



DIGITAL منتدى
HERITAGE التراث
FORUM الرقمي
2025

Where Heritage Meets Innovation

The **Digital Heritage Forum 2025**, hosted by **DCT Abu Dhabi** from **3–5 November** at the **Cultural Foundation** in **Abu Dhabi**, will bring together innovators, academicians and practitioners to explore how technology is transforming the ways cultural heritage is recorded, interpreted, and shared. Through keynotes, talks, panel discussions, and immersive showcases, the Forum will serve as a dynamic platform for dialogue, knowledge exchange, and collaboration, collectively **envisioning the future of digital heritage**.

5 Tracks 18 Sessions

TRACK 1 **Preserving the** **Irreplaceable**

Digital Conservation,
Archiving & Infrastructure

Conservation Reimagined: Digital Strategies for Preserving Cultural Heritage

Safeguarding Digital Heritage: Integrity, Ethics and Protection in the age of AI and Blockchain

Echoes Preserved: Innovations in Digital Archiving

Building the Backbone: Infrastructure and Information Management for Heritage Futures

TRACK 2 **Mapping, Modeling &** **Machine Learning** Smart Technologies

Historic Cities in the Digital Age: GIS Meets Digital Twins

Living Heritage: Enhancing Wellbeing through Digital Technologies in Urban Landscapes

Future of the Past: Risk Mapping, Communication, and Community Resilience in Cultural Landscapes

TRACK 3 **Immersion &** **Imagination** AR/VR, Gamification & Experience Design

Beyond the Glass Case: VR/AI Experiences in Cultural Heritage & Museums

Immersive Heritage: Exploring Dual-Use of digital heritage data combining XR gamification and AI inspection

Playful Pasts: Interactive Tech, Gamification, and Inclusive Access in Heritage Learning

Digitizing the Past: The Pillars of 3D Reconstruction in Heritage

TRACK 4 **Data - Driven** **Discoveries** Science & Analytics

From Field to Data: E-Science for Landscape Heritage Discovery

Digital Deep Dive: Digitizing Abu Dhabi's Maritime Heritage within a Global Framework

Data of Experience: AI and Extended Reality in Cross-Cultural Heritage

TRACK 5 **Storytelling & Creative** **Futures** Humanities, Culture & Digital Expression

Rooted in Place: Community, Storytelling, and the Digital Reimagination of Heritage

Hearing History: Reimagining Cultural Heritage Preservation through Creative Sound Experiences

Geo Stories: Mapping Heritage Landscapes with Narratives

Heritage by Design: Collaborative Platforms for Co-Creation in Digital Heritage

Programme

PROGRAMME

Date: 3-5 November 2025

Venue: Cultural Foundation, Abu Dhabi

Nov 03

- 9:00 am **Registration – Coffee**
- 10:00am **Opening Speech DCT**
- 10:30am **Keynotes**
- 12:00pm **Gaudí 100: A Digital Tribute**
VR Experience Opening: Gaudí, the Atelier of the Divine

12:30pm **Lunch**

Technical Parallel Sessions

- 2:00pm
- From Field to Data: E-Science for Landscape Heritage Discovery
 - Historic Cities in the Digital Age: GIS Meets Digital Twins
 - Heritage by Design: Collaborative Platforms for Co-Creation in Digital Heritage

3:30pm **Coffee & Tea Break**

- 4:00pm
- Conservation Reimagined: Digital Strategies for Preserving Cultural Heritage
 - Digitizing the Past: The Pillars of 3D Reconstruction in Heritage
 - Hearing History: Reimagining Cultural Heritage Preservation through Creative Sound Experiences

5:30pm **Cultural Event for Invited Participants**

7:00pm **Gala Dinner for Invited Participants**

*Translation English-Arabic will be available in the morning sessions.

PROGRAMME

Date: 3-5 November 2025

Venue: Cultural Foundation, Abu Dhabi

Nov 04

9:00am Keynote

9:40am Break

Technical Parallel Sessions

- 10:00am
- Beyond the Glass Case: VR/AI Experiences in Cultural Heritage & Museums
 - Echoes Preserved: Innovations in Digital Archiving
 - Living Heritage: Enhancing Wellbeing through Digital Technologies in Urban Landscapes

11:30am Coffee & Tea Break

- 12:00pm
- Geo Stories: Mapping Heritage Landscapes with Narratives
 - Immersive Heritage: Exploring Dual-Use of digital heritage data combining XR gamification and AI inspections
 - Data of Experience: AI and Extended Reality in Cross-Cultural Heritage

1:00pm Lunch

- 2:30pm
- Future of the Past: Risk Mapping, Communication, and Community Resilience in Cultural Landscapes
 - Playful Pasts: Interactive Tech, Gamification, and Inclusive Access in Heritage Learning
 - Safeguarding Digital Heritage: Integrity, Ethics and Protection in the age of AI and Blockchain

4:00pm Coffee & Tea Break

- 4:30pm
- Digital Deep Dive: Digitizing Abu Dhabi's Maritime Heritage within a Global Framework
 - Building the Backbone: Infrastructure and Information Management for Heritage Futures
 - Rooted in Place: Community, Storytelling, and the Digital Reimagination of Heritage

6:00pm Evening Event and Dinner for International Participants

PROGRAMME

Date: 3-5 November 2025

Venue: Cultural Foundation, Abu Dhabi

Nov 05

9:00am	Keynotes
10:20am	Break
10:30am	Panel - Reporting Back: Insights and Outcomes of the Digital Heritage Forum 2025
11:30am	Coffee & Tea Break
12:00pm	Panel - Digitally Ever After? Inspiring the Next Chapter
1:30pm	Closing Ceremony - Cultural Heritage Resonance: I Hear You. I Hear Me. I Hear Us
2:00pm	Lunch
3:00pm	End of the Event

*Translation English-Arabic will be available this full day.

Schedule

3 November

Keynotes



Prof. Simon See

Chief Solution Architect and Global
Head of AI Technologies, NVIDIA

Date: 3 November

Time: 10:30 am

Location: Theatre



Dr. Najwa Aaraj

CEO, Technology Innovation
Institute (TII)

Date: 3 November

Time: 11:15am

Location: Theatre

Talks

Gaudí 100: A Digital Tribute



Casa Batlló: A people-centered digital approach to World Heritage

Dr. Amilcar Vargas
Casa Batlló

Date: 3 November
Time: 12:00pm
Location: Theatre



VR Experience Opening:
Gaudí, the Atelier of the Divine

Agnes Garudel
GEDEON Experiences
Voyelle Acker
Small Creative

Date: 3 November
Time: 12:20pm
Location: Theatre

Technical Sessions

From Field to Data: E-Science for Landscapes Heritage Discovery

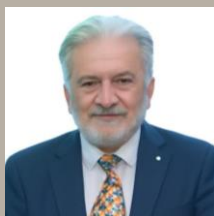
Date: 3 November

Time: 2:00pm- 3:30pm

Location: Theatre

E-Science refers to research carried out through distributed collaborations on the network, with distributed access to large data collections and resources and with advanced visualization tools. The potential benefits of this scheme, and in particular the possibility of processing, sharing and distributing previously unthinkable quantities of information, have led the major world research agencies to promote the development of the necessary infrastructures. Some technologies and experiences of this approach related to the documentation of naturalistic heritage will be presented, implemented at different levels of depth and detail, offering a future-oriented view of this multidisciplinary approach.

Co- Convenors



Prof. Fulvio Rinaudo
Politecnico di Torino (DAD)/
ICOMOS CIPA Heritage
Documentation

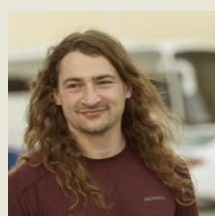


Dr. Ravikiran Saripalli
Technology Innovation
Institute (TII)

Speakers



Georgios Toubekis
Fraunhofer FIT



Dr. Gino Caspari
Max Planck Institute of
Geoanthropology / GeoInsight AG



Dr. Daniele Spizzichino
ICOMOS-ICORP / ISPRA



Prof. Francisco García García
Polytechnic University of
Valencia



Abdulla AlMarar
UAE Space Agency



Dr. Luciano Oliveira
Technology Innovation
Institute (TII)

Historic Cities in the Digital Age: GIS Meets Digital Twins

Date: 3 November

Time: 2:00pm - 3:30pm

Location: Study Room 1

The integration of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and digital twin technologies is transforming the ecosystem of historic urban landscape protection and management. This evolving ecosystem brings together spatial data, real-time modelling, and Internet of Things (IoT) sensors to create dynamic tools for documenting, analyzing, and conserving cultural heritage. Digital twins enhance traditional GIS capabilities by enabling simulation, visualization, and predictive analysis, supporting more informed and proactive decision-making in urban planning and heritage conservation. By fostering collaboration among researchers, policymakers, and technology developers, this integrated ecosystem drives innovation in the digital transformation of historic cities, paving the way for more intelligent and sustainable heritage management.

Co- Convenors



**Prof. Dr. Mario
Santana Quintero**
Carleton University



Tariq Yousif Alhammadi
Department of Culture and
Tourism- Abu Dhabi

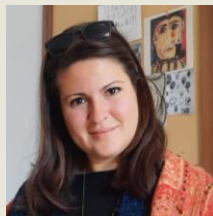
Speakers



Prof. Grazia Tucci
University of Florence



Dr. Arnadi Murtiyoso
INSA Strasbourg



Dr. Raffaella De Marco
University of Pavia



Prof. Dang Anrong
School of Architecture,
Tsinghua University



Ahmed ElHussiny
ESRI

Heritage by Design: Collaborative Platforms for Co-Creation in Digital Heritage

Date: 3 November

Time: 2:00pm - 3:30pm

Location: Study Room 2

This session critically examines “Heritage by Design” as a collaborative act of storytelling. As heritage experiences increasingly use immersive technologies, who authors the narrative? Moving beyond the institution–community binary, we explore an ecosystem of co-creation involving heritage authorities, local communities, academic experts, and digital technologists. Leading figures from these domains will debate how collaborative platforms—archival databases, immersive displays, and open-source tools—can serve as digital infrastructure for a “digital commons” of cultural knowledge. Mediated by the perspective of international organizations working to bridge the gap between these diverse stakeholders, the panel will seek to define strategies for a more creative and equitable future, ensuring heritage storytelling becomes multivocal rather than a monolithic act.

Co- Convenors



Thibault Guillaumont
Holusion



Dr. Assaad Seif
Lebanese University/
ICOMOS Lebanon

Speakers



Kostas Konstantinidis
PostScriptum



Dr. Bilel Chebbi
ICESCO



Dana Altoaimi
Heritage Commission, KSA



Prof. Dr. Pierre Hallot
University of Liege



Dr. Jonas Geuens
Flanders Heritage Agency



Farukh Khabibullaeyev
IICAS

Conservation Reimagined: Digital Strategies for Preserving Cultural Heritage

Date: 3 November

Time: 4:00pm - 5:30pm

Location: Theatre

Heritage conservation is entering a new phase where digital intelligence is inseparable from preservation practice. This session explores how technologies are reshaping risk anticipation, environmental monitoring, and collection protection. By integrating geospatial surveys, diagnostics, and long-term environmental records into shared digital platforms, managers can detect vulnerabilities, simulate scenarios, and plan proactively. Drawing on expertise from leading institutions—including the Grand Egyptian Museum, the National Museum of Korea, the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Qatar National Library, and CNRS/DAFA—the discussion highlights transformative directions such as AI, digital twins, immersive VR/AR, and IoT monitoring for resilient heritage management.

Co- Convenors



Dr. Vicente Bayarri
GIM Geomatics



Dr. Dmitriy Voyakin
National Commission of the
Republic of Kazakhstan for
UNESCO & ICESCO, UCL-
CAAL

Speakers



Dr. Vasily Novikov
Knorozov Mesoamerican
Center of RSUH



Maxim Nasra
Qatar National Library



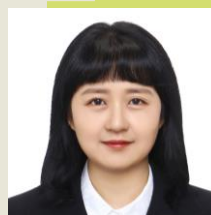
Dr. Ilkwon Huh
National Museum of Korea



Dr. Julio Bendezu Sarmiento
CNRS —MAFUR MNHN



Dr. Eman Taha
Grand Egyptian Museum



Dr. Wonjin Lee
National Museum of Korea

Digitizing the Past: The Pillars of 3D Reconstruction in Heritage

Date: 3 November

Time: 4:00pm - 5:30pm

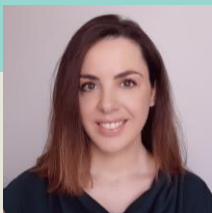
Location: Study Room 1

The session will discuss 3D technologies in heritage, covering the full lifecycle of a 3D model, from data acquisition and digitization of ruins to modelling, reconstruction and additive manufacturing (3D printing). There will be an emphasis on applying conservation ethics in virtual reconstructions based on scientific evidence and research findings. A panel of international experts will present case studies demonstrating a broad range of technologies applied at different scales. This will initiate a dialogue addressing major challenges and opportunities for 3D reconstructions, the roles key actors play in such projects, the importance of multidisciplinary collaboration, and the balance between aesthetically pleasing results, research and scientific evidence, budgets, and tight project timelines

Co- Convenors



Dr. Eleni Kotoula
University of Edinburgh



Dr. Erato Kartaki
Arts University
Bournemouth

Speakers



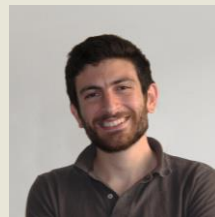
Prof. Rita Lucarelli,
University of
California, Berkeley



Nuria Medina
Factum Arte



Daniele Guerrini
z3D



Bachaar Tarabay
ICONEM



**Prof. Dr. Fernando
Moral-Andres**
School of Architecture
and Building, Nebrija
University

Hearing History: Reimagining Cultural Heritage Preservation through Creative Sound Experiences

Date: 3 November

Time: 4:00pm - 5:30pm

Location: Study Room 2

Sound offers a new dimension in which to preserve heritage and to connect communities with their cultural places, objects and practices. Sound can evoke events from the past, transport us to the most biodiverse rainforest in the world, connect us across time with our ancestors or hear materiality through its resonant frequencies. Harnessing sound for preservation requires the collaboration of many specializations that encompass the creative industries, heritage professionals and technical skills. This session invites speakers to explore the possibilities that soundscapes, music and voice, can offer for preservation, interpretation (especially for controversial memories) and participation by reflecting on their own practice

Co- Convenors



Dr. Cristina Garduño Freeman

University of New South Wales (UNSW)



Giancarlo Sciascia
Mezzo Forte

Speakers



Dr. Marco Liuni
Mezzo Forte



Prof. Manuel Salge Ferro
Universidad Externado de Colombia



Neddy Amoga Lusimbo
Sounds of Freedom Africa



Dr. Steven Cooke
University of Melbourne



Prof. Dr. Carlos Guedes
Music and Sound Cultures
Research Group/NYU Abu Dhabi

Schedule

4 November

Keynote



Prof. Maurizio Forte

Advisor, US Department of
State

Professor, Duke University

Date: 4 November

Time: 9am- 9:40am

Location: Theatre

Beyond the Glass Case: VR/AI Experiences in Cultural Heritage & Museums

Date: 4 November

Time: 10:00am – 11:30am

Location: Theatre

This forum unites global leaders to examine how museums and cultural heritage institutions can adapt in an age shaped by AI, XR, and the Metaverse. It explores new museum roles in immersive and AI-enhanced contexts, redefining missions, responsibilities, and collaborations with technology industries. Key themes include applying generative AI, VR, and other tools for knowledge discovery, preservation, interpretation, and inclusive storytelling, while confronting challenges of authenticity, provenance, and ethics. A major focus is workforce transformation, identifying emerging roles and skills, and advancing training models, academic–industry partnerships, and innovative education to build a diverse, digitally fluent future heritage workforce.

Co- Convenors



Prof. Eugene Ch'ng
Beijing Normal-Hong
Kong Baptist University



Dr Charles Cheung
NVIDIA AI Technology
Centre (Global)

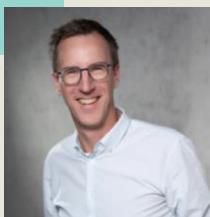
Speakers



Daniel Sproll
Realities.io



Prof. Frank Guan
Singapore Technology
University



Andreas Bauer
Ars Electronica
Centre



Prof. Dr. Henry Duh
HK Polytech University

Echoes Preserved: Innovations in Digital Archiving

Date: 4 November

Time: 10:00am – 11:30am

Location: Study Room 1

Large-scale digitization has triggered a revolution: cultural heritage archives are no longer exclusive domains for specialists. Today, they are open laboratories for a global audience of researchers, artists, innovators and the curious public. This demographic shift in users demands a critical reflection on access and interaction models. Our session brings together pioneers from around the world for a discussion on the boldest and most innovative experiences in management, presentation, and creative reuse of digital content. The goal is to outline a shared vision for the future of archives, ensuring they remain vital and accessible resources for generations to come.

Co- Convenors



Dr. Paul Burtenshaw
World Monuments Fund



Dr. Dario Taraborrelli
University of Bologna

Speakers



Dr. Stefano Vitali
Former Director of the
Central State Archives



Dr. Vasyl Rozhko
Ukrainian Heritage
Monitoring Lab



Nico Verplancke
meemoo, Flemish
Institute for Archives



Dr. Raed Alsuyfani
Thakerah Saudi
Memory Center



Javier Ors Ausin
World Monuments Fund

Living Heritage: Enhancing Wellbeing through Digital Technologies in Urban Landscapes

Date: 4 November

Time: 10:00am – 11:30am

Location: Study Room 2

This session explores how digital tools like AI, GIS, and 3D modeling can document, preserve, and revitalize the cultural heritage of historic cities. A proposed workshop will demonstrate how these technologies systematically safeguard both built environments and living traditions, from oral histories to artisanal practices. Guided by participatory methods and ethical data governance, the workshop will showcase how these digital initiatives generate measurable social, economic, and environmental returns. The ultimate goal is to illustrate how data-driven approaches create new pathways for sustainable development, valorizing heritage for the long-term benefit of communities and the environment.

Co- Convenors



Prof. Dr. Veronica Heras
University of Azuay



Prof. Dr. Jose Antonio Fernandez Gallardo
University of Cordoba

Speakers



Dr. Francisco Javier Gomez Gomez
Paythunder & Qualica-RD



Hubert Beroche
Urban AI



Dr. Sezi Karayazi
Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University



Dr. Rumi Okazaki
Shibaura Institute of Technology



Michelle Mumbi Gathigi
Spatial Collective Limited

Geo Stories: Mapping Heritage Landscapes with Narratives

Date: 4 November

Time: 12:00pm – 1:30pm

Location: Theatre

This session explores how geospatial technologies, cultural heritage, and storytelling converge to redefine heritage as an evolving space shaped by memory, ritual, and narrative. Focusing on narrative mapping of oral traditions, community histories, and indigenous knowledge, we highlight how these methods challenge tangible-intangible divides and reveal affective layers within historical environments. Community-engaged mapping will be illustrated by integrating audience voices, oral histories, and tacit knowledge in collaborative cartographic practice. Case studies from diverse regions will show how geospatial tools can interpret and protect cultural landscapes. Finally, we address technical, methodological, and conceptual challenges, alongside opportunities for innovation and collaboration.

Co- Convenors



Dr. Tokie Laotan-Brown
ACHS/Foundation for the
Preservation of Cultural
Heritage in Nigeria



Prof. Bekeh Ukelina
SUNY Cortland /Nsibidi
Institute for Culture and
Memory, Abuja

Speakers



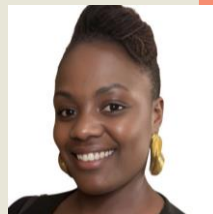
Dr. Melinda Shimizu
SUNY Cortland Geography



Hee-Kyoung Yeo
WHIPIC



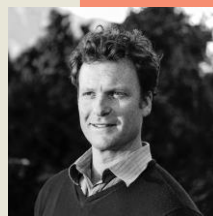
**Dr. Ijeoma (Harriet)
Onyejekwe**
National Commission for
Museums and Monuments
Nigeria



Mutanu Kyany'a
African Digital Heritage



Prof. Eduardo A. Escalante
Ibero-American University



Owen Murray
OMM Photography

Immersive Heritage: Exploring Dual-Use of digital heritage data combining XR gamification and AI inspections

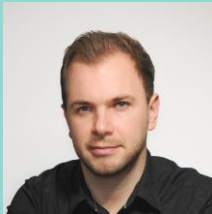
Date: 4 November

Time: 12:00pm – 1:30pm

Location: Study Room 1

This interactive session explores how immersive technologies (reality capturing, XR, gaming engines, and AI-driven inspection and simulation) are reshaping the digitization, preservation, and experience of historic and maritime heritage. Participants will discover best practices and workflows, engage with live VR demonstrations, and examine the dual-use potential of data for AI-based inspection and interactive visualization. Together, we will exchange ideas and strategies for integrating these innovations into daily digitization pipelines while aligning with global cultural heritage standards. The session promotes collaboration and inspires new approaches to what digital heritage can achieve.

Co- Convenors



Tomas Barnas
overhead 4D



Ted Strazimiri
Sky Deploy

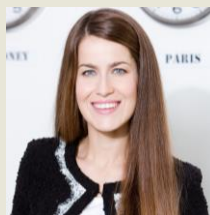
Speakers



Dr. Fabio Menna
University of Sassari



Dr. Alberto Mendikute Garate
Tekniker



Mag. Mag. Phil. Nikola Jancovicova
Epic Games



Mohamed Salama
University of Alexandria



Josip R.
Vectrino d.o.o

Data of Experience: AI and Extended Reality in Cross-Cultural Heritage

Date: 4 November

Time: 12:00pm – 1:30pm

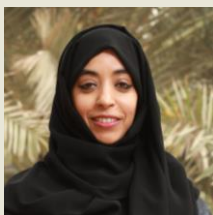
Location: Study Room 2

This session examines how the powerful convergence of data, artificial intelligence, virtual/augmented reality, interactivity, and sensor technologies is reshaping the preservation, interpretation, and experience of cultural heritage across global contexts. The session explores how data inform AI algorithms to create responsive and personalized VR/AR experiences, from motion-tracking systems that enable natural navigation through virtual archaeological sites to environmental sensors that trigger contextual multimedia content. Speakers will address the technical challenges of integrating these technologies, including real-time rendering, spatial computing, and adaptive user interfaces, while examining their cultural and ethical implications.

Co- Convenors



Roch Thibault
Department of Culture
and Tourism – Abu
Dhabi



Dr. AlAnood AlShaikh
New York University,
Abu Dhabi

Speakers



Prof. Nuno Nunes
University of Lisbon



Prof. Toshikatsu Kiuchi
Kyoto Institute of Technology



Dr. Valentina Nisi
University of Lisbon



Prof. Dr. Francois Giligny
Université Paris 1
Panthéon-Sorbonne



Prof. Hye Seung Shim
Hong Kong Shue Yan
University (HKSJU)

Future of the Past: Risk Mapping, Communication, and Community Resilience in Cultural Landscapes

Date: 4 November

Time: 2:30pm – 4:00pm

Location: Theatre

Effective heritage risk management begins with comprehensive risk assessments at the landscape scale, integrating cultural, natural, tangible, and intangible attributes alongside social and community dynamics. Digital technologies, from remote sensing to immersive storytelling tools, enhance risk mapping, facilitate stakeholder communication, and promote community resilience. Clear and engaging risk communication is essential for involving communities directly in preparedness activities and fostering proactive local stewardship. This integrated, risk-aware approach leverages smart technologies to create resilient cultural landscapes, empowering communities and heritage professionals alike in safeguarding the past for the future.

Co- Convenors



Dr. Bijan Rouhani
University of Oxford,
School of Archaeology



**Dr. Paola Di
Giuseppantonio Di Franco**
University of Essex

Speakers



Dr. Bernadette Devilat
University of Nottingham



Prof. Dr. Simone Mantellini
University of Bologna



Anwar Sabik
ICCROM



Sophie Abraham
ALIPH



Liu Shaobo
HIST - UNESCO

Playful Pasts: Interactive Tech, Gamification, and Inclusive Access in Heritage Learning

Date: 4 November

Time: 2:30pm – 4:00pm

Location: Study Room 1

This session explores how playful technologies—such as serious games, tangible interaction, and immersive VR—can activate heritage learning across audiences and contexts, from children in community spaces to adults in museums. Emphasis is placed on inclusive access, cultural sensitivity, and ethical innovation in an era shaped by AI and rapid technological change. Speakers will present case studies that span museum-based game design, VR storytelling, AI-powered tools, and archaeological visualization, each highlighting the potential of play to deepen understanding, foster engagement, and reach marginalized or underrepresented communities. Through diverse lenses—academic, institutional, and creative—this session provokes fresh thinking on how playful heritage can be both impactful and equitable. It concludes with a participatory roundtable addressing shared challenges and calling for co-developed, sustainable strategies in digital heritage innovation.

Co- Convenors



Dr. Eslam Nofal
University of Sharjah



Monette-Mary Saade
Department of Culture and
Tourism - Abu Dhabi

Speakers



Gary Goldberger
Fablevision



Marine Botton
Louvre Abu Dhabi



Moza Humaid AlMazroua
Department of Culture and
Tourism - Abu Dhabi



Dr. Sara Tonelli
Bruno Kessler Foundation



Prof. Naif Haddad
Hashemite University

Safeguarding Digital Heritage: Integrity, Ethics and Protection in the age of AI and Blockchain

Date: 4 November

Time: 2:30pm – 4:00pm

Location: Study Room 2

Artificial intelligence is transforming how cultural heritage is documented, preserved, and experienced, offering powerful opportunities for access, interpretation, and creative engagement. Alongside these benefits, however, arise critical concerns around authenticity, integrity, and ethical responsibility in managing this data. This session explores how AI can be leveraged to expand opportunities for cultural heritage while addressing risks of bias, misrepresentation, and over-dependence on automated systems. By considering both opportunities and challenges, it aims to define approaches that safeguard digital heritage and ensure its sustainable role in connecting communities for the future.

Co- Convenors



Abdullatif Al-Jasmi
Qatar Museums



Muhammad Nadat
Department of Culture
and Tourism- Abu Dhabi

Speakers



Prof. Daniel Pett
Digital Strategy and
Operations for Westminster
School



Prof. Dr. Emily L. Spratt
Columbia University



Wayne Graham
Council on Library and
Information Resources
(CLIR), Digital Library
Federation (DLF)



Dr. Victor Mateu
Technology Innovation
Institute (TII)

Digital Deep Dive: Digitizing Abu Dhabi's Maritime Heritage within a Global Framework

Date: 4 November

Time: 4:30pm – 6:00pm

Location: Theatre

This session explores how emerging technologies are reshaping the study and preservation of maritime heritage. With a focus on the unique underwater and coastal heritage of Abu Dhabi, leading experts in the field of robotics, e-science, and data analytics, will present innovative methods for mapping, monitoring, documenting and analyzing maritime archaeological sites. The panel will discuss how digital tools and new technologies can enhance research accuracy, accessibility, and long-term conservation. The session will conclude with a series of recommendations specifically designed for Abu Dhabi, with the aim of incorporating advanced digital practices into the management of its maritime heritage.

Co- Convenors



Prof. Vincent Creuze
University of Montpellier



Dr. Alessandro Ghidoni
Department of Culture and
Tourism - Abu Dhabi

Speakers



Prof. Dimitrios Skarlatos
Cyprus University of
Technology



Mark James
MSDS Marine



Mohammad Khedr
Alexandria Center for
Maritime Archaeology &
Underwater Cultural Heritage



Prof. Fraser Sturt
University of Southampton



Dr. Michel L'Hour
Former Director of DRASSM



David Souto
Technology Innovation
Institute (TII)

Building the Backbone: Infrastructure and Information Management for Heritage Futures

Date: 4 November

Time: 4:30pm – 6:00pm

Location: Study Room 2

In this panel session, we will reflect on a diverse range of digital heritage information infrastructures and the information practices associated with them. After a brief introduction, the panel members will present their day-to-day operations through short lightning talks, each introducing a specific topic for further discussion — such as data interoperability, long-term sustainability and reusability, and public access. We will then proceed to discuss these topics among the panelists, aiming to share practical insights and exchange solutions to common challenges in managing, using, and sustaining digital heritage information infrastructures.

Co-Convenors



Koen Van Daele
Flanders Heritage Agency



Prof. Piraye Hacigüzeller
Antwerp Cultural Heritage
Sciences, University of
Antwerp

Speakers



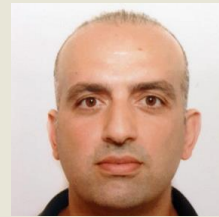
Dr. Holly Wright
University of York



Maarten Vermeyen
Flanders Heritage Agency



Dr. Sebastian Mukumbira
Department of Informatics,
Namibia University of
Science and Technology



Eng. Selim Germanos
Directorate General of
Antiquities (DGA)/
Lebanese Ministry of
Antiquities

Rooted in Place: Community, Storytelling, and the Digital Reimagination of Heritage

Date: 4 November

Time: 4:30pm – 6:00pm

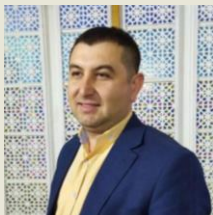
Location: Study Room 2

Across continents and cultures, communities are reclaiming the power to tell their own stories. This session explores how digital storytelling, grounded in place, memory, and lived experience, can foster more authentic and inclusive narratives of heritage. From immersive soundscapes, XR experiences, and AI tools to community-driven archives and platforms like Google Arts & Culture and Tapestry, speakers will share strategies for building narratives that resonate locally and connect globally. Through diverse perspectives from Rapa Nui, Saudi Arabia, Colombia, and beyond, we examine how technology can support not just preservation, but creative renewal and cultural continuity.

Co- Convenors



Kacey Hadick
CyArk



Prof. (Hon.) Suhrob Babaev
ArchFund Society

Speakers



Merahi Atam
Rapa Nui
Archaeologist



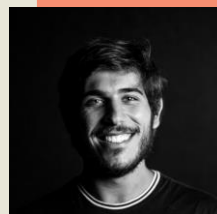
Dr. Santiago Giraldo
ProSierra Nevada de Santa
Marta Foundation/ WMF



John Risteovski
CyArk



Rehaf Al Gassas
Ministry of Culture of
Saudi Arabia



Rami Jawhar
Google Arts &
Culture

Schedule

5 November

Keynotes



Prof. Jonathan Adams

Director, Centre for Maritime
Archaeology University of
Southampton

Date: 5 November

Time: 9:00am- 9:40am

Location: Theatre



Prof. Douglas Pritchard

Professor, Robert Gordon
University

Date: 5 November

Time: 9:40- 10:20am

Location: Theatre

PANEL - Reporting Back: Insights and Outcomes of Digital Heritage Forum 2025

Date: 5 November

Time: 10:30am - 11:30am

Location: Theatre

Moderator



Dr. Ona Vileikis
Department of Culture
and Tourism - Abu Dhabi



Dr. Dmitriy Voyakin
National Commission of the
Republic of Kazakhstan for
UNESCO & ICESCO, UCL-CAAL

TRACK 1
Preserving the Irreplaceable
Digital Conservation,
Archiving & Infrastructure



Prof. Grazia Tucci
University of Florence

TRACK 2
Mapping, Modeling & Machine Learning
Smart Technologies



Prof. Eugene Ch'ng
Beijing Normal-Hong Kong
Baptist University

TRACK 3
Immersion & Imagination
AR/VR, Gamification
& Experience Design



Dr. Felix Vega
Technology Innovation Institute (TII)

TRACK 4
Data - Driven Discoveries
Science & Analytics



Prof. Bekeh Ukelina
SUNY Cortland /Nsibidi Institute
for Culture and Memory, Abuja

TRACK 5
Storytelling & Creative Futures
Humanities, Culture &
Digital Expression

PANEL - Digitally Ever After? Inspiring the Next Chapter

Date: 5 November

Time: 12:000pm- 1:30pm

Location: Theatre

Moderators



Prof. Dr. Mario Santana Quintero
Carleton University



Dr. Joyce Azzam
UN Women Goodwill Ambassador
Joyce Azzam Project Management Services

Speakers



Dr. David Mitchell
Historic Environment Scotland



Mohamed AlJneibi
Red Dunes Games
Govt of Abu Dhabi



Sakurako Naka
teamLab



Takashi Kudo
teamLab



Thomas Rigauts
UNESCO World Heritage Centre

Closing Event



Cultural Heritage Resonance: I hear you. I hear me. I hear us.

An unprecedented experience of cultural heritage with sound from around the globe.

Date: 5 November

Time: 1:30pm

Location: Theatre

Events and Exhibitions



Technology and Innovation Booths

Explore the future of digital technologies, innovation and heritage.

Date: 3 - 5 November

Location: Hall First Floor



Gaudí, the Atelier of the Divine

A co-production by GEDEON Experiences, Small Creative, NHK

With the support of the CNC

In partnership with the Junta Constructora Del
Temple Expiatorio de la Sagrada Familia Foundation

A narrative VR journey into Gaudí's studio to discover his visionary mind, his bold methods, and his extraordinary universe.

Date: 3 – 5 November

Location: VR Room (Pre-registration required)



The Heritage Couch Podcast
Creators: Sounds of Freedom

A conversation to share your stories, insights,
and ideas on culture, heritage and technology.

Date: 3 - 5 November

Location: VIP Lounge



Image Credit: Mohamed Ahmed Ibrahim, Mountains Peak + Four Blue Clouds (2024),
Courtesy of the artist and LawrieShabibi

Mohamed Ahmed Ibrahim: Two Clouds in the Night Sky Exhibition

Curated by Noor AlMehairbi and Medyyah AlTamimi

The landmark solo exhibition of Mohamed Ahmed Ibrahim offers a new era of his practice while paying homage to his earlier career, tracing his enduring dialogue with memory, landscape, and abstraction.

Date: 3 - 5 November

Location: Ground Floor



And After Exhibition
Curated by Dirwaza Curatorial Lab

And After looks at the element of air and its states through the lens of Arabic terminology. The exhibition brings us closer to our surrounding nature and its shifts and invites us to witness the quiet intervals where shifts begin to stir.

Date: 3 - 5 November
Location: First Floor



Faces and Voices of Malta Exhibition
Curated by: Magna Żmien Foundation

An exhibition that celebrates the island's identity through the unique lens of Guido Stilon, an amateur Maltese photographer whose work offers an intimate and personal perspective on life in Malta.

Supported by: Embassy of the Republic of Malta

Date: 3 - 5 November

Location: VIP Lounge

تنظيم
Organiser

نقاصه

أبوظبي للثقافة
ABU DHABI CULTURE