

Preservation Perspectives

and Urban Archaeology



Pulitzer Arts Foundation

**October and November 2023
Wednesdays, 6:30 – 8:30PM**

Michael Allen, facilitator

Description

Facilitated by National Building Arts Center Executive Director, Michael Allen, this five-week class series will examine the multiverse of historic preservation practices in our world today. Relating to the themes of the Pulitzer's fall exhibition *Urban Archaeology: Lost Buildings of St. Louis*, participants will explore topics such as community memory-keeping, the transmission of intangible heritages, oral histories, and activism against gentrification and displacement. Classes will meet each week at the museum and will include assigned readings, guest lectures, and open spaces for discussion. This class series is best for teens and adults.

General Rules

Format: The course is a large-enrollment, free, public course. The intention of the course is to explore themes of the *Urban Archaeology* exhibition in greater depth. There will be five sessions that will include facilitator lectures, discussions with guests and space for open discussion. The brevity of the course means that it will offer a topical, rather than comprehensive, investigation into themes. Hopefully sessions will lead participants to further research into the fields of historic preservation and heritage.

Discussion: Sessions will leave time for open discussion. Participants should allow the facilitator to call on them, and be respectful of the time and contributions of other participants.

Respect for Time: The course will always begin and end on time. Since the Pulitzer is not open regularly on Wednesdays, the building will not be open before 6:00PM.

Readings and Assignments: There are suggested readings that sample key texts relating to themes. None of these readings are required, but they could support better understanding of how topics of discussion relate to the larger fields of historic preservation and heritage. There are no assignments.

Inclusive Space: Participants who need any form of accommodation should communicate needs to the Pulitzer staff, and accommodations will be made. The space of the class will be an inclusive learning environment, where participants will agree to be respectful toward the points of view expressed by other participants. No forms of discrimination or harassment will be allowed.

Instructor Contact

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Schedule

Wednesday, October 25

What Historic Preservation Can Do

In the first session, the instructor will introduce themes of the series, including histories of heritage movements and historic preservation, the ways in which social power structures impact preservation and current movements to make preservation less exclusionary and more responsive to a changing world. After introductions, students will join the instructor for a conversational tour of the Urban Archaeology exhibition.

Wednesday, November 1

Who Defines Historic Preservation?

There are authorized definitions of what “historic preservation” is, and there are countless ways in which individuals or communities have forged their own definitions. This session of the course explores ways in which practices of preserving places or holding memories has amplified marginalized voices, challenged dominant narratives of the past and provided support for struggles against gentrification, displacement and cultural forgetting.

Guests:

Cheeraz Gorman, author, artist and activist

Bob Hansman, Senior Lecturer in Architecture, Washington University in St. Louis

Suggested Reading:

Kristin Baldwin Deatheridge, “Getting to the Heart of Preservation: The Place of Grassroots Efforts in the Contemporary Preservation Movement,” *Radical Roots: Public History and a Tradition of Social Justice Activism* (Amherst: Amherst College Press, 2021).

Frederic Jameson, “Nostalgia for the Present,” *Historic Preservation Theory: An Anthology: Readings from the 18th to the 21st Century* (Sharon, Conn.: Design Books, 2023).

Dolores Hayden, “Contested Terrain,” and “Place Memory and Historic Preservation,” *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1995).

Christopher Koziol, “Historic Preservation Ideology: A Critical Mapping of Contemporary Heritage Policy Discourse,” *Preservation Research and Education* 1 (2008).

Wednesday, November 8

Preservation Laws, Preservation Movements

Historic preservation movements have succeeded in creating laws worldwide, including the frameworks of local, state and federal preservation laws in the US. Yet preservation also has remained a cultural movement, sometimes utilizing those laws for good but also occasionally finding those laws to be a hindrance to what people demand. This third session examines the ways in which preservation laws operate, and how activists interact with the legal structure.

Guests:

Meg Lousteau, Director, Cultural Resources Office, City of St. Louis
Aaron Williams, President, 4theVille

Suggested Reading:

Alden A. Fletcher, "Forced Betting the Farm: How Historic Preservation Law Fails Poor and Nonwhite Communities," *The Georgetown Law Journal* 109.6 (2021).
William J. Murtagh, "Government and Preservation Since World War II," *Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2006).
Thomas F. King, "Repeal the National Historic Preservation Act," *Bending the Future: 50 Ideas for the Next 50 Years of Historic Preservation in the United States* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2016).
Australia ICOMOS, *The Burra Charter* (1979).
<http://australia.icomos.org/publications/charters/>

Wednesday, November 15

Expanding History

This session explores contemporary efforts to expand what it is that historic preservationists are preserving, from buildings built in the recent past to ordinary places like shopping malls to sites where historic objects are no longer present. Conventions within the field and preservation laws can make expanding the scope challenging, but not impossible.

Guest:

Janna Añoneuvo Langholz, artist and caretaker of the Philippine Village Historic Site

Suggested Reading:

David Lowenthal, "The Purpose of Heritage," *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
Michel-Rolph Trouillot, "The Power in the Story," *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995).
Richard Longstreth, "When the Present Becomes Past," *Past Meets Future: Saving America's Historic Environments*. (Washington, DC: Preservation Press, 1992.)

Wednesday, November 22: NO MEETING

Wednesday, November 29

A Claim on the Future

The concluding session will invite participants to meditate on how the drive to preserve the past also is an effort to shape the future. Discussion will include a local case study, the future of St. Louis' now-shuttered medium security jail known as "the Workhouse." Today there is a public effort to create a

vision for the Workhouse's future, which has to reckon with its notorious past. Can preservation be a tool for working through the complex meanings of places today in order to build a better tomorrow?

Guest:

Annemarie Spitz, Public Design Bureau

Suggested Reading:

Andrea Roberts, "When Does It Become Social Justice? Thoughts on Intersectional Preservation Practice," *Preservation Leadership Forum* (July 20, 2017).

<https://savingplaces.org/stories/when-does-it-become-social-justice-thoughts-on-intersectional-preservation-practice>

Sharon C. Park et al., "Contested Monuments, A Critical Issue in Times of Turmoil," *APT Bulletin: The Journal of Preservation Technology* 53.1 (2022).

Daniela Sadler, "Counterpreservation as a Concept," *Counterpreservation* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2016).

Jorge Otero-Pailos, "Experimental Preservation," *Places Journal* (September 2016).

<https://placesjournal.org/article/experimental-preservation/>

Suggested Viewing:

#DismantlePreservation UnConference (2021) sessions:

<https://www.sarahmarsom.com/dismantlepreservationv21>