgalerie 451* for ZDF's *Das kleine Fernsehspiel* and won the Max Ophüls Prize for Best Music in a Documentary.

18:00

**FILM
SCREENING**

BERLIN UTOPIEKADAVER

[BERLIN EVICTION]

JOHANNES BLUME, 2024, 95'

IN THE PRESENCE OF THE DIRECTOR
IN GERMAN WITH GREEK AND ENGLISH SUBTITLES

Q&A: JOHANNES BLUME

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH WITH SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION INTO GREEK

20:30

**ROUNDTABLE
DISCUSSION**

**MARIA KOMNINOS, SOFIA DONA,
PEGGY RINGA, LINDA PAGANELLI,
AND MARCEL WEBER**

MODERATION: CATHRYN DRAKELAN

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH, GREEK WITH SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION

22:00

DJ SETS

IRAKLI, ABLAZE MEURSAULT

HERITAGE
IN FOCUS

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN
GOETHE-INSTITUT ATHEN
AND THE HUMBOLDT FORUM

GOETHE-INSTITUT ATHEN
27.11.2024

FREE ADMISSION

MUSIC AND FILM SPACES IN DANGER

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

SOFIA DONA

Artist and architect. Her work, positioned between architecture and art, deals with social, economic, and political issues in an interdisciplinary way through site-specific practice. Whether focusing on the border region between Mexico and the US, on various strategies of eviction, or historically symbolic architectural elements of power, Dona creates installations and video works that distort established notions of everyday life. Her works illuminate a series of situations and narratives, viewing them from a different perspective to reveal hidden, forgotten, or unnoticed elements. An important part of her artistic practice is the generation of a defamiliarising effect that results in works that are as revealing as they are poetic. Acts such as constructing a replica of a border mountain range out of sand, extending a balcony, moving a streetlight, and enlarging a doorway transform familiar objects into unexpected narrative elements. Through processes of defamiliarisation, estrangement, and ostranenie, the transformed artifacts become capable of revealing stories and meanings, reproducing memories and raising awareness through the exceptional ordinariness of simulation.

MARIA KOMNINOS

Emerita Professor at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and President of the Board of Directors of the Greek Film Archive. She has researched and taught in both Athens and London as an honorary research fellow at the Department of History of Art, Birkbeck College. She is currently teaching at the postgraduate programme Film and Cultural Studies, offered by the Media and Communication Department of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. She is the Artistic Director of the Athens Avant-Garde Film Festival, which is preparing its 13th edition in December 2024. She is also responsible for the new laboratory of Digitisation and Restoration of the Greek Film Archive. She has written books and articles in Greek and English.

LINDA PAGANELLI

Italian visual anthropologist, artist, and filmmaker based in Berlin since 2017. Employing a sensorial and inclusive approach and an anthropological, decolonial, queer*feminist perspective, her work touches on themes such as migration and (be)longing, mass violence, memory culture, realities of (post)conflict zones, eco-grief, and the relationship between humans and other species. She collaborates with museums, galleries, universities, educational institutions, and NGOs. Paganelli co-manages the Berlin Independent Film Community.

PEGGY RINGA

Born and raised in Athens, she studied Archaeology and History of Art at the University of Athens and obtained two Master's degrees in Egyptology and Classical Archaeology from the University of London. She worked as a contract archaeologist in various parts of Attica for nearly a decade. After her father died in 2013, she took over the family business, which included four movie theatres, namely "Aavora" and the open-air "Athens", "Riviera", and "Vox". Since then, although she has taken part in only one excavation, she considers herself an archaeologist rather than a businesswoman.

MARCEL WEBER

First chairperson of the Board of Clubcommission Berlin, he is an experienced architect of change and certified systemic business coach specialising in shaping sustainable and diverse organisational cultures. Since 2022, he has been Chairman of the Board of Clubcommission Berlin and was Managing Director of SchwuZ Queer Club until August 2024. With over two decades of experience in nightlife, Weber started his professional career by training as an office communications clerk. After various positions within and outside the SchwuZ cosmos, he was appointed Managing Director of this queer institution in 2012. Weber is passionate about advocating for the recognition of queer lifestyles, gender equality, and the sustainable development of club culture. His commitment encompasses social, ecological, and economic aspects. In his free time, he occasionally works as a DJ and maintains a great passion for house music and disco.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION MODERATOR

CATHRYN DRAKE

A writer and art critic who has contributed features and reviews on contemporary art, design, and places to publications such as *Artforum*, *e-flux Criticism*, *frieze*, *Metropolis*, *Men's Vogue*, *Time*, and *Wall Street Journal*. She has written about the role of art in the public sphere, urban development coupled with historic preservation, and the culture and architecture of communal bathing from antiquity to the present. She curated *The Presence of Absence, or the Catastrophe Theory* – shown at Izolyatsia, in Kyiv, and NiMAC, in Nicosia – contemplating landscape and memory, amnesia and nationalism, identity and resistance, fragmentation and displacement, alienation and longing for places that may no longer exist through the work of artists from Albania, Turkey, Cyprus, and Greece. Former copy chief of the design magazine *Metropolis* and editor at the Museum of Modern Art, she edits publications for the Yale School of Architecture. Previously, she served as publicity director for the Ann Arbor Film Festival and managed production for two feature film shoots in New York – Swiss murder mystery *Morocco* and the Russian-American *Beyond the Ocean*. After graduating with a degree in political science and creative writing, she worked for several years as a legislative assistant to U.S. Congressman Timothy Wirth in Washington, D.C.

THE DJ SETS

IRAKLI

Originally from Georgia, Irakli Kiziria's early descent into the German capital has seen him corner and develop a side of the local scene and turn it into something of an international fare. In 2013, he created STAUB, one of Berlin's most celebrated techno parties. As a part of the production duo I/Y, he has been releasing music under the titular co-founded label. But most of all, Irakli's craft behind the decks has been weighed upon by the likeliest of Berlin's underground venues, namely Tresor, Berghain, and Griessmuehle, with his vision of electronic music taken further afield in Europe and the Americas. In 2017, he founded the Inter-galactic Research Institute for Sound with artists like Stanislav Tolkachev, Natalie Beridze, Rezo Glonti, and many others. Irakli also heads up a burgeoning convey diving into exploratory concepts of ambient, hued by the tones and colours of his homeland, Georgia. Adding orchestral collaborations and sound installations to a field of work outside the club, Irakli's expanding platforms and industrious connection to Berlin have seen his entry point into the scene now serve as an outlet into the more abstract, experimental realms of techno. With new endeavours afoot and a creative repertoire to boot, Irakli's DJ sets, labels, and parties always display unique qualities. It does not matter whether he is exploring beatless soundscapes or high-energy techno music, Irakli always manages to create something special.

ABLAZE MEURSAULT

Katerina P. Trichia studied Theatre (BA, University of Peloponnese) and Culture & Film (MA, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens); her thesis explored "DIY Record Labels in Greece during the 90s: A chronicle and a study of their activity." Her artistic practices are rooted in a diverse range of media, including music (Filament Zine), film curation (Boiling Films, Drama International Short Film Festival, Opening Nights – AIFF, Ios Festival, Syros International Film Festival), and photography via Studio Trichia.

The Humboldt Forum brings together under one roof cultural world heritage, art and culture, advanced international research, and urban and architectural history. A critical examination of the eventful history of the site and the ethnological collection forms the basis for a programme of exhibitions, performances, concerts, readings, and workshops that crosses genres and involves international experts, creative artists, and culture professionals.

The Humboldt Forum is jointly organised by the Humboldt Forum Foundation (Stiftung Humboldt Forum im Berliner Schloss), the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation (Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz) – with the Ethnological Museum and the Asian Art Museum, which form part of the National Museums in Berlin – the Stadtmuseum Berlin, and the Humboldt University in Berlin; its programme is designed in cooperation, on an equal basis, with Berlin's communities and partners around the world.

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EVENT SERIES
IS A COLLABORATION
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AND THE HUMBOLDT FORUM**



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**GOETHE-INSTITUT ATHEN
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