PHOTOGRAPHIC DIGITAL HERITAGE

Institutions, Communities and The Political

QR code for registration information

Online conference organised by the
**DigiCONFLICT Research Consortium
in partnership with the National Trust**

19-20 October 2021

digiCONFLICT

National Trust

DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY LEICESTER

UKRI Arts and Humanities Research Council

Cultural Heritage AND GLOBAL CHANGE

PHOTOGRAPHIC DIGITAL HERITAGE

Institutions, Communities and The Political

Online conference organised by the DigiCONFLICT Research Consortium in partnership with the National Trust, 19–20 October 2021

PROGRAMME
All time slots UTC +1

19 OCTOBER 2021

09.15–09.45   INTRODUCTION

Gil Pasternak (De Montfort University & DigiCONFLICT) and **Catherine Troiano** (The National Trust) | *Welcoming Remarks*

Gil Pasternak (De Montfort University & DigiCONFLICT) | *Historical Photographs and Digital Heritage: A Critical Introduction*

09.45–11.00   KEYNOTE LECTURE

Jane Lydon (University of Western Australia) | *Indigenous Uses of Photographic Digital Heritage in Postcolonising Australia*

11.00–13.00   BREAK

13.00–15.30   PANEL I   Institutions

Christo Kefalas (The National Trust) | *Ethical Questions of Institutional Photography in Cataloguing, Digitisation and Public Reach*

Françoise Poos (Esch2022) | *Fortress Walls and Legionnaires: Digital Cultural Heritage at the M3E, Luxembourg*

Donna West Brett (University of Sydney) | *Operation Overlord: Civilian Photography and Artistic Mediation*

Debbie Cooper and **Paul Herrmann** (The Photographic Collections Network – PCN) | *Towards a Distributed National Photography Collection*

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09.00–11.00   PANEL II   Communities

Geoff Broadway (The Living Memory Project) | *The Living Memory Project: Personal Photography Collections and Life Stories*

Anand Chhabra (The Apna Heritage Archive) | *Punjabi Migration to the Black Country: A Photographic Journey through History, Cultures and Digital Technology*

Catherine Troiano (The National Trust) | *Dilemmas of Digitisation: Considering Community as Cataloguing Strategy*

11.00–13.00   BREAK

13.00–15.30   PANEL III   The Political

Kylie Thomas (Netherlands Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies – NIOD) | *Digital Visual Activism: Photography and the Re-Opening of the Unresolved Truth and Reconciliation Commission Cases in Post-Apartheid South Africa*

Denis Skopin (St Petersburg State University) | *Sheltering the Ghosts? Digitised Photographs of Political Victims and World War II Veterans on Russian Online Databases*

Christina Riggs (Durham University) | *Reborn-Digital Tutankhamun: Howard Carter and an Egyptian Archaeologist, Name Unknown*

Michelle Hamers (De Montfort University) | *The UNRWA Film and Photo Archive*

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Photographic Digital Heritage: Institutions, Communities and The Political intends to explore how uses of digital technology, and digitisation in particular, have transformed the ways in which historical photographs of value to perceived inherited cultural legacies are collected, deployed and identified as such. It will specifically investigate what has led formal heritage and memory institutions to drive this process, how heritage communities might have navigated their aspirations around it, and how political interest groups have taken advantage of it to promote their causes.

Photography and heritage became well-entangled long before the rise of digital technology. In fact, their connection has been highly influential, if not essential, to the development of heritage practices that one may by now take for granted. While some scholars have already considered the impact exerted by digitisation practices on approaches to photographic image-objects, much of this work tends to evaluate how the creation of digital photographic surrogates has undermined conventional archival documentation and preservation practices. In this regard, research around this area has largely taken issue with questions concerning provenance, cataloguing, dematerialisation, and media-morphosis, as a means to increase awareness of the potential loss of historical data that might result from the conversion of analogue photo collections into digital databases.

Bringing together photography and heritage scholars, policymakers, and community activists, *Photographic Digital Heritage: Institutions, Communities and The Political* is designed to expand the discussion on the entanglement of photography and digital heritage into the political environment—where human diversity often gives rise to antagonistic sentiments. It is therefore geared towards unravelling how "the political" has conditioned digitisation practices, while equally looking into the ways in which photographic digital heritage has facilitated innovative hegemonic, counter-hegemonic, and anti-hegemonic aspirations in national and inter-national social settings.

Speakers will consider interrelated topics, including the influence that photographic digitisation practices have exerted on definitions of heritage assets; the effect of photographic digitisation on institutional practices and policies; uses of photographic digital heritage for community building and activism; the employment of photographic digital heritage by governing powers; and the effect of photographic digital heritage on social and inter-generational communications about history, memory and the past.

Livestreamed online, the conference will provide multiple opportunities for knowledge exchange among the participants while enabling engagement with comments and questions from the public.

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KEYNOTE SPEAKER

JANE LYDON

Wesfarmers Chair of Australian History / The University of Western Australia

Jane's research centres upon Australia's colonial past and its legacies in the present. She is interested in the ways that popular and especially visual culture has shaped ideas and debates about race, identity and culture that persist today. In particular, she is concerned with the history of Australia's engagement with anti-slavery, humanitarianism, and ultimately human rights.

Jane's books include *Eye Contact: Photographing Indigenous Australians* (Duke, 2005), the edited *Visualising Human Rights* (Perth, 2018), *Photography, Humanitarianism, Empire* (Bloomsbury, 2016), and *Imperial Emotions: The Politics of Empathy Across the British Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 2019). Her latest book *Antislavery and Australia: No Slavery in a Free Land?* (Routledge, 2021) examines the entwined histories of the abolition of British slavery and settler colonisation.

Between 2018 and 2021, Jane served as an adviser for the UK-based team of the DigiCONFLICT Research Consortium.

19 October 2021, 09.45
Indigenous Uses of Photographic Digital Heritage in Postcolonising Australia

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DONNA WEST BRETT

Associate Professor and Chair of Art History / University of Sydney

Donna is author of *Photography and Place: Seeing and Not Seeing Germany After 1945* (Routledge, 2016); and co-editor (with Natalya Lusty) of *Photography and Ontology: Unsettling Images* (Routledge, 2019). Her recent research has been published in the journals *Photography & Culture*, *Photographies*, and *Passagen des Exils*, Exilforschung: Ein internationales Jahrbuch. Donna is a recipient of the 2017 Australian Academy of the Humanities, Ernst and Rosemarie Keller Award, Research Leader for the Photographic Cultures Research Group, and Editorial Member of the Visual Culture and German Contexts Series, Bloomsbury.

19 October 2021, 14.00
Operation Overlord: Civilian Photography and Artistic Mediation

GEOFF BROADWAY

Director of the Living Memory Project CIC

Geoff is a UK-based independent artist, filmmaker, project director and coach, with over 25 years of experience working in the culture and education sector. He has lectured in the field of photography, design and interactive technology in the UK and New Zealand, and has undertaken several major artist residencies including Durham Cathedral in the UK and Medio-Lab Prado in Madrid. He often works with communities and schools to encourage creativity and to record, share and celebrate life stories.

20 October 2021, 09.00
The Living Memory Project: Personal Photography Collections and Life Stories

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ANAND CHHABRA

Co-founder of the Apna Heritage Archive / Black Country Visual Arts CIC

Anand is a co-founder, director and the incumbent Chair at Black Country Visual Arts. He initiated the Apna Heritage Archive project, winning a national award for best New Archive in the UK in 2017 from Community Archives and Heritage Group. In 2020 Historic England assigned Anand to document responses to the COVID-19 pandemic in the Midlands as part of the Picturing Lockdown documentary initiative, which focused on a total of ten regions across the UK. He has also worked with the National Trust, Arts Council England, Worcestershire Archaeology Archives Service, British Council, Heritage Lottery Fund, GRAIN photography hub, and The Living Memory Project.

20 October 2021, 09.30
Punjabi Migration to the Black Country: A Photographic Journey through History, Cultures and Digital Technology

DEBBIE COOPER

Manager of the Photographic Collections Network (PCN)

Debbie has vast experience as a producer, project manager, curator, trainer and artist in the photographic sector. In addition to her work at the Photographic Collections Network, she is currently also a part-time producer for FORMAT Festival in Derby (UK). Previously, Debbie worked as fundraising manager for Museums Sheffield and as project manager and artist in residence at WW Winter Studio. Writing large-scale public engagement and community projects, she has recently delivered projects for the British Council, NHS and District Councils, and in 2017, she delivered public engagement projects in China and India.

19 October 2021, 14.30
Towards a Distributed National Photography Collection

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MICHELLE HAMERS

PhD Candidate / De Montfort University

Michelle is a freelance photography historian and researcher in visual culture with specialisation in photographic archives in areas of conflict. Between 2014 and 2017 she worked for UNRWA as Archive Project Coordinator, overseeing the digitisation of the audio-visual archive. Currently a part-time PhD student in the Photographic History Research Centre at De Montfort University Leicester (United Kingdom), Michelle's research focuses on the social and political role of UNRWA's audio-visual archive in Israel, Palestine and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

20 October 2021, 14.30
The UNRWA Film and Photo Archive

PAUL HERRMANN

Founder and Director of the Photographic Collections Network (PCN)

Paul is an organiser and convenor in photography. He is the founding director of The Photographic Collections Network, which aims to support the UK's photo collections and archives, and share specialist knowledge. He is also the Director of Redeye, a network that has supported hundreds of photographers to develop their photographic work and careers through a programme of events, courses, commissions, collaborations, business advice and information. Paul started out as a freelance editorial photographer in the 1980s. He talks, writes and advises on business and professional issues in photography, and is also a regional chair of WhatNextCulture.co.uk.

19 October 2021, 14.30
Towards a Distributed National Photography Collection

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CHRISTO KEFALAS

Senior National Curator, Global and Inclusive Histories / The National Trust

Christo received her D.Phil in anthropology from the University of Oxford, studying a 19th century collection of Maori objects and historic photographs held at the Pitt Rivers Museum to explore contemporary approaches to Indigenous knowledge and visual repatriation. She has worked as a curator at the British Museum, Great North Museum Newcastle, and led the curatorial development of the World Cultures Gallery at the Horniman Museum. As Global and Inclusive Histories Curator for the National Trust, she is focusing on language, repatriation, and how to decolonise collections on the database.

19 October 2021, 13.00
Ethical Questions of Institutional Photography in Cataloguing, Digitisation and Public Reach

GIL PASTERNAK

Chair of Photographic Cultures and Heritage / De Montfort University & DigiCONFLICT

Gil explores socio-political photographic cultures, investigating intersections of photography with governmental, diplomatic, public and heritage practices. His key publications focus on deployments of domestic photographs in antagonistic environments, and other recent publications include the edited volumes *Visioning Israel-Palestine: Encounters at the Cultural Boundaries of Conflict* (Bloomsbury, 2020), *The Handbook of Photography Studies* (Routledge, 2020), and the special issue "Photographic Digital Heritage in Cultural Conflicts" (*Photography & Culture*, 2021). In 2018-21, Gil has been Project Leader of *Digital Heritage in Cultural Conflicts* (DigiCONFLICT), funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research & innovation programme.

19 October 2021, 09.30
Historical Photographs and Digital Heritage: A Critical Introduction

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FRANÇOISE POOS

Director of Cultural Programmes at Esch2022 / European Capital of Culture

Françoise is a researcher of visual culture focusing on photography, memory and identity. Heritage collections and archives of national interest are recurring subjects in her work. Most relevant examples comprise her research on the National Amateur Film Collection at Luxembourg's Centre National de l'Audiovisuel (PhD, 2016), her work on Edward Steichen's interpretation of the Farm Security Administration collection for his 1962 exhibition *The Bitter Years* (CNA, 2010-12) and her investigations into early industrial photography (CNA/University of Luxembourg, 2013-17). More recently, she started to explore the collection of photographs documenting the dismantling of the fortress of Luxembourg, held at the Musée national d'histoire et d'art Luxembourg.

19 October 2021, 13.30
Fortress Walls and Legionnaires: Digital Cultural Heritage at the M3E, Luxembourg

CHRISTINA RIGGS

Chair in the History of Visual Culture / Durham University

Christina is a historian of photography, archaeology, and museums. She is the author of several books including *Photographing Tutankhamun: Archaeology, Ancient Egypt, and the Archive* (Bloomsbury, 2019) and *Unwrapping Ancient Egypt* (Bloomsbury, 2014 – a critical account of Egyptology's colonial roots, based on her experience as a museum curator). She is currently working on the role of photography in the study of ancient art alongside a new project on the photographic cultures of archaeology in Egyptian and Sudanese Nubia, from the 19th century to the construction of the Aswan High Dam.

20 October 2021, 14.00
Reborn-Digital Tutankhamun: Howard Carter and an Egyptian Archaeologist, Name Unknown

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DENIS SKOPIN

Associate Professor of Philosophy / Saint Petersburg State University

Denis obtained a PhD in aesthetics from Paris 8 University. Currently teaching in the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Saint Petersburg State University, his interests focus on the relationship between images, politics and ethics. He is the author of the books *La photographie de groupe et la politique de la disparition dans la Russie de Staline* ("Group Photography and Policy of Disappearance in Stalin's Russia"; Harmattan, 2015) and *Oedipe sous l'objectif: La psychanalyse et la photographie* ("Focus on Oedipus Complex: Psychanalysis and Photography"; Harmattan,2018) and his new monograph, *Defacing the Enemy: Photography and Political Repressions in Stalin's Russia*, is scheduled for publication in English in 2021.

20 October 2021, 13.30
Sheltering the Ghosts? Digitised Photographs of Political Victims and World War II Veterans on Russian Online Databases

KYLIE THOMAS

Research Fellow / Netherlands Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies (NIOD)

Kylie is the author of *Impossible Mourning: HIV/AIDS and Visuality After Apartheid* (Wits University Press & Bucknell University Press, 2014) and co-editor of *Photography in and out of Africa: Iterations with Difference* (Routledge, 2016) and *Women and Photography in Africa: Creative Practices and Feminist Challenges* (Routledge, 2020). She has held numerous research fellowships, including a EURIAS Fellowship at the Institute for Human Sciences, Vienna, Austria; a British Academy International Visiting Research Fellowship at the University of Brighton, UK; and a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship at NIOD.

20 October 2021, 13.00
Digital Visual Activism: Photography and the Re-Opening of the Unresolved Truth and Reconciliation Commission Cases in Post-Apartheid South Africa

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CATHERINE TROIANO

National Curator of Photography / The National Trust

Catherine works with the National Trust's dispersed collection of photography, numbering about 550,000 objects across 250 different sites. Previously she was Assistant Curator, then Curator, of Photographs at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London. Recent publications appeared in the journals *Photography & Culture* (2019) and *PhotoResearcher* (2020; which she also guest-edited), and in the edited volume *Photographic Cultures of the Museum: Ecosystems, Hierarchies and Non-Collections* (forthcoming 2022). She holds an MA in History of Art (University of Edinburgh) and a PhD in Visual Culture (Photographic History Research Centre at De Montfort University Leicester).

20 October 2021, 10.00
Dilemmas of Digitisation: Considering Community as Cataloguing Strategy

The livestreamed conference is aimed at a variety of audiences, including students, professionals, communities, policymakers, and the general public. All presentations will be recorded with video and audio with a view to increasing inclusion and accessibility. After the conference, the recordings will be made available for public viewing via DMU Events YouTube Page. The copyrights of individual presentations remain with the authors.

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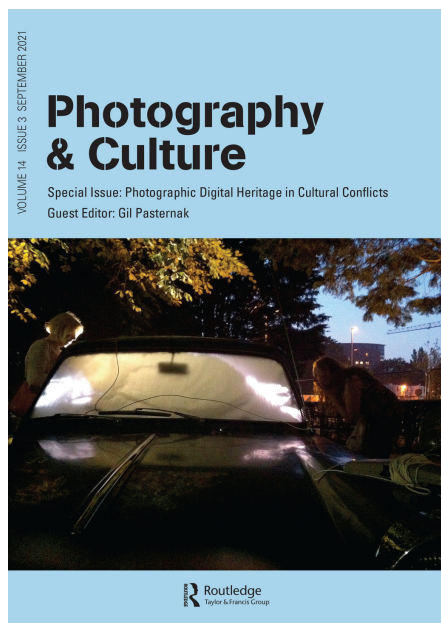
Some of the presentations in the event are based on contributions made to the September 2021 special issue of *Photography & Culture*, titled **Photographic Digital Heritage in Cultural Conflicts.** Presenting case studies from Australia, Britain, Israel, Palestine, Russia and South Africa, the special issue argues that the increasing confluence of historical photographs and digital heritage must not be understood as a mere response to technological progress but as an articulation of politically-charged aspirations to administer approaches to differing cultural values in a time of imposing liberal-democratic politics of consensus. It subsequently calls for the development of research into the various local and global political circumstances that have influenced the absorption of historical photographs into the realm of digital heritage, alongside the study of the heritagisation practices triggered by this very process.

Pasternak, Gil, ed. 2021. Photographic Digital Heritage in Cultural Conflicts (Special Issue). *Photography & Culture* 14(3), URL: https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rfpc20/14/3?nav=tocList

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DigiCONFLICT RESEARCH CONSORTIUM

DigiCONFLICT is an international, interdisciplinary research consortium funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, via the Joint Programming Initiative on Cultural Heritage and Global Change. Its founding research partners are based at De Montfort University in the United Kingdom, Liber pro Arte in Poland, and Linköping University in Sweden. Focusing specifically on multimedia museums, oral history and photography as some of the most common sources, media and means employed in digital heritage practices, members of the consortium—as part of their large-grant research project *Digital Heritage in Cultural Conflicts*—explore the impact exerted by different manifestations of digital heritage in multiple nationally-framed sociocultural environments.

While acknowledging the role digitisation and digitalisation have played in shaping transnational attitudes to cultural heritage, members of the DigiCONFLICT Research Consortium contest common convictions about the allegedly universal, democratic, and liberating nature of digital heritage. Recognising the role digital heritage has played in increasing access to cultural heritage and in making cultural heritage products readily available across borders, they nevertheless pay particular attention to the ways in which the rising prominence of digital heritage has also resulted in increased social inequalities and escalating cultural divides.

Alongside academic and scholarly outputs, members of the DigiCONFLICT Research Consortium deliver conferences, workshops, talks, and community engagement events, to demonstrate how different professional, ethnic, national, civil and other interest groups have employed digital heritage to advance their social, political, cultural or economic priorities.

For post-event queries contact:
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