ICOM international council of museums Southeast Europe

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Museums uniting a divided world

ZEMALJSKI MUZEJ BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE

3 & 4 NOV 2026

SARAJEVO, BIH

National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina

ICOM international council of museums Southeast Europe
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of Bosnia and Herzegovina

CONFERENCE DETAILS

Conference organisers: ICOM SEE
Co-organisers: ICOM Bosnia Herzegovina, National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina
Organising Committee: Jurica Sabol, Alma Leka, Lidija Milašinović, Alenka Černelič Krošelj, Ivana Grujić, Matija Dronjić
Supported by: ICOM

PROGRAMME BOOK / BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Publisher: ICOM Southeast Europe Regional Alliance
For the Publisher: Jurica Sabol, ICOM SEE Chair
Editor: Matija Dronjić
Graphic Design & Language Editing: MCS
Gornja Stubica, 2026

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ICOM international council of museums

Museums uniting a divided world

The ICOM SEE Annual Conference explores how museums can foster dialogue, build trust and bridge social, cultural and political divides. With a particular focus on South East Europe, it brings together museum professionals, researchers and representatives of related institutions to reflect on the legacies of conflict, the challenges of interpreting sensitive histories and the possibilities of more inclusive museum practice. Through shared experiences and critical discussion, the conference considers how museums can create spaces for diverse voices, strengthen connections with communities and contribute to mutual understanding in a divided world.

Bridging divides, building connections

Dear colleagues and friends,

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to Sarajevo for the ICOM SEE Annual Conference 2026. Our gathering offers a valuable opportunity to reconnect with colleagues across the region, exchange ideas and reflect on the role of museums in a world marked by division and uncertainty.

Our theme, *Museums uniting a divided world*, invites us to consider both the responsibilities and the possibilities of museums today. How can we encourage dialogue where perspectives differ, approach difficult histories with care, and create spaces where people feel heard and represented? These questions call for thoughtful discussion, openness and a willingness to learn from one another.

For us in South East Europe, they also invite reflection on how we understand our shared and distinct experiences, and how we bring them into conversation. Rather than avoiding complexity, we can approach it with curiosity and respect, recognising that meaningful exchange does not always require agreement.

At the heart of this conference is collaboration: sharing knowledge, strengthening professional connections and exploring how our institutions can contribute to greater understanding across communities and borders. I hope our discussions will offer not only inspiration, but also practical ideas to take back to our museums, alongside new partnerships that continue beyond our time in Sarajevo.

On behalf of ICOM SEE, I warmly thank our hosts, partners, speakers and all participants for their commitment and contributions to this gathering. Your presence and perspectives are what give this conference its value.

I wish you an inspiring conference, many meaningful conversations and a memorable stay in Sarajevo.

Jurica Sabol
Chair, ICOM SEE

Programme

3 NOVEMBER

08:30 REGISTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS

09:00 OPENING REMARKS

JURICA SABOL, ICOM SEE Chair
IVANA GRUJIĆ, ICOM Bosnia and Herzegovina Chair
ANA MARIĆ, Director of the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina
SVJETLANA ŠOŠIĆ, Deputy Chair of the Sarajevo City Council

09:30 KEYNOTE LECTURE

ANA MARIĆ
Director, National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo

That Yellow Building from Where You Go on Excursions

10:15 COFFEE BREAK

SESSION 1: MEMORY, CONFLICT AND ETHICAL INTERPRETATION

10:45 ENVERA MORO | UK / BIH
University of London, Museum Cultures with Collections Management, Birkbeck (MA Candidate) / University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Philosophy (MA Candidate)

Curating a Post-National 'We': Collection, Narrative and Digital Belonging at the Museum of Yugoslavia

11:05 BELMA HALILHODŽIĆ | BIH
Museum "Battle for the Wounded on the Neretva River", Jablanica

Beyond the Battle: Memory, Dialogue and Reconciliation at the Battle for the Wounded on the Neretva Museum

11:25 ELMA HAŠIMBEGOVIĆ | BIH
History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo

Whose Museum? Architecture, Memory, and Belonging at the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina

11:45 HARIS DERVIŠEVIĆ | BIH
University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Philosophy

The Museum of Islamic Culture and Art Sarajevo: Rethinking Islamic Cultural Heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina

12:05 KRISTJAN SEDEJ | SLO
Modern Gallery, Ljubljana

Reframing Difficult Heritage: Ethics, Responsibility and the Interpretation of Racially Marked Artworks

12:25 DISCUSSION / Q&A

12:40 LUNCH BREAK

SESSION 2: MUSEUMS WITHIN COMMUNITIES: PARTICIPATION, INCLUSION AND LEARNING

13:40 NELA TONKOVIĆ | SRB
The Contemporary Art Gallery Subotica

From Volunteers to Co-Creators: The 60+ Club as a Space for Multivocality and Dialogue in the Contemporary Art Gallery Subotica

14:00 DANIJELA GRBAVAC | BIH
Franciscan Museum Humac, Ljubuški

From an Adapted Workshop Towards Inclusive Museum Practice: A Case Study

14:20 LEJLA AGIĆ | BIH
Zenica City Museum

Connecting Generations through Living Heritage: The Vranduk Kilim in Museum Education

14:40 LANA BEDE | CRO
Karlovac City Museums

Archive of City Imprints: Participatory Documentation and the Democratization of Urban Heritage

15:00 ALENKA ČERNELIČ KROŠELJ | SLO
Posavje Museum Brežice

Can Black and White Harmony Unite Divided Sectors?

15:20 DISCUSSION / Q&A

16:00 GUIDED TOUR OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA & HISTORY MUSEUM OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

4 NOVEMBER

09:00 ICOM SEE BOARD MEETING

Closed meeting; for ICOM SEE Board members only.

10:30 COFFEE BREAK

SESSION 3: HERITAGE, IDENTITY AND THE CHANGING CITY

11:00 AIDA BIČAKČIĆ | BIH
Sarajevo City Museums, Museum of Contemporary Art Sarajevo

Museum of Contemporary Art in Sarajevo – Where Do We Stand?

11:20 EDINA SELESKOVIĆ | USA / BIH
KulturaMedia / Planet Sarajevo

Reimagining Memory: New Technologies and the Museum as a Living Archive

11:40 SNEŽANA MIJIĆ | SRB
TELOK, Novi Sad

The Armenian Church in Novi Sad

12:00 ADNAN DŽAFERAGIĆ | BIH
National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo

Visual Sarajevo: Street Art as an Impermanent Archive of Identity in an Urban Space

12:20 VALENTINA ILIJEVSKA | MKD
National Institution Museum Kumanovo

Museums as Shared Urban Spaces: Architecture, Memory and Symbolic Presence in a Multicultural City

12:40 LJUBIŠA VELJKOVIĆ | BIH
Museum of East Bosnia, Tuzla

Beyond the Museum Walls: The Museum of East Bosnia as a Civic Space for Dialogue, Memory and Inclusion

13:00 DISCUSSION / Q&A

13:15 LUNCH BREAK

SESSION 4: CONNECTING COLLECTIONS, AUDIENCES AND INSTITUTIONS

14:15 BRANKO ŠUŠTAR | SLO
Historical Association of Slovenia, Ljubljana

Between Utopia and Possibilities: How Can Museums of Education Contribute to Connecting a Divided World

14:35 JANJA KOVAČ | CRO
Međimurje County Museum

Intangible Heritage "Trapped" Inside the Museum Walls – Challenges of Documentation and Presentation

14:55 VASILKA DIMITROVSKA | MKD
KREAKTIVA – The Storytelling & Experience Design Studio

From Objects to Experiences: Gamified Storytelling as a Model for Museum Engagement

15:15 LEILA TOPIĆ | CRO
Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb

The Museums of Contemporary Art in Zagreb and Belgrade Present: How to Be a Vegetarian in Cannibalistic Capitalism

15:35 DRAŽEN KOTROŠAN | BIH
National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Role of ICOM Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Development of Local and Regional Cooperation in the 2003–2006 Period

15:55 DISCUSSION / Q&A

16:10 CLOSING REMARKS

16:30 GUIDED WALKING TOUR OF SARAJEVO

GENERAL INFORMATION

CONFERENCE VENUE

The conference will take place at the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Zemaljski muzej Bosne i Hercegovine), Zmaja od Bosne 3, 71000 Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

PARTICIPATION FEE AND PAYMENT DETAILS

A participation fee of 50 KM or EUR 25 is required for each speaker to help cover the cost of coffee breaks and lunches during the conference. Thank you for your understanding and support.

The fee may be paid either by bank transfer in advance or in cash at the registration desk upon arrival at the conference. For payments by bank transfer, please arrange payment by Friday, 30 October 2026, using the following bank details:

IBAN: FR76 3005 6005 1105 1100 5016 715
BIC: CCFRFRPP
Banking domiciliation: HSBC FR PARIS CBC ICOM SEE
Payment reference: ICOM SEE Conference Sarajevo 2026

TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

Participants and speakers are kindly asked to arrange and cover the costs of their own travel and accommodation, as these expenses are not covered by the conference organisers. Thank you for your understanding.

CONFERENCE LANGUAGE

The official language of the conference is English.

PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

- Each presentation is allocated 20 minutes. Q&A discussions will take place at the end of each thematic session, rather than after individual presentations.
- Please prepare your presentation in PowerPoint or PDF format and bring the final version on a USB drive.
- To ensure a smooth technical setup, please submit your presentation to the on-site technical support person at the beginning of your conference day.
- If your presentation includes audio or video, please inform the technical support when submitting your files so that playback can be checked in advance.
- Please arrive at the session room at least 15 minutes before your session begins.

DIETARY REQUIREMENTS AND ACCESSIBILITY

If you have any dietary requirements or accessibility needs, please contact us in advance so that we can discuss the available arrangements.

CONTACT

For any questions or further clarification, please contact us at icomseera@gmail.com. We will be happy to assist you and look forward to welcoming you to Sarajevo!

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Memory, Conflict and Ethical Interpretation

This session examines how museums approach conflict, trauma, difficult heritage and contested historical narratives. It understands memory as an active ethical and interpretive practice rather than a fixed account of the past. The papers address post-conflict memory, religious and ethnic histories, politically charged collections and museums' responsibility to create dialogue rather than renewed division.

ENVERA MORO
University of London, Museum Cultures with Collections Management, Birkbeck (MA Candidate) /
University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Philosophy (MA Candidate)
UK / BIH

Curating a Post-National 'We': Collection, Narrative and Digital Belonging at the Museum of Yugoslavia

This paper addresses the construction of community in post-dissolution heritage, focusing on the collections, narratives and digital practices of the Museum of Yugoslavia in Belgrade. Based on the premise that museums contribute not only to the transmission but also to the active shaping of historical knowledge, it examines how the memory of a dissolved state, whose interpretation remains deeply contested, can be sustained within contemporary museum practice. The paper considers how the institution inherited an apparatus originally dedicated to state-building, revolutionary education and leader cults, and how this apparatus has been repurposed in the aftermath of state collapse. By bringing critical museological theory into dialogue with difficult heritage and post-socialist nostalgia, I examine how the traditional mechanics of statecraft adapt to a post-state reality. The central question guiding this analysis is: what kind of 'we' emerges through the museum's collections and digital strategies, and who is imagined as belonging to this post-dissolution community? I argue that the museum's social function centres on the creation of a distinct kind of Yugoslav identity, one that revitalises a sense of past Yugoslav citizenship for older generations while offering younger visitors a new form of belonging. At the same time, the institution operates within strict political limits, constantly navigating tensions between institutional authority, official post-socialist neglect and visitor identification. I conclude that the contemporary Museum of Yugoslavia creates a flexible, highly contested and evolving space of post-national belonging, with implications for how museums in divided societies across South East Europe engage with memory and reconciliation.

Envera Moro is an early-career researcher studying museums, memory and post-socialist heritage in South East Europe, with a particular interest in questions of reconciliation and youth engagement across the region. She is a Chevening Scholar completing an MA in Museum Studies at Birkbeck, University of London, alongside an MA in Linguistics at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo, where she also completed a BA in History of Art and English Studies. She is a contributing author to Contemporary Art in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Crisis, Rupture and Discontinuity (Routledge), with a chapter on emerging artists in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

BELMA HALILHODŽIĆ
Museum “Battle for the Wounded on the Neretva River”, Jablanica
BIH

Beyond the Battle: Memory, Dialogue and Reconciliation at the Battle for the Wounded on the Neretva Museum

The Museum “Battle for the Wounded on the Neretva” in Jablanica, Bosnia and Herzegovina, was established in 1978 as a memorial institution dedicated to one of the most significant events of the Second World War in Yugoslavia. Nearly five decades later, the museum operates within a profoundly transformed social and political landscape, shaped by the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the conflicts of the 1990s and competing interpretations of the shared past. This paper examines how a museum founded within a specific Yugoslav commemorative framework can critically reinterpret its legacy and contribute to dialogue in a post-conflict society. Rather than treating memory as fixed, the museum faces the challenge of preserving historical evidence while creating space for multiple perspectives, difficult questions and previously underrepresented experiences. The Battle of the Neretva offers particular possibilities for such an approach. Beyond military history and traditional heroic narratives, its central story—the evacuation and rescue of thousands of wounded people—opens up discussions about solidarity, human dignity, civilian suffering, displacement, medical care and moral choices in wartime. Drawing on the museum’s contemporary interpretive and educational practices, the presentation explores the transition from a monument-centred culture of remembrance towards a more participatory and human-centred museum practice. It argues that museums working in post-conflict societies can serve not as places where the past is simplified or reconciled into a single narrative, but as spaces where its complexity can be acknowledged, critically examined and discussed across generations.

Belma Halilhodžić is a museum professional and director of the Museum “Battle for the Wounded on the Neretva” in Jablanica, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Before becoming director, she worked as a museum educator, developing educational programmes, workshops and interpretive activities aimed particularly at children, young people and school groups. Her professional work focuses on museum education, audience development, the interpretation of difficult heritage, the culture of remembrance and the use of contemporary and digital approaches to presenting historical narratives. She has initiated and participated in numerous educational workshops, professional seminars, conferences and museum projects, as well as collaborations with cultural and heritage institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the wider region. Through her work, she advocates for museums as accessible and dynamic spaces for learning, dialogue and critical engagement with the past, with particular emphasis on human stories, solidarity and the educational role of museums in contemporary society.

ELMA HAŠIMBEGOVIĆ
History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo
BIH

Whose Museum? Architecture, Memory, and Belonging at the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Faced with the prolonged crisis affecting state cultural institutions, the staff of the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina addressed the public with a question displayed on the façade of the museum building: “Neither Bosniak, nor Serb, nor Croat—nobody’s museum?” The message, displayed in 2012, referred to the institutional crisis resulting from the ethnic divisions of post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also marked a shift towards rethinking the museum as an institution open and relevant to all: turning the problem of “nobody’s museum” into the concept of “everybody’s museum”.
The presentation explores the methodologies and approaches employed by the museum through its permanent exhibitions, both of which address topics related to conflict, to promote more constructive and inclusive narratives around sensitive and contested issues. The architecture of the museum building, together with its symbolic position within Sarajevo, further contributes to its role as a place where questions of shared heritage, belonging and collective memory can be negotiated.

Elma Hašimbegović is a historian and museum professional with over two decades of experience in the museum sector, specialising in curatorial practice, museum management and cultural heritage preservation. Since 2001, she has worked at the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, initially as a curator and, since 2013, as its director. Her professional expertise includes the development and implementation of exhibition concepts, strategic institutional leadership and the positioning of the museum as a platform for education, critical reflection and public engagement. She has contributed to numerous international projects, with a focus on inclusive museum practices and contemporary approaches to historical narratives.

HARIS DERVIŠEVIĆ
University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Philosophy
BIH

The Museum of Islamic Culture and Art Sarajevo: Rethinking Islamic Cultural Heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Can a museum dedicated to a religious and cultural tradition become an open space for shared understanding? This paper explores that question through the concept developed for the Museum of Islamic Culture and Art in Sarajevo. Rather than viewing the museum solely as an institution for collecting, preserving and displaying objects associated with Islam, it considers its potential to facilitate encounters between different communities and interpretations of cultural heritage. The museum presents Islamic culture and art as integral to the historical and cultural development of Bosnia and Herzegovina and situates them within broader European and Mediterranean contexts. Its permanent exhibition connects artistic production, religious practice, knowledge, everyday life and intangible heritage, while avoiding a homogeneous or idealised image of the past. Particular attention is given to the curatorial challenges of addressing diverse audiences, including local communities, visitors unfamiliar with Islam, school groups, tourists and researchers. The paper asks how objects and museum narratives can convey religious meanings without reducing Islamic cultural heritage exclusively to religion, and how a museum associated with a specific tradition can remain inclusive without obscuring that tradition's distinctiveness. As a case study of a recently established museum, the paper argues that museums can bridge divisions by creating conditions for informed encounters, critical interpretation and dialogue among diverse audiences.

Haris Dervišević is an art historian specialising in Islamic art and visual culture in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He is an associate professor and head of the Chair of Art History at the University of Sarajevo, where he also directs the Centre for Art History. He has participated in numerous national and international research, museum and cultural heritage projects and is the author and co-author of several books and scholarly studies on Islamic art. He is currently involved in the development of the permanent exhibition of the Museum of Islamic Culture and Art in Sarajevo. He is a member of ICOM and ICOMOS.

KRISTJAN SEDEJ
Modern Gallery, Ljubljana
SLO

Reframing Difficult Heritage: Ethics, Responsibility and the Interpretation of Racially Marked Artworks

Even after the conflicts that gave rise to them have largely ceased, visual artworks produced amid ethnic and political division continue to challenge museums. This paper examines how art museums can responsibly interpret artworks marked by racial and ethnic associations, taking as its central case study two caricatures by the Slovenian artist Hinko Smrekar, created during the Second World War and containing antisemitic and racist imagery. Displayed in the permanent collection of Moderna galerija in Ljubljana, the works have provoked strong negative reactions from visitors, who have experienced them as unmediated hate speech rather than as historical artefacts requiring critical distance. Analysing these reactions reveals the consequences of the absence of an interpretive framework: without adequate contextualisation, a museum risks reproducing the violence of the original image rather than critically confronting it. Seeking examples of dignified approaches to the display and interpretation of objects, the paper examines the curatorial approaches adopted by two Dutch museums, the Rijksmuseum and the Groningen Museum, which have revised their terminology and introduced new interpretive frameworks to address artefacts with colonial and racial associations. Both the productive outcomes and the inconsistencies of these approaches will be critically evaluated, providing the basis for a broader interpretive framework built on four practical strategies: recognising institutional silence, contextualising problematic iconography, revising terminology and enabling multivocal, participatory interpretation. Focusing on a South East European case while engaging directly with divisive histories of ethnicity, religion and conflict, the paper argues that ethically responsible interpretation is essential if museums are to become spaces of dialogue rather than sites of renewed division.

Kristjan Sedej is an art historian and curator of collections and exhibitions at Moderna galerija in Ljubljana, Slovenia. He completed a Research MA in Art History at Utrecht University in the Netherlands. His research focuses on contemporary art, particularly the relationship between artistic practices and strategies, critical discourses such as decolonialism and ecocriticism, and the philosophy of aesthetics.

Museums Within Communities: Participation, Inclusion and Learning

This block presents museums as shared social spaces shaped with their users, communities and partners. It brings together participatory approaches, inclusive museum education, intergenerational exchange and cooperation with civil society. The papers ask how museums can enable people not only to receive knowledge but also to contribute their experience, memory and interpretation.

NELA TONKOVIĆ
The Contemporary Art Gallery Subotica
SRB

From Volunteers to Co-Creators: The 60+ Club as a Space for Multivocality and Dialogue in the Contemporary Art Gallery Subotica

The 60+ Club of the Contemporary Art Gallery Subotica brings together older citizens as volunteers and active participants in the life of the institution. Rather than approaching older adults primarily as an audience to be engaged, the program creates opportunities for them to contribute their time, knowledge, memories, and personal experiences to the gallery's activities and to interact with other generations. This presentation explores the 60+ Club as a case study of how a cultural institution can become a space for dialogue by creating conditions for participation beyond conventional models of audience engagement. Particular attention is given to the ways in which the experiences and perspectives of older volunteers can enter the institution's public narratives, challenge assumptions about aging and cultural participation, and contribute to a more multivocal understanding of the gallery and its role in the community. The presentation also reflects on the specific context of Subotica, a culturally and linguistically diverse city in northern Serbia, where questions of memory, belonging, and generational experience intersect. Through examples from the Club's activities, it examines both the potential and the limitations of participatory practice: who gets to speak, whose knowledge is recognized, and how institutions can move from inclusion as a principle toward meaningful participation and shared ownership of cultural life. By reflecting on the practical experience of the 60+ Club, the presentation argues for understanding museums and galleries not only as places that present cultural narratives, but as spaces where different generations can negotiate, exchange, and co-create them.

Nela Tonković is an art historian and curator at the Contemporary Art Gallery Subotica, Serbia, where she works on exhibitions, interpretation, and the presentation of cultural heritage. She holds an MA in Cultural Policy and Management from the University of Arts in Belgrade. Her professional interests include heritology, museum studies, contemporary art and its mediation, and innovative approaches to the interpretation of architectural and urban heritage.

DANIJELA GRBAVAC
Franciscan Museum Humac, Ljubuški
BIH

From an Adapted Workshop Towards Inclusive Museum Practice: A Case Study

Inclusion in museums should extend beyond creating occasional programs specifically designed for children with disabilities. It also requires questioning how museums can become spaces in which children with different abilities can participate, learn, and develop a lasting sense of belonging. This case study presents the experience of the Franciscan Museum Humac and its first educational workshop specifically developed for children with different developmental needs. The Little Archaeologists workshop brought together children with Down syndrome, autism, and other developmental differences. Through a simulated archaeological excavation, children explored artifacts and archaeological concepts, followed by creative and interactive activities such as coloring and puzzle-solving. The program was designed to provide a flexible and welcoming environment in which participation could take different forms, according to each child's abilities and interests. The workshop was very positively received by the children and their families. More importantly, it prompted the museum to reconsider inclusion not as a separate program, but as an ongoing dimension of its educational and social role. While specially adapted programs can provide an important entry point, a key question remains: how can museums encourage children with disabilities to participate in their regular programs alongside other children, rather than limiting inclusion to designated activities? The Little Archaeologists workshop therefore represents not an endpoint, but a starting point for developing more inclusive museum practice at Humac. The museum hopes to continue the program annually while gradually creating opportunities for broader participation, accessibility, and a stronger sense of belonging for all children.

Danijela Grbavac was born in Ljubuški, BiH. She graduated from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb, where she obtained a master's degree in Art History and Philosophy. She is currently working as a curator at the Franciscan Museum Humac. In addition to her curatorial work, she also writes exhibition forewords and is a published author.

LEJLA AGIĆ
Zenica City Museum
BIH

Connecting Generations through Living Heritage: The Vranduk Kilim in Museum Education

How can museum education connect children with craft knowledge held by older generations? This presentation examines an educational approach developed at the Zenica City Museum that brings together Vranduk fortress, local kilim weaving traditions, and the author's illustrated fairy tale, The Magic of the Vranduk Thread. The approach distinguishes the kilim as a material object from the knowledge, skills, and practices associated with its production. It foregrounds women's domestic craft knowledge and explores how museum interpretation can make this contribution visible within a historic site commonly associated with rulers and military history. Drawing on workshop practice and educational materials, the presentation discusses storytelling, encounters with museum objects, weaving on simple cardboard looms, and creative work with textile motifs. The fairy tale serves as a contemporary interpretive resource, while practical activities introduce children to the processes behind the finished textile. The central argument is that living heritage can offer a starting point for dialogue across generations and for participation that does not require prior historical knowledge. Local identity is approached through everyday work, creativity, and care, opening possibilities for connection with experiences beyond the locality. This case study contributes to the conference theme by examining the museum's role in connecting generations and widening access to heritage. It also considers the limits of the approach: educational participation alone does not demonstrate reconciliation, and further evaluation is needed to assess its effects on children's understanding and relationships with heritage.

Lejla Agić is a psychologist, museum educator, and Head of the Education Department at JU Muzej grada Zenice, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Her work focuses on interpreting cultural heritage for children through storytelling, creative workshops, and practical learning. She is the author of The Magic of the Vranduk Thread, an illustrated fairy tale used in museum education. You can find many examples of Lejla's workshops and day-to-day museum education work on the museum's official Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1EadEVSpSj/

LANA BEDE
Karlovac City Museums
CRO

Archive of City Imprints: Participatory Documentation and the Democratization of Urban Heritage

Archive of City Imprints is an ongoing museum project initiated in 2023 by the Karlovac Municipal Museum, exploring how participatory documentation can contribute to the democratization of urban heritage. The project developed from an initial artistic impulse: Saša Martinović Kunović's eponymous 2015 exhibition. Through field workshops held at different locations across Karlovac, participants create clay imprints from the textures of specific sites. Preserved in clay plaques, each imprint becomes a durable material record of a specific urban surface at a particular moment in time. Together, they document a city in transformation, including elements that are disappearing or carry contested and dissonant meanings. Workshops have explored diverse urban settings, from Dubovac Castle and a heritage park to an old wooden bridge on the Korana River and street facades. This paper presents the project as a case study in participatory heritage-making. It has engaged with different layers of urban memory, including the remains of an anti-fascist monument devastated at the beginning of the Homeland War. Its most recent workshop focused on the transformation of Karlovac's main square, which has generated contrasting responses within the local community. The paper argues that democratizing heritage involves creating opportunities for different voices within a community to contribute to what is documented, remembered, and preserved. By engaging citizens as active contributors, museums can accommodate multiple perspectives on shared urban spaces without requiring a single, unified interpretation of the past. The project proposes an accessible, transferable model for engaging communities with changing and contested urban heritage.

Lana Bede is Senior Curator of Education at the Karlovac City Museums, Croatia, where she has worked since 2009. She graduated in Art History and English Language and Literature from the University of Zagreb. Her professional work focuses on museum education, accessibility, inclusive and participatory museum practice, urban architectural history, and the development of educational programs and publications for diverse audiences. She was curator and author of the exhibition concept for the award-winning inclusive exhibition Seeing Through Touch (Gledam dodirom), recipient of the SEGD Global Design Merit Award 2020. She is a member of ICOM, ICOM CECA, and the Croatian Museum Association.

ALENKA ČERNELIČ KROŠELJ
Posavje Museum Brežice
SLO

Can Black and White Harmony Unite Divided Sectors?

The Posavje Museum Brežice is a complex regional Slovenian museum committed to safeguarding the tangible and intangible heritage of Slovenia's Posavje Region. While public service, defined in the national legislation and founding acts, remains central to our mission, being an active part of society and local communities is increasingly becoming a key priority. This is nothing new, and we often emphasize that we are an important part of our cultural landscape, sustainability directives, and an irreplaceable institution, but is the standard and traditional way of fulfilling our entrusted public service mission enough? We all know that museums have evolved and ventured into many different fields, some more successfully than others. The paper will present some examples from a regional museum that is similar to many other regional museums across SEE established mostly after the Second World War as new managers of historical buildings, particularly castles, and keepers of diverse regional heritage. Over time, these museums have transformed their operations through a wide range of projects and collaborations. The project period can be divided into two parts:

1. Cooperation with civil society and established heritage communities.
2. Cooperation with other sectors, including the economy, tourism, small businesses, local governments, interest groups, and NGOs—mostly within the framework of EU-funded programs of varying scope.

Drawing on project experience with different partners through Local Action Groups (LAGs), the paper will examine how working with different sectors influences and benefits museum work, in terms of more respect, a better understanding of knowledge and skills, mutual interests, and goals. Some thoughts will be dedicated to selected keywords from the museum definition, such as "in the service of society," "inclusive," "to interpret," "to communicate," "education," and "enjoyment," among others. The paper will present efforts and results recognized by different sectors, stakeholders, partners, and users/communities. Both successful and unsuccessful examples will be shared.

Alenka Černelič Krošelj studied at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana. After graduating in history of art, ethnology, and cultural anthropology, she worked in different institutions and was involved in several projects financed with EU funds. Since 2014, she has been the managing director of Posavje Museum Brežice (Slovenia). She is involved in different strategic and development groups and boards, organizations, and societies focused on developing society through and with cultural heritage. She is a lecturer at the Faculty of Tourism and President of the Slovenian Museum Association. She was Chair of RA ICOM SEE from 2019 to 2025 and continues to serve on the ICOM SEE Board as Treasurer.

Heritage, Identity and the Changing City

This session considers how heritage, urban transformation and cultural identity are produced through places, objects and collective memory. It addresses lost, changing and symbolically charged spaces, from city centres and religious sites to museum institutions and public cultural environments. The papers show how heritage work can connect material traces, lived experience and public space without reducing complex histories to a single narrative.

AIDA BIČAKČIĆ
Sarajevo City Museums, Museum of Contemporary Art Sarajevo
BIH

Museum of Contemporary Art in Sarajevo – Where Do We Stand?

The efforts to establish the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sarajevo, embodied in the Ars Aevi project (Sarajevo, 2000), can be traced back to 1987 and 1989 and the art exhibitions titled Yugoslav Documenta. The actual realization of this long-held dream was triggered by the harsh reality of the siege of Sarajevo, which began in 1992. Based on the concept of solidarity, in early 1992 (with the first publications appearing in 1993), a call was launched to curators and cultural institutions to actively engage and show their support for the besieged and heavily bombed Sarajevo. This call resulted in the creation of the Ars Aevi Collection, which continued to develop in Sarajevo from 2000, mostly under the patronage of the Italian Government and UNESCO. This project was seen by many as an opportunity for the renewal of post-conflict society. A milestone in the development of the project was the transition of the Museum from a non-governmental organization to a public institution fully funded by the City of Sarajevo. The presentation focuses on models for the future Museum of Contemporary Art Ars Aevi based on authentic ideas and community participation, understanding the Museum as a public space open to the community and especially to grassroots initiatives. Such an approach is expected to result in the activation of the Ars Aevi Collection – currently detached from the contemporary societal context – and therefore to boost the Bosnian-Herzegovinian art scene. Such models aim to oppose the politicization of this institution, as well as its instrumentalization by external donors, both of which are very much present in shaping the future program activities. The integration of the Museum into the fabric of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian art scene is crucial for its relevance in terms of inclusion, educational opportunities for society, activation of the values of the collection and sustainable development. The presentation addresses several focus themes of the conference: Museums and post-conflict societies: memory, reconciliation and critical engagement with the past; Museums as spaces of dialogue: community participation, inclusion of marginalized groups and multivocal narratives; Museums and public space: architecture, urban context and symbolic presence in divided cities; ICOM standards, ethical codes and museum practice in divided societies.

Aida Bičakčić was born in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. She completed her studies in Art History in 2008 at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo, and is currently a PhD student in Art History, Cultural Heritage, and Visual Culture at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb (her dissertation topic is "Protection of Architectural Heritage in the People's Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina between 1945 and 1960"). From 2009 to 2023, she held the position of advisor for movable heritage and later an art history advisor at the Commission to Preserve National Monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina. During her work, she conducted numerous research studies that led to the designation of cultural assets as national monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina – including historical buildings, memorial architecture, and movable heritage from medieval manuscripts to modern painting. Since April 2023, she has continued her career as the head of the Ars Aevi collection at the Museum of Contemporary Art under the umbrella of the City Museums of Sarajevo, and later as a curator of the City Museum of Sarajevo.

EDINA SELESKOVIĆ
KulturaMedia / Planet Sarajevo
USA / BIH

Reimagining Memory: New Technologies and the Museum as a Living Archive

Museums preserve memory. But can they also change the way a city remembers itself? Planet Sarajevo was created in a post-conflict city where war has understandably become a defining lens through which its recent history is interpreted. We asked how a museum could broaden that narrative by recovering another layer of collective memory: Sarajevo's extraordinary cultural and creative renaissance between 1945 and 1992, and reconnecting it with the city of today. That memory did not exist in one collection. It was fragmented across archives, media institutions, museums, photographs, recordings and personal histories. More than one hundred artists, musicians, journalists, architects and citizens helped us bring these fragments together. But preserving memory was not enough. We wanted to activate it—to transform information into experience and memory into emotion. Across 300 square meters, archival material and oral histories are reinterpreted through visual art, AI, virtual reality, holograms, interactive projection, a video infinity room and digital storytelling. Technology is not the story; it allows the story to be experienced in new ways. Planet Sarajevo now extends beyond its physical walls through digital platforms, social media storytelling and cultural activity in public space. Using Planet Sarajevo as a case study, this presentation explores how museums can move beyond being static repositories of the past and become living cultural spaces. Because when memory is not only preserved but given back to people through new forms and experiences, it can generate something new: connection, creativity, imagination and a renewed relationship with place.

Edina Selesković is a Bosnian-American multidisciplinary artist, cultural strategist and co-creator of Planet Sarajevo. A graduate of the Corcoran School of Art in Washington, DC, her practice explores the intersections of art, technology, public space, memory and collective participation. Her work has been exhibited internationally, and she has received fellowships in the United States and Europe, including the Sculpture Space and the Golden Foundation Fellowship. Her long-running participatory project Think Freedom has connected young people and communities across cities in Europe and the United States. She is a visiting lecturer at IEDC Bled School of Management and a recipient of the Plaque of the City of Sarajevo for her contribution to art and culture. Through Planet Sarajevo, she explores how visual art, immersive technologies, and digital storytelling can activate collective memory and create new relationships between museums, cities and their communities.

SNEŽANA MIJIĆ
TELOK, Novi Sad
SRB

The Armenian Church in Novi Sad

In 1963, the Mekhitarist Armenian Church in Novi Sad was demolished. Ten years before its demolition, the church had been declared a protected cultural property, as a monument to the Armenian community that once lived in the city. This protection was subsequently revoked, and the church was demolished. Within the grant program Evropsko iz Srbije, the organization TELOK implemented the project European Heritage, Local Memories – Digital Reconstruction of the Armenian Church in Novi Sad, dedicated to documenting, researching and digitally reconstructing this lost cultural heritage. As part of the project, we created a digital model of the former church, reconstructing both its exterior and interior. Objects that once belonged to the church and are today preserved within a museum collection were documented and digitally returned to their original positions within the reconstructed interior. In this way, the digital environment brought together the lost architectural space and surviving material heritage that had become physically separated after the demolition. The project also included the production of a documentary film in which experts discuss the historical and cultural significance of the church, alongside testimonies of contemporary witnesses who still remember the building before its demolition. The project explores digital reconstruction as a method for documenting, interpreting and presenting lost cultural heritage, while connecting archival and museum material, architectural space and living memory within a single digital environment.

Snežana Mijić is a conservator, artist and researcher from Serbia whose work focuses on lost cultural heritage, digital reconstruction and new approaches to the interpretation and presentation of cultural heritage. She holds a master's degree in Conservation and Restoration, worked as a museum conservator for five years, and has been a member of ICOM Serbia for the past three years. For the past five years, her professional and research practice has increasingly focused on digital reconstruction and digital heritage. Her work in this field combines conservation knowledge with research into lost architectural spaces and their contemporary forms of presentation, primarily through authorial and collaborative cultural heritage projects. She is currently pursuing doctoral studies in Interior Design at the Academy of Arts in Novi Sad, where her research addresses the reconstruction, interpretation and presentation of lost or transformed spaces. She is also pursuing doctoral studies in Digital Arts at the University of Arts in Belgrade, further developing her research into the relationship between cultural heritage, digital media and spatial experience.

ADNAN DŽAFERAGIĆ
National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo
BIH

Visual Sarajevo: Street Art as an Impermanent Archive of Identity in an Urban Space

Since 2023, I have been systematically documenting street art mostly in Sarajevo, collecting over 1,000 photographs of murals, graffiti and other forms of visual expression in public space. A significant portion of this material no longer exists today. They have been painted over, changed/altered, destroyed or removed. This paper starts from the premise that street art in Sarajevo (and elsewhere) functions as an informal, impermanent archive of the collective and individual identity of a city marked by the legacy of coexistence, of war and by divisions. Methodologically, the project draws on experience gained through my master's thesis on 2D and 3D digitization in contemporary ethnography, in which street art emerged as the 2D case study. Unlike museum collections, this form of expression is neither protected, curated, nor systematically preserved, and its value and meaning shift over time, and works disappear before their significance is even recognized. The paper will present selected examples from my personal photographic archive as case studies, focusing on how street art articulates themes of memory, identity and dialogue in the public space of a city that is simultaneously a symbol of division and coexistence. Emphasis will be placed on:

- the role of street art festivals in the legitimization and visibility of this art form;
- challenges of preservation;
- the question of who decides what is remembered and what is erased from the city's visual landscape.

The paper concludes with a reflection on what it would mean to treat street art as heritage worth preserving, and what role museums could play in this.

Adnan Džaferagić is an ethnologist and sociologist from Sarajevo, currently working as a Curatorial Trainee in the Ethnology Department of the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina. His work focuses on rural material culture, traditional architecture and village heritage. He also represents the department on the museum's PR team and serves as a Junior Editor for the ethnology volume of the Herald of the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina. He earned his bachelor's degree in 2023 and his master's degree in 2025, both in Ethnology and Sociology at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo. His involvement with the National Museum began during his studies, when he joined as a student volunteer. His research connects traditional ethnological approaches with contemporary methodologies, particularly visual anthropology and digitisation. His bachelor's thesis examined the contribution of visual anthropology to ethnography, while his master's thesis focused on digitisation in contemporary ethnography.

VALENTINA ILIJEVSKA
National Institution Museum Kumanovo
MKD

Museums as Shared Urban Spaces: Architecture, Memory and Symbolic Presence in a Multicultural City

Museums are not only institutions for the preservation and interpretation of cultural heritage; they are also active participants in the creation of urban identity and public space. In cities shaped by cultural, social and historical diversity, museum architecture and its symbolic presence can play an important role in creating spaces for dialogue, encounter and shared memory. This paper examines the role of museums in the urban context of South-East Europe, with particular attention to Kumanovo, Macedonia, a city marked by cultural and social diversity and by complex layers of historical memory. Through its collections, exhibitions, and presence in the urban environment, the NI Museum of Kumanovo can be understood as a space where different narratives, communities, and interpretations of the past meet. The paper considers how museum architecture, location, and relationship with public space shape the ways cultural heritage is perceived and experienced by different communities. It also highlights the potential of museums to transform historical and cultural differences from sources of separation into opportunities for dialogue and mutual understanding. Rather than presenting the museum as a neutral repository of objects, this contribution considers it as a social and symbolic space, capable of connecting people with different cultural backgrounds through shared heritage and inclusive narratives. The paper also reflects on the challenges museums face when presenting complex or contested histories and proposes approaches through which museum practice can contribute to more open, inclusive and participatory urban spaces. Ultimately, the museum is understood not simply as a place within the city, but as a meeting point where memory, identity, heritage and contemporary urban life intersect.

Valentina Ilijevska is a conservator and restorer at NI Museum Kumanovo. She graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts in Skopje and earned a master's degree in Conservation and Restoration of Wall Paintings. She is currently pursuing doctoral studies in Cultural Studies at the Institute of Macedonian Literature in Skopje, focusing on conservation and restoration methodologies for religious art in the Kumanovo–Osogovo region. Her professional experience includes the conservation and restoration of wall paintings, icons, mosaics, sculpture, and architectural decoration, as well as archaeological fieldwork and technical documentation. She has worked on numerous heritage conservation projects and participated in scientific conferences and professional training. She is a member of ICOMOS Macedonia and serves on its Executive Board for the 2024–2028 term.

LJUBIŠA VELJKOVIĆ
Museum of East Bosnia, Tuzla
BIH

Beyond the Museum Walls: The Museum of East Bosnia as a Civic Space for Dialogue, Memory and Inclusion

The Museum of East Bosnia in Tuzla has increasingly understood its role not only as a guardian of collections, but as a public institution capable of connecting communities, generations and different experiences of the past. This paper reflects on several initiatives developed during this period and asks how a regional museum can contribute to dialogue in a society marked by political, social and historical divisions. Particular attention will be given to the program 'School in the Museum – Museum in the School', through which exhibitions and museum interpretation have reached schools and communities beyond Tuzla, including Banovići, Sapna and Teočak. We will also examine the Museum's work with difficult twentieth-century histories, including exhibitions addressing fascism, the Second World War and the 1990s war, alongside the use of public space for historical exhibitions. Inclusion represents another dimension of this practice. The exhibition 'Feel the Museum', developed with persons with visual impairments, challenged conventional assumptions about how museum collections can be experienced. More recently, projects such as 'Gomilari' have questioned who defines what is worthy of preservation and how contemporary life can enter museum practice. These examples suggest that museums do not necessarily unite divided societies by producing a single narrative. Rather, they can create spaces — physical, educational and symbolic — in which different memories and experiences can encounter one another. The Museum of East Bosnia's experience demonstrates how even a regional museum with limited resources can expand its civic role by taking heritage beyond its walls and making participation itself a form of dialogue.

Ljubiša Veljković has served as Director of the Museum of East Bosnia in Tuzla since May 2020. The museum's work focuses on the preservation, interpretation, and public presentation of the cultural and historical heritage of northeastern Bosnia. During his directorship, the museum has developed programs aimed at expanding access to museum collections, strengthening cooperation with schools and local communities, addressing complex and sensitive historical subjects, and improving inclusion and accessibility. As a cultural manager, his professional interests include the social role of museums, museum education, heritage interpretation, and the responsibilities of museums working in post-conflict and socially diverse environments.

Connecting Collections, Audiences and Institutions

This block focuses on methods through which museums extend their reach: interpretation of intangible heritage, playful and digital engagement, international cooperation and institutional networks. Together, the papers demonstrate how collections and professional exchange can become points of encounter, imagination and connection across geographical, generational and institutional boundaries.

BRANKO ŠUŠTAR
Historical Association of Slovenia, Ljubljana
SLO

Between Utopia and Possibilities: How Can Museums of Education Contribute to Connecting a Divided World

In addition to presenting their own local or national narratives regarding the history of education, individual pedagogical and school museums also facilitate the transfer of knowledge as a form of international cooperation. World exhibitions held in the late 19th century contributed to the establishment of some school museums. Initially, these museums served as venues for introducing modern teaching aids and methods into the schools of the time; later, within the context of the international development of education, they also emphasized the importance of the teaching profession and regional educational traditions. Even before the First World War, some museums were establishing cross-border connections through their publications. How can contemporary school museums and collections continue this tradition of connecting a divided world? How do museums succeed in critically engaging with the past? What are the challenges in the ICOM SEE countries? Schools impart knowledge that transcends national borders; the same applies to school and pedagogical museums, which can evolve into inclusive educational spaces. Museums and educational collections vary widely—both in terms of numbers (there were nearly 700 worldwide in 2004) and their local or regional contexts—with dedicated regional or national museums existing in only a few countries. This paper examines how museum narratives are shaped by the social environment and by valuable mutual cooperation. Such cooperation has taken place since 1984 through biennial international symposia for school museums and collections - initiatives that began with efforts to foster international collaboration across the then-existing Iron Curtain. Academic gatherings and exhibition activities - ranging from the exchange of exhibitions to joint comparative exhibition projects - also contribute to an understanding of historical diversity and cooperation. Just as knowledge knows no boundaries, museums of education operate internationally, including through collaboration with the academic community and living school practice.

Branko Šuštar, PhD, is a historian and museum counselor who heads the Section for the History of Education at the Historical Association of Slovenia in Ljubljana. He earned his PhD in 2005 and has professional experience in schools, historical archives, and museums. From 1988 to 2024, he worked at the Slovenian School Museum in Ljubljana, serving as its director from 1998 to 2006. He is actively involved in professional museum and historical associations. He served on the Board of ICOM Slovenia from 2011 to 2014, is a member of ICOFOM, and previously served as President of the Historical Association of Slovenia. He participates in international conferences on museology, the history of education, and educational museums, including those organized by ICOPM, ICOFOM, ISCHE, and ECER.

JANJA KOVAČ
Međimurje County Museum
CRO

Intangible Heritage "Trapped" Inside the Museum Walls – Challenges of Documentation and Presentation

Intangible cultural heritage has emerged as a trending topic in the museum world since 2003, when UNESCO adopted the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Recognizing the potential of intangible heritage to act as an intermediary between museum objects and the bearers of skills and knowledge in the field, the Museum of Međimurje Čakovec (MMČ) developed and implemented a project aimed at reconstructing and revitalizing the fortification of Čakovec Old Town and transforming it into a museum dedicated to intangible heritage. The project was completed in July 2021, when a new museum unit, the Treasury of Međimurje, was opened. The Treasury of Međimurje brings together, in one place, all elements of intangible cultural heritage inscribed on the national Register of Cultural Goods and associated with Međimurje County. The exhibition is based on physical museum objects, as well as audiovisual materials collected through field research. Drawing on the experience of working at the Treasury of Međimurje—from the development of the exhibition concept to five years of operation following its opening—the presentation will address three issues that have emerged as particularly relevant: (1) the impact of the Treasury of Međimurje on the local community (Međimurje County) and on the promotion and visibility of intangible cultural heritage; (2) the effectiveness of museum exhibitions as a means of presenting intangible cultural heritage; and (3) future perspectives on the documentation and presentation of intangible cultural heritage in museums.

Janja Kovač holds a master's degree in Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology and South Slavic Languages and Literatures from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. She is Head of the Ethnology Department at the Museum of Međimurje Čakovec, where she holds the professional title of Museum Advisor. Her research and professional interests focus on intangible cultural heritage, textile traditions, and foodways.

VASILKA DIMITROVSKA
KREAKTIVA – The Storytelling & Experience Design Studio
MKD

From Objects to Experiences: Gamified Storytelling as a Model for Museum Engagement

Museums increasingly seek ways to move beyond the presentation of collections toward experiences in which visitors actively participate in creating meaning. This contribution presents an original practice-based methodology developed by the author for designing gamified museum experiences that combine heritage interpretation, storytelling, archaeology and participatory game design. The methodology has been tested through a growing portfolio of original museum experiences created in collaboration with the National Archaeological Museum in Skopje, an institution actively opening its collections and spaces to participatory and experimental approaches to heritage interpretation. These include The Quest for the Lost Symbol, Homer's World, The Bronze Woman, and Revived Stories from Ancient Rome. Although different in theme and historical context, the experiences share a common principle: museum objects are not treated simply as sources of information, but as starting points for observation, interpretation, choice, interaction and storytelling. Through maps, missions, role-play, replicas, tactile elements, strategic games and direct engagement with museum objects, visitors become active participants rather than passive recipients of information. This approach is adaptable to different collections and institutional contexts, allowing museums to develop locally rooted experiences based on their own objects, stories and audiences. The presentation will examine how gamification and storytelling can support deeper visitor engagement while maintaining archaeological and interpretive integrity. The collaboration demonstrates how museums and heritage interpretation professionals can work together to develop participatory, story-driven experiences that open archaeological collections to new forms of engagement, dialogue and meaning-making.

Vasilka Dimitrovska, MSci in Archaeology, is a heritage interpretation specialist, Certified Interpretive Trainer and founder and Creative Director of KREAKTIVA – The Storytelling & Experience Design Studio. With more than 20 years of experience in archaeology, cultural heritage and interpretation, her work focuses on transforming research and museum collections into participatory experiences that connect people with heritage through storytelling, interpretation and game-based engagement. She develops original gamified museum experiences, interpretive concepts and participatory formats for museums and heritage sites, combining archaeological knowledge with storytelling and experience design. Her current work explores adaptable methodologies through which museum objects become starting points for observation, interaction, dialogue and personal meaning-making. She is also a trainer of heritage professionals and Country Coordinator for Interpret Europe in Macedonia.

LEILA TOPIĆ
Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb
CRO

The Museums of Contemporary Art in Zagreb and Belgrade Present: How to Be a Vegetarian in Cannibalistic Capitalism

Taking the museum as a space of dialogue, participation and inclusion, this presentation asks what role contemporary art museums can play in reconnecting cultural spaces divided by war, political transformation and three decades of separate institutional histories. It examines this question through How to Be a Vegetarian in Cannibalistic Capitalism, the first comprehensive retrospective of Igor Grubić, developed through a new partnership between the Museum of Contemporary Art Zagreb (MSU) and the Museum of Contemporary Art Belgrade (MSUB). Opening in Zagreb in 2027 and continuing in Belgrade in 2028, the project approaches institutional partnership as part of its curatorial methodology. Conceived by Leila Topić (MSU Zagreb) and developed in partnership with Una Popović (MSUB), it establishes a shared framework for research, interpretation and public dialogue around an artist who has worked extensively in both cities and whose practice is recognized throughout the region. Grubić's work addresses experiences shared across the post-Yugoslav space: political violence, social transformation, labor, collective memory, marginalization and solidarity. East Side Story, filmed in Zagreb and Belgrade, is particularly revealing. The two-channel video installation confronts violence surrounding Pride marches in both cities, exposing how different political and national contexts can produce strikingly similar mechanisms of exclusion and violence against marginalized communities. Works such as 366 Liberation Rituals, Angels with Dirty Faces and Small Acts of Power further demonstrate the emancipatory potential of art to confront different political positions and experiences. Art can create a space in which conflicting perspectives become visible and discussable, while personal narratives complicate established interpretations of the past. The presentation proposes the MSU–MSUB partnership as a case study for a transnational curatorial methodology in post-conflict museum practice. Its concrete contribution is to examine how two museums can jointly research, interpret and present an artistic practice rooted in a shared cultural space while acknowledging different institutional, political and historical perspectives. The project tests how sustained museum collaboration and contemporary art can create concrete conditions for confronting difficult histories, negotiating disagreement and rebuilding professional and public connections across post-conflict societies.

Leila Topić is an art historian, curator and Museum Advisor at the Museum of Contemporary Art Zagreb, where she heads the Photography Collection. Her curatorial practice focuses on projects that cross disciplinary and institutional boundaries, connecting contemporary art with film, photography, social research and critical public discourse. She has initiated and curated long-term programs including Cinematographies of Resistance and Possibilities, alongside numerous exhibitions and experimental curatorial projects. Her work is particularly interested in developing new forms of collaboration between museums, artists, independent cultural organizations and different publics. Since 2025, she has also been Editor-in-Chief of the cultural magazine 15 dana.

DRAŽEN KOTROŠAN
National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina
BIH

The Role of ICOM Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Development of Local and Regional Cooperation in the 2003–2006 Period

Following the period of war destruction from 1992 to 1995, Bosnia and Herzegovina was accepted as a full partner in ICOM for the first time at the ICOM General Assembly in Stavanger, Norway. Following the first elections held in 2003 and the registration of the national committee in 2006, ICOM Bosnia and Herzegovina carried out a range of activities aimed at strengthening cooperation among museums, institutions and organizations at the local and regional levels. At the local level, ICOM BiH worked to establish and strengthen connections among museum professionals, institutions and organizations. This resulted in improved communication and the exchange of experiences through exhibitions and other activities, as well as the organization of national and international conferences. At the regional level, particular importance should be given to the establishment of the ICOM SEE Committee, the translation of the ICOM Code of Ethics, and meetings of museum professionals held during the period from 2007 to 2009. From today's perspective, it can be said that this period represented a turning point in relations among museum professionals, institutions and organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the wider region, subsequently leading to new activities and programs. Looking to the future of cooperation at the local and regional levels, it is possible to envisage a number of ideas and initiatives in whose implementation ICOM BiH will undoubtedly continue to play a significant role.

Dr. Dražen Kotrošan was born on 2 August 1970 in Sarajevo, where he completed his primary and secondary education. He graduated in Biology from the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics at the University of Sarajevo, where he subsequently obtained his master's and doctoral degrees. Since 1998, he has been employed at the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a biologist specializing in vertebrates—an ornithologist. In addition to his activities in the field of ornithology, he has been actively involved in the work of the Museum and museum organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the wider region. He obtained the professional title of Museum Advisor in 2016. From 2003 to 2006, he served as Secretary of the National Committee of ICOM in Bosnia and Herzegovina (ICOM BiH), and from 2007 to 2010 he served as President of ICOM BiH. He was a member of the Board of the ICOM NAT-HIST Committee from 2007 to 2010. As a representative of ICOM BiH, he participated in the 20th and 21st ICOM General Conferences, held in Seoul in 2004 and Vienna in 2007, respectively, as well as in the 113th and 114th ICOM General Assemblies, held in Paris in 2008 and 2009. He also served as the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the European Museum Forum. Since 2022, he has served as President of the Commission for Museum Professional Titles of the Parent Museums of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

ICOM international council of museums Southeast Europe