REcall-European Conflict Archaeological Landscape Reappropriation

BEYONDMemorialisation

Design for Conflict Heritage

REcall – European Conflict Archaeological Landscape Reappropriation

REcall Book

REcall

European Conflict Archaeological Landscape Reappropriation

edited by Michela Bassanelli, Viviana Gravano, Giulia Grechi, and Gennaro Postiglione



RECALL - EUROPEAN CONFLICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE REAPPROPRIATION

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REcall is a research project founded by EC Culture 2007-13 Programme (n. 2012 - 0927 / 001 - 001 CU7 COOP7) focused on the possible roles Museography can play when dealing with Difficult Heritage such as the ones coming from conflicts and wars. REcall wishes to envision new ways to the handling of Painful Places & Stories going behind any traditional approach: there is the need to shift from the 'simply' commemoration attitude to a more active involvement and participation of people in/with Places & Stories, through design strategies of 'reappropriation' (www.recall-project.polimi.it).



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RECALL CONSORTIUM

POLIMI-Politecnico di Milano/DAStU - Coordinator - (Italy)
AAU-Aalborg University (Denmark)
NTNU-Norwegian University of Science and Technology (Norway)
UNEW-Newcastle University (United Kingdom)
Falstad Memorial and Human Rights Centre, Falstad (Norway)
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Acknowledgments

This book grew out of the work of the research project REcall "European Conflict Archaeological Landscape Reappropriation" led by the coordinator Gennaro Postiglione, Politecnico di Milano, with a consortium of six Partners (POLIMI, NTNU, AAU, UNEW, Falstad Memorial and Human Rights Centre - Norway, Museo Diffuso della Resistenza - Turin) and three Associated Partners (Museum of Romsdal, Ergan Foundation, Snark - Space Making). Recall is a project financed by the EC-Culture 2007 programme in 2012 (ref.: 2012 - 0927 / 001 - 001 CU7 COOP7). The project wants to challenging the investigation of new forms of interventions on Conflict Heritage. The aim is to overcome the trauma connected with many painful places & stories and to acknowledge history, with the precise goal to avoid the reduction and limitation of actions around commemorative spaces. The consortium making up REcall, believe there is the need to shift from 'simple' commemoration to more active involvement and participation of people in/with the places & stories of conflict memory, through acts of 'reappropriation'.

The editors would like to thank all the scholars who enriched this book with their suggestion and contributions, as well as all the local partners of the Venice workshop (Biennale Sessions, IUAV-UdR Architettura e Archeologia dei Paesaggi della Produzione, ISVER-Istituto veneziano per la storia della Resistenza e della Società Contemporanea), the Falstad workshop (Levanger Municipality) and the Rome Workshop (Routes Agency, IED-Roma, La Casa della Memoria e della Storia-Roma, Associazione Quadraro, Associazione Ugo Forno).

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Part I

Reflections on Conflict Heritage



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Beyond Memorialization

→ MICHELA BASSANELLI

The transformations recorded in the evolution of the memorialization's forms, after WWII to the present, characterize the starting point of the European Research Project REcall—European Conflict Archaeological Landscape Reappropriation. Today, it seems that monuments and memorials have given way to parks and museums more closely linked to the territory and local communities. The reasons for this evolution lie in the change of objectives in the forms of memorialization: the shift from the will to perpetuate a memory ad infinitum, to the necessity of processing grief and promoting reconciliatory action. Monuments and memorials seem to lose their effectiveness over time, and to become empty simulacri of a remembrance and a memory that they are no longer able to reactivate or keep alive. This point is affirmed—among others—by Elena Pirazzoli¹, who explains that

the monuments/memorials fall into a crisis, being much less significant than what remains: the reaction to this radical questioning was an attempt to transform the model, to make it appropriate at this time, at the current modality of commemorating. But in essence has always tried to respond to the crisis by articulating new formal possibilities, which broadened the meaning of the monument in memory: memorials, museums but also installations, surveys, movies. (2010, 207)

The rituals, repeated on the occasion of anniversaries, emphasize the failure of these structures rather than represent a time of recovery and reactivation.

For this reason, and on the initiative of individual authors, architects and/ or artists, experimental explorations of new commemorative forms came

¹ Elena Pirazzoli is PhD in the History of Art; her research field lies between Memorial Studies and Visual Studies, directing attention towards the theme of memorial sites and forms—interweaving an historical approach with the analysis of the artistic and architectural practices which act in relation both with the events' traces and with the constitution of new signs for commemoration.

into being over the last decade. An example of this new memorial typology is represented by "counter-monuments": an artistic practice opposed to classical monuments, which focused on some key issues such as the role of the visitor and his/her interaction with the work. One of the most representative results, and probably even the first of this kind, is *The Monument Against Fascism* (1986) in Hamburg by Esther and Jochen Gerz—created to disappear in the ground of the spot it was erected. The artists speak about "public authorships" where the production activity of the artist is transformed into a shared process. They erected a twelvemetre high stela with a lead coating on a pedestrian bridge in Hamburg's harbour. The object, referred to as a "Monument against Fascism and War", is at first sight distantly reminiscent of a traditional monument on account of its column-like character. However, the artists invited passersby to write personal or political remarks on the surface.

In this sense, counter and anti-monuments are always memorials, not in a celebrative or commemorative sense, but in the sense of the activation of memory processes, which involve in themselves also the fractures, the conflicts of non-conventional points of view on the past or on the way to narrate it. (Grechi 2013, 329-330)

Over the course of the following years, the monument was successively lowered and in 1993 it disappeared from the surface entirely and can now only be seen through a window. The monument, says Gerz, cannot take away the responsibility of adult citizens to foster an active and critical political awareness, since, "in the long run, nothing can rise up against injustice in our stead," as can be read on a slab next to the sunken monument. The artists used this concept to create a succinct image of the disappearing monument. The counter-monuments represent

a new mnemonic practice rather than an innovative vehicle, focusing on meanings and concepts, on the effort which is necessary in order to make a 'step further' to internalize the tragedies of the past, without rejecting or denying them. (Borello 2004)

Other international artists have been trying to critically and creatively address Borello's point since the 1990s, presenting concepts that aim to provide alternative ways of thinking about history but strongly involving public space. Many of these approaches focus on the idea of dispensing with a traditional, grand type of monument, dispersing "remembrance prompts" in public places instead, which are as inconspicuous as they are surprising. Some examples are the *Stolpersteine* project (1995) by Gunter Demnig³, the *Places of Remembrance* (1993) by Renata Stih and Frieder

² The definition of this term was coined by James E. Young, Professor of English and Judaic Studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Further important texts include: "The Counter-Monument: Memory against Itself in Germany Today," in Critical Inquiry, Vol. 18, No. 2, 1992, pp. 267-296. Young is also the author of At Memory's Edge: After-images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture (Yale University Press, 2000); The Texture of Memory (Yale University Press, 1993); and Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust (Indiana University Press, 1988).

³ Started in 1995, the work is an open process, consisting of re-placing typical urban paving with bronze stones: the new objects are placed just in front of doorways of places where people who were deported

Schnock in Berlin⁴, and *The Missing House* (1990) by Christian Bol tanski in Berlin-Mitte⁵. In particular, in the mid-1990s, the debates about how to remember appropriately provided some of the key leitmotifs in the context of the 50th anniversary of the liberation of the concentration camps and the end of the War. The questions posed also raised further issues of whether it is possible to develop concepts for monuments which can avoid the danger of having a limited historical perspective and can achieve more than merely the expression of a finished and possibly even ideologically biased interpretation of history.

The criticality towards traditional monuments issues from one of James Young's basic ideas, which he used to substantiate alternative concepts of monuments. Young's provocative idea was based on the observation that many monuments, rather than prompting reflection on complex historical situations, are an expression of a conclusive and sometimes onedimensional interpretation process.



IMG. 02 — Dani Karavan. Memorial to the Sinti and Rom of Europe Murdered under the National Socialist Regime, Berlin, 2013. Photo: Gennaro Postiglione.

and never returned, used to live. Nowadays, there are several thousands of these objects spread around Europe. Paving stones bearing the names of people who were deported during the Nazi era are laid in front of buildings where they lived to recall their fate.

- 4 A project with a similar basic intention was realized by the two Berlin artists Renata Stih and Frieder Schnock in 1993 in Berlin's Bavarian Quarter in Schöneberg as a monument against anti-Semitism. Stih and Schnock had eighty coloured double signs put up at the roadside. At first sight, they look like ordinary advertisements. Only when one takes a closer look does it become apparent that there are pictograms on the front of the signs that refer to texts on the back, taken from Nazi decrees and laws that $successively\ excluded\ Jewish\ citizens.\ The\ concept\ brings\ together\ a\ pictogram\ of\ a\ bench,\ for\ example,$ with the text of a decree prohibiting Jewish citizens to using benches specifically labelled as being for their use.
- 5 The Missing house is a project by the French artist Christian Boltanski, which he realized in Berlin-Mitte in 1990. Boltanski's work focusses on an empty site in Grosse Hamburger Strasse left by a house destroyed in the war. The area had a large proportion of Jewish residents until the 1930s. The artist carried out archival research on the building's former residents and discovered that the Jewish inhabitants had been expelled or deported by the Nazis. Plaques were attached to the fire-wall of the adjacent building bearing their names, occupations and the dates they lived in the house. The gap left by the destroyed house is thus linked with references to its former residents, who are thus no longer anonymous.

Is putting up a monument about recording interpreted history? Or should not monuments rather act as a prompt for ongoing reflection? Can the significance of the object of remembrance be expressed by means of traditional grand iconography-monumentality, marble, concrete and bronze? Can a traditional representative monument be the starting point for individual commemoration at all? What significance should the "authentic places of the perpetrators" have in the context of the new monuments which have been put up, such as the memorial sites already existing in the concentration camps, but also the so-called *Topography of Terror* on the former site of the Gestapo's headquarters in Berlin? (Sigel 2008)

Some contemporary examples show a new perspective on the past and the need to re-tell the story in new ways, activating people in the commemorative process. In particular three strategies seem to be able to represent new formal and typological models of commemoration, which seem to overcome more traditional modes. The first typology is represented by the "temporary monument", such as installation or performance, in public space and landscape—able to re-enact, through evocative processes, the memory of a traumatic event for a limited period. One example is a cathartic event that reactivates collective memory, as in the case of the "red river" formed by the chairs in the city of Sarajevo (2012)⁶, and in *The Fallen* project (2013) who reactivated the coast of the Normandy landings only for a day.

But there are also new forms including more permanent characters, and related to landscape and urban interventions. The Lady Diana memorial in London (2004)⁸, or the *Gardens of Righteous Worldwide* (2001-) that are taking place around the world, represent examples of permanent intervention in the landscape. In these instances, it appears to be the recovery of a typology gone into disuse; the latter engages the parks of Remembrance, gardens typical of the memorials of heroes of the WWI. Nature and landscape seem to be used as tools and media for handling difficult heritage and memory—able to negotiate the difficult topic via their beauty and the life they embody.

Finally, the third typology acts directly on the public space to engage people, places and memories. In the *Triangular Pink Pench* (1989) by

⁶ In the city of Sarajevo to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the siege of the capital when it was built a temporary installation in the main street of the city. The 11,541 empty chairs correspond to the exact number of victims of the attack on the Bosnian capital. The chairs were neatly arranged in the road with the help of the population—a collective celebration that re-enacts the memory and enters in a strong way in the urban everyday life.

⁷ In Normandy, along the beach of the landing, in relation to the International Day of Peace (21 September 2013), British artists, Jamie Wardley and Andy Moss, realized an installation by drawing on the beach, with the help of volunteers, the silhouettes of 9,000 men in position of death. The project, called The Fallen, is a tribute to the civilians, to the German forces and Allied forces who lost their lives during Operation Neptune, which took place on 6 June 1944.

⁸ This project, although not related to a conflict memory, represents an interesting way of converting memorial space into a place accessible, not rhetorical and welcoming everyday life. The memorial by Gustafson Porter concerns the construction of a very accessible place, dominated by a free use of the space and the fountain by the passer. The visitors do not consider it not as a place of commemoration but a place of interaction, where drama and life can exchange continuously the role.



IMG. 03 — Dani Karavan, Memorial to the Sinti and Rom of Europe Murdered under the National Socialist Regime, Berlin, 2013. Photo: Gennaro Postiglione.



IMG. 04 — Andy Moss, Jamie Wardley, The Fallen 9000, Normandy beach, September 21 2013. Courtesy of the artists.



IMG. 05 — Andy Moss, Jamie Wardley, The Fallen 9000, Normandy beach, September 21 2013. Courtesy of the artists.



IMG. 06 — Haris Pašović, Sarajevo Red Line, Sarajevo, April 6 2012. Courtesy of the artists.

Corrado Levi⁹, and in the *National 9/11 Memorial* (2011)¹⁰, the commemorative act is performed without contemplation and without using the dramaturgy of the trauma as a communicative tool—it is a different mode of storytelling.

→ REcall: Project Description and Goals

What all these last examples presented share in common is that they attempt to detach remembrance work and the resulting moral position taken up by individuals from the traditional, grand type of monument. Historical tracks should rather be anchored in the everyday world, appealing to passers-by to think for themselves and pointing to the need for every individual to take critical responsibility in daily life. And this is precisely what we have identified as REcall project main goals. A researchaction founded by EC Culture 2007-13 Programme, REcall focused on the possible roles which the next-monument could play in dealing with difficult heritage¹¹, such as that of conflict and war; while envisioning new ways of handling painful places and stories—going beyond the traditional monumental approach. The main action exploited by the project has been the investigation, by means of interdisciplinary design proposals, developed by ten international and interdisciplinary working teams who have worked on the two assigned sites: the Falstad Centre in Norway (an ex-concentration and execution camp) and five locations of

⁹ This was realized in 1989 by the Italian artist and architect Corrado Levi, to remember homosexual victims in Nazi concentration camps. Set in a public space in the city of Turin, the object becomes part of everyday urban life while at the same time friendly acting also as a commemorative monument.

¹⁰ The National Memorial to Ground Zero by Michael Arad and Peter Walker represents a possibility to work with the traces and the strong memory inside the city. Visitors will leave the everyday life and enter into a special public area defined by a dense forest of 416 oak trees and by two fountains following the perimeter of the old towers. Using a language similar to Michael Heizer's North, East, South, West (1967/2002), the voids render absence visible. In this way, the overwhelming losses of 11 September 2001 are given permanent presence but while a new public space is donated to the big and dense metropolis.

¹¹ See Logan, William and Keir Reeves. 2009. Places of pain and shame: dealing with 'difficult heritage'. London: Routledge; and Macdonald, Sharon. 2009. Difficult heritage: Negotiating the Nazi Past in Nuremberg and Beyond. London: Routledge.

Italian Resistance in Rome during the last year of the War. The project proposes a "research by design" approach that joins a merely cognitive activity—the traditional theoretical research—and a purely operational one—the design practice.

The purpose of such an unconventional approach is that of knowing what "doing" means by doing (Van Ouwerkerk and Rosemann 2001, Postiglione 2011). A "thinking laboratory" can thus be established with no preestablished method: each author defines the scope of his/her practice independently. In order to succeed in this intent, the programme resorts to two methodological principles: inter-disciplinarity and complementarity. The combination of these factors defines a meta-cultural model that aims at integrating contributions from different disciplines in the field of Humanities.

On that account, the research will benefit from the conjoined action of a Consortium of six partners: POLIMI (Italy, acting as co-ordinator), NTNU (Norway), UNEW (Great Britain), AAU (Denmark), Falstad Centre (Norway) and Museo Diffuso della Resistenza (Italy). The Consortium's fields of expertise respectively cover museography, archaeology, fine arts, architecture, human rights and world war history—disciplines in which all institutes have already performed high quality multidisciplinary work. In order to exploit the potential of the interdisciplinary approach and of the "research by design" methodology, the programme has been implemented through two international Workshops open to young practitioners under thirty-five from different educational backgrounds. The workshops produced operative proposals for the reappropriation of



ıмg. от — Haris Pašović, Sarajevo Red Line, Sarajevo, April 6 2012. Courtesy of the artists

the memorial landscape in Falstad (Norway) and of the minor histories of civil resistance in Rome (Italy). The workshops—made up of participants selected by a call for proposals—were organized in Norway and in Italy to allow site visits, and were followed by a post-production phase and an intensive closing week. In both places we chose to work on five stories that marked, in a dramatic way, the memory of the site.

This proposal embodies our aim as it weaves memory and imagination together: we believe in action, reuse and reappropriation, as a therapy to overcome the unresolved trauma of difficult heritage. In our approach, the military ideology of boundary and control attached to war remains takes on a different meaning through a process of re-semantization. By turning borders into occasions for exchange, we open up our heritage to the reality of the current European territory, where national boundaries disappear and permeability is both geographical and political. Indeed, "borders are not just dividing lines [any more], places where differences assert themselves; they can also be places of exchanges and enrichment, places where plural identities are formed" (Warschawksi 2004, 5). Conflict heritage thus becomes evidence for a recent history that has changed the power relations among European countries. In this context, it is therefore clear that the great challenge of twenty-first century museography will be centred on the reappropriation of our tangible and intangible patrimony to integrate the past in our life and encourage intergenerational exchange. After the time of monuments and memorials, which mark a first action of fixing memory in established forms, today a new time has come, where actions imply a re-possession of places, of memories, and of stories, in order to elaborate the trauma. Places, with or without war traces, enable a direct relationship with a memory that is triggered by the emotions felt when walking through these sites. This is what our envisioned interaction between cultural heritage and contemporary art/design forms aims at.

Finally, within a framework of "Europeanness" (which is the result of an encounter among many identities and cultures), the proposal also recognizes intercultural dialogue as fundamental to keep the multifaceted identity of Europe alive. This is the reason why the outlook of the research goes beyond local, regional or even national interests: only by developing synergies at a European level a transnational network will be created that will have the potential to share narratives of places unified by a common yet differentiated historical memory. Therefore, memory must be defined as an evolutionary and continuous process that connects past, present and future; and the museum, which was once a "national crypt and a commemorative cemetery," is now, "a migratory network of traces and memories" (Chambers 2012, 7).

Index of Editors and Authors

Michela Bassanelli

Michela Bassanelli is an architect and PhD in Interior Architecture and Exhibition Design at the Politecnico di Milano. Her PhD thesis, "The Form of Memory: Beyond the Memorial. Representing, narrating, communicating the Conflict Heritage", focuses on forms of memorialisation related to European conflict of the twentieth century. Bassanelli collaborates with professor Gennaro Postiglione on the research project about War Archaeologies-focussing on war remains in urban contexts and cultural landscapes developed within the framework of PRIN 2008: The intervention in archaeological areas for activities related to museums and cultural communication (National Coordinator prof. Marco Vaudetti) performed by the MIB Group at Politecnico di Milano (coordinated by prof. Luca Basso Peressut); REcall-European Conflict Archaeological Landscape Re-appropriation (financed by the EC-Culture 2007 program in 2012): http://www.recall-project. polimi.it/; MeLa—European Museums in an Age of Migrations (financed by EU with the programme FP7): http://www.mela-project.eu/. www.michelabassanelli.com

Rebecca Farley

Rebecca Farley is a Doctoral Researcher at the International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies, Newcastle University. Her current PhD research project "Looking beyond 'The Angel': Framing and interpreting a public art collection in Newcastle-Gateshead" stems from her own professional background within public art commissioning, working as a freelance curator and project manager with Grit & Pearl LLP and Inspire Northumberland, and as Commissions Officer, Art Council England North East (2003-2010).

Anna Maria Fisker

Anna Maria Fisker graduated from Aarhus School of Architecture in 1984, followed by studies at Kolding School of Design. After holding a number of positions, both as a practitioner of architecture and later as part of academic circles, she completed her PhD thesis "Food and Architecture" in 2003. This work stood as a condensation of a longstanding devotion to the interrelation between the two fields; a devotion, which is highly evident in Anna Marie's later career activities. Anna Maria Fisker currently holds the position as director of the Center for Food Science, Design and Experience at the Department of Civil Engineering, Aalborg University. This research centre is primary engaged in a multi-disciplinary understanding of how our physical surroundings affect the meal-experience and how architecture and design related tools can be applied deliberately in the development of better food experiences.

Viviana Gravano

Viviana Gravano is Curator of Contemporary Art and Professor of Art History at the School of Fine Arts in Naples, and at the IED (European Institute of Design) in Rome. She is also coordinator and professor of contemporary art for the IED masters programme in "Museum and Events Curatorial Studies - Contemporary Arts and Performing Arts". She is on the editorial board of the journal Art'O_Cultura e Politica delle arti sceniche; and before that was photo editor and editor for the journal Gomorra-Territories and Cultures in the Contemporary Metropolis. Gravano was the assistant director in the journal Avatar-Dislocations between Anthropology, Communication and Visual Arts; as well as curator in the Nova Gallery and in LopLop Gallery in Rome. She was the author of the radio programme "The Magic Eyes", broadcast by RAI Radio3. She is currently director of the online journal roots §routes - research on visual culture. She also works in a team of independent curators based in Rome, called Routes Agency – Cura of Contemporary Arts. She has published many essays in exhibition catalogues, books and journals, such as: L'Arte fotografica, Fotografi da tutto il mondo nelle collezioni italiane (The Photographic Art- International Photographers in the Italian Collections), Fondazione Italiana per la Fotografia, Palazzo Cesi, Acquasparta (TR), Carte Segrete, Roma 1996; L'immagine fotografica (The Photographic Image), Mimesis, Milano 1997; Crossing. Progetti fotografici di confine (Crossing Photographic Projects on the Border), Costa & Nolan, Milano 1998; Paesaggi attivi Saggio contro la contemplazione/L'attivismo paesaggistico nell'arte contemporanea (Active Landscapes. Essay against Contemplation/ The Activism in the Landscape in the Contemporary Art), Costa&Nolan, Milano 2008, II ed. Mimesi, Milano 2013.

Giulia Grechi

Giulia Grechi holds a PhD in "Theory and Social Research" at the University La Sapienza, Rome, Italy. She is currently a research fellow at

the University L'Orientale in Naples, as a member of the EU Project Mela - European Museums in the Age of Migrations (EU-7PQ), where she is working on the relationships between museums, curatorial practices, anthropology and contemporary art. Her research interests include cultural anthropology, postcolonial studies, museography, contemporary art and embodiment. She teaches "Photography - Social Communication" at the Fine Arts School of Brera (Milan, Italy), and "Sociology of Cultural Processes" at the European Institute of Design (IED) in Rome. She is also co-coordinator and professor of "Visual Anthropology and Contemporary Art" for IED Masters Programme in "Museum and Events Curatorial Studies – Contemporary Arts and Performing Arts". She is editor-in-chief of the online journal roots Froutes - research on visual culture. She works in a team of independent curators based in Rome, called Routes Agency - Cura of Contemporary Arts.

Marek E. Jasinski

Marek E. Jasinski is Professor Dr. of archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology and Studies of Religion at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim, Norway. His main research interests are Medieval and Post-Medieval Archaeology of the European Arctic; Maritime Archaeology, Conflict Archaeology and Management of Cultural Heritage. He has been leader and Norwegian co-leader of several major research projects in Norway, Russia, Greenland, Greece, Argentina, Mexico, United Arab Emirates and Bulgaria. During the last three years he has been leading the interdisciplinary project 'Painful Heritage: Cultural Landscapes of the Second World War in Norway. Phenomenology, Lessons and Management Systems' financed by the Research Council of Norway. This project includes, among other aspects, archaeological documentation and investigations of the Atlantic Wall fortifications and Nazi camps for foreign Prisoners of War and slave workers in Norway 1940-1945. Marek E. Jasinski is the

author and co-author of approximately 200 publications, including books, articles, reports, etc., and of numerous presentations delivered at national and international conferences and seminars in Europe, USA, Canada, Latin America and Africa.

Tone Jørstad

Tone Jørstad is Director of the Falstad Centre. She has a Master of Arts in Media Studies from the University of Bergen, focusing mainly on communication in Art and Culture. In her MA thesis "Traces in Landscapes", she studied the process of implementing the international Art Project HemArt (a Land-Art project in the countryside of County Hedmark in Norway). She is a trained teacher with special competences within Art and Handicraft, Art History, Sports, Media and Communication. Jørstad has taught at different levels within the Norwegian school system. For several years Jørstad worked as Head of the Cultural Department, Levanger Municipality.

Gennaro Postiglione

Gennaro Postiglione is Associate Professor of Interior Architecture at the Politecnico di Milano (activity: www.lablog.org.uk). Researches focus mainly on domestic interiors (questioning relations among culture of dwelling, domestic architecture and modernity), on museography and on preserving and diffusing collective memory and cultural identity (connecting the museographic issues with the domestic ambit). In this field he carried out several research projects amongst wich: "The Atlantic Wall Linear Museum", "Abarchive – archivio borghi abbandonati", "One-hundred houses for onehundred architects of the XX century", "MeLa - European Museums in an age of migrations". Besides, he has a specific interest in the architecture of Nordic countries. From 2004, he is promoter of PUBLIC ARCHITECTURE @ POLIMI, an interdisciplinary research & operative group that puts the resources of Architecture in the service of the Public Interest

and from 2006 is promoter of IFW-Interior Forum World, an academic network and a web platform for research edited by the PhD in Interiors at POLIMI.On going researches: besides "European Museums and Libraries in/ for the Age of Migrations" (EU-FP7 funded), "Dealing with Conflict Heritages" (National Grant). He seats in the editorial board of AREA (il sole24ore ed.) from 1997 and, from 2010 is in the Advisory Board of the Peer Review Journal 'Interiors' (Berg Publisher Ltd). - See more at: http://www.recall-project.polimi.it/gennaropostiglione/#sthash.EVRYHbFP.dpuf.

Ion Reitan

Jon Reitan (b. 1973) is a Historian and Senior Curator at the Falstad Centre in Levanger, Norway. Reitan has worked as Historian and Curator at Falstad since 1999, Senior Curator since 2009. Reitan was chief responsible for the script production of the main exhibition of the Centre, opened by the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs in October 2006. He has also done research and collected oral testimonies for the Jewish Museum in Trondheim in the years 2000-2005. He is a member of the Board of the Iewish Museum since 2011.

Reitan got his MA in History at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) in Trondheim in 1999. Currently he is occupied with finishing a PhD Dissertation in History entitled Along the Traces to Auschwitz. The Holocaust in the Norwegian Historical Culture 1945-2010 (finished spring 2013). In the years 2007-2008, Reitan developed and taught three MA University Courses on Memory Studies, Museology and Genocide at the Department of History and Classical Studies, NTNU.

Reitan has been a permanent member of the Norwegian official delegation to the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (ITF for short) since 2004, and held the position of Chairman of the Memorial and Museum Working Group in the ITF in 2009. From January 2012 he holds the Presidency of the International Committee on Memorial Museums (IC MEMO) in the International Council of Museums (ICOM). Reitan has been involved in a number of international research, documentation and exhibition projects.

Tenna Doktor Olsen Tvedebrink

Tenna Doktor Olsen Tvedebrink is educated as a civil engineer with specialization in architecture from Aalborg University. She completed her master degree from the Department of Architecture, Design and Media Technology in June 2008, and is currently a PhD student at the Department of Civil Engineering. Tenna has furthermore obtained single courses in Sensory & Consumer Science, Food & Meal Sociology, as well as Food Culture and Food History from the University of Copenhagen, Departments of Human Nutrition and Food Science.

With a primary research interest in how spatial settings influence the meal experience and overall wellbeing, her PhD dissertation focuses on the possibility of utilizing architectural design to improve the healing process of patients in Danish Hospitals through the design of better eating facilities.

In 2010 Tenna was awarded a scholarship from Ejnar Packness Fonden, Aalborg. This gave her the opportunity for a research stay at Carleton University, Azrieli School of Architecture & Urbanism, Canada in 2012, where she joined the PhD program. Tenna was furthermore accepted as a Senior Member in the International order: Cordon Bleu du Saint Esprit in 2010, as well as appointed Danish Delegate at the International Slow Food & Terra Madre Conference in 2010.

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Wolfgang Weileder

Wolfgang Weileder's recent work is primarily concerned with the exploration and critical deconstruction of architecture, public spaces and the interactions we have with the ubiquitous urban environment. Focusing on large-scale temporary site-specific architectural installation and sculpture in the urban environment his work also branches into performance, film,

photography and sound installation. Wolfgang Weileder is currently Professor in Contemporary Sculpture at Newcastle University, UK. His work has been exhibited worldwide, recent shows and projects include:5×5 Project, Washington DC (2012); hub to hub, Singapore ArchiFest (2011); Die Begnadigung / la Sospensione, Neon Gallery, Bologna (2009); Le Terme, Ciocca Arte Contemporanea Milan (2008); Fold-Up, Sunderland (2008); Transferback, Milton Keynes Gallery (2007); Transfer, Milton Keynes Gallery (2006); You shall know our velocity, Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead (2006); house-birmingham, IKON Gallery, Birmingham (2004); housemadrid, Madrid Abierto (2004).

NEXT PAGE —Photos of the Nordic Embassy in Berlin during the Final Event of the Project. Photo: Michela Bassanelli.







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REcall is a research project founded by EC Culture 2007-13 Programme (n. 2012 - 0927 / 001 - 001 CU7 COOP7) focused on the possible roles Museography can play when dealing with Difficult Heritage such as the ones coming from conflicts and wars. REcall wishes to envision new ways to the handling of Painful Places & Stories going beyond any traditional approach: there is the need to shift from the 'simply' commemoration attitude to a more active involvement and participation of people in/with Places & Stories, through design strategies of 'reappropriation' (www.recall-project.polimi.it).

EDITORS

Michela Bassanelli, Viviana Gravano, Giulia Grechi and Gennaro Postiglione

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