

URBAN HERITAGE (Cluster 1)

- Operational plan

Urban currents: The becomings and makings of urban heritage

Departing from notions of the city as an interface of different temporalities -- past events, dreams for the future and contemporary constraints -- this cluster will handle 'urban heritage' as intermingled in many different urban realities, entangled in issues of aesthetics, space and power.

While urban heritage in and of itself often is conceived of as one of the most recognized forms of heritage, it is still essentially multifaceted and elusive. Urban heritage meets us in different shapes and contexts: in strategic branding and marketing of places and sites, whole quarters and areas, individual buildings or apartments. New forms of urban governance, politics and policies pave the way for the construction of new material forms, but also frame the economic and symbolic coding and re-coding, scaling and re-scaling, valuing and re-valuing of the already existing urban materiality (buildings, architecture, places, sites, roads).

But urban heritage cannot solely be identified with the dominant currents of socio-economic and political power. There are also under-currents, where a performative understanding, encompassing various movements, initiatives and everyday practices stemming from a bottom-up perspective, also claims the past, present and future of our cities. Urban heritage therefor also needs to be related to the existence of the transient, the temporal, the interstices, the overlaps and imaginations. This means taking into account and building upon the unsettled, as well as the unseen.

Staff

Cluster coordinators (3 years period): Henric Benesch, Ingrid Martins Holmberg
Post-docs (2 years period): Feras Hammami, Evren Uzer

Aim

To establish the cluster as a key research environment within the field of urban heritage. The ambition is to advance the research into a well-recognised unit in the national and international academic society, as well as regionally and nationally among societal actors and practitioners.

Strategy for cluster activities

The cluster builds upon the two postdoc projects and the cluster coordinators' research platforms in their respective contexts (artistic research, heritage studies and built environment). These research activities are all within the realm of urban heritage but with different foci and heading for different horizons. These research activities have to be strategically 1) correlated, and 2) supplemented in order to identify prospective themes and issues. This means that the sub-themes will be in continuous formation and negotiation. They are vessels for mobilisation rather than an end in themselves. At this point, instead of formulating overarching themes we will formulate *micro-themes* in relation to specific activities, i. e mini-conferences, guest researchers, workshops etc., in order to explore and investigate their full potential within the context of the urban heritage cluster research.

This has brought the following cluster activities for the first year: two internal work-conferences (lunch to lunch) in spring, trip to a research conference in August, one micro-conference with invited researchers. The first work-conferences will consist of the mapping of our own current research, and the second will result in the identification

of micro themes and researchers to invite, as well as future cluster activities.

In short, the establishment of the cluster consists of three steps. These steps of course work in parallel, and should be well established already after the first year. The first step in the development of the new cluster is to consolidate the group, working inwards. This work leads to the identification of future **research activities** in step two which consists of **outgoing activities**, where micro-themes are developed and elaborated, such as -- conferences, workshops and articles. This also includes general activities directed towards making ourselves more known as a research environment. The third step is the successive establishment of one or several **research themes**, orienting future activities, with the final goal to establish major **research programmes** as well as **research projects** including post-doc and PhD-positions.

Criteria for cluster activities

The cluster activities shall

- consolidate the common ground of the cluster;
- identify the main strands for the working research environment of the cluster;
- explore the main interest and synergies of the cluster researchers;
- further academic promotions;
- establish of long term financial security of the research field of the cluster