

PRESERVATION AS AN ORIGIN

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Creative heritage, cultural heritage, habitats of the future, urbanity and identity, conversion of industrial sites, conversions of harbours, palimpsest, reuse and recycle

Abstracts:

Creative Heritage ist ein Manifest im Europäischen Jahr des Kulturerbes 2018 – es ruft dazu auf, Kulturerbe als Dinge und Räume neu mit Ideen und Menschen in Verbindung zu bringen. Creative Heritage fordert, Kulturerbe zu schützen, kreativ zu nutzen und als Grundlage und Anregung zu sehen, Neues zu schaffen. Creative Heritage zeigt, wie Kulturerbe Impulse geben kann, um die Gesellschaft von heute zu integrieren und Städte von morgen zu gestalten.

Creative Heritage is a manifesto during the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 – it represents a call to forge connections once again between cultural heritage as things and spaces on the one hand and ideas and people on the other. Creative Heritage demands that cultural heritage be protected, used creatively and viewed as the basis and impulse to create something new. Creative Heritage shows how cultural heritage can provide an impetus to integrate the society of today and design the cities of tomorrow.

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If seen as an origin, preservation addresses the future and might be a trigger for qualities of the environment and of cultural mediation. As part of the urban transformation of the former Inner Harbour of Duisburg in Germany, the Israeli artist Dani Karavan offers options to think the world into being otherwise. "The garden of memories" is embedded in and generated from the histories of the place. It is characterised by reduced, reused, and reinterpreted materials of the previous grain harbour. White concrete stripes and low wall outlines of anterior buildings are traced and are crossed by connecting paths paved with materials of former constructions. Two isolated staircase towers with their iron reinforcement and pine trees on their tops rested there from demolished buildings. All fragments are whitewashed as are the new structures: a light steel framework evoking a hall construction and a concrete frame skeleton with new planted locust trees inside. A wavy lawn stripe and three raised beds with different kinds of corn complete the project, and besides a rubble-rock garden with ruderal vegetation an old weighing machine can be found. This landscape of fragments indicates some strong former identities of the site. The promoted process-oriented experience stimulates a fluid relationship to the past and evokes multiple memories, being generated in an in-between. One could become aware of the condition that there are memories both incorporated in and projected upon the environment. It may also remind us that nothing is neutral, but the outcome of conscious or unconscious values, and that the act of selection creates new memories and imaginations, including also heavy layers of the site's history. It is a multidimensional offer additionally enriched by the powerful "authenticity" of the remains of the medieval city wall and the old harbour artefacts. Interrelations ensure that the new place has a memory built into it and is simultaneously equipped with openness. Memories of the past and palimpsest identities can be grasped in different ways and activated for the future. Artefacts, actions, and reflections of today will become tomorrow's heritage.



Dani Karavan Garden of Memories Duisburg Inner Harbour 1999.
Photo: Margitta Buchert