Catrin Huber

Expanded Interiors: Bringing contemporary site-specific fine-art practice to Roman houses at Herculaneum and Pompeii.

1st May 2017 – 31st December 2019

Explored through site-specific installations, 3D scanning and 3D printing, exhibitions, drawings, collages, publications, slide talks.

Team:

Prof. Catrin Huber (Principal Investigator, Artist, Newcastle University)

Prof. Ian Haynes (Co-Investigator, Roman Archaeologist, Newcastle University)

Rosie Morris (RA Fine Art, Artist, Newcastle University)

Dr Thea Ravasi (RA Archaeology, Roman Archaeologist, Newcastle University)

Alex Turner (Archaeologist, Digital Technology Expert, Newcastle University)

Expanded Interiors is funded by

In partnership with





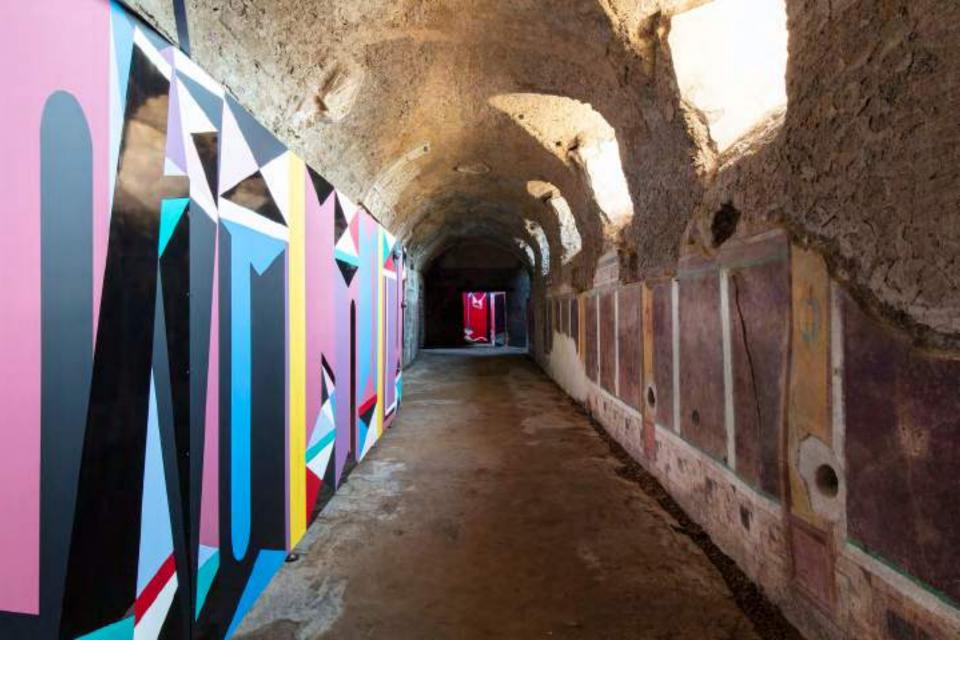




Research carried out in the context of:
THE HERCULANEUM CONSERVATION PROJECT
An initiative of the Fackard Humanities Institute
in collaboration with the Italian heritage authorities
and other partners



Expanded Interiors at Herculaneum



Expanded Interiors at Pompeii

Contents

300 Word Statement (7)

Research Questions (8)

Context (11)

Methodology (12-30)

Examples of research through site visits, 3D scanning, 3D modelling, 3D printing, photography, drawing, collage, working with 3D models, installation development and realisation at:

House of the Cryptoporticus (13-22)

House of the Beautiful Courtyard (23-30)

Outputs 1-3 (31-48)

Output 1: *Expanded Interiors* at Herculaneum (32-37)

Output 1: *Expanded Interioors* at Pompeii (38-46)

Output 2: Expanded Interiors Book (47)

Output 3: Chapter on *Expanded Interiors* for *Contemporary Art in Heritage Spaces* (48)

Outcomes 1- 4 (49 - 53)

Outcome 1: *Expanded Interiors* Website (49)

Outcome 2: Expanded Interiors podcasts (50)

Outcome 3: Leaflet for *Expanded Interiors* at Herculaneum (51)

Outcome 4: *Expanded Interiors* workshops (52-53)

Selection of press coverage (54 - 57)





Pompeii

Statement

Expanded Interiors was an interdisciplinary research project that drew site-specific contemporary fine art practice into a unique dialogue with ancient Roman wall paintings and architectural remains at the UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Herculaneum and Pompeii. For the first time, it brought together Huber's practice-led research with the disciplinary perspectives and expertise of archaeologists, art historians, and digital technologists. The project was delivered in partnership with the Parco Archeologico di Pompei, the Parco Archeologico di Ercolano, the Herculaneum Conservation Project, and Newcastle University.

Expanded Interiors investigated and developed installations for the House of the Beautiful Courtyard, in Herculaneum, and the House of the Cryptoporticus, in Pompeii.

Objectives of *Expanded Interiors* were:

- (1) To investigate through site-specific installations at Pompeii and Herculaneum how contemporary and Roman wall paintings negotiate public and private space, and respond to specific social, economic, and cultural contexts.
- (2) To bring together academic researchers and practitioners from complementary fields (fine art, archaeology and art history) to explore the relationship between Roman wall paintings and Roman artefacts via practice-led research.
- (3) To develop through practice-led fine art research new forms for displaying archaeological artefacts at Roman archaeological sites.

Outputs

- (1) Three site-specific installations for exhibitions in two Roman houses one installation in Herculaneum and two installations in Pompeii.
- (2) A book 'Expanded Interiors' (in English, Italian, German).
- (3) A chapter about *Expanded Interiors* in 'Contemporary Art in Heritage Spaces', published May 2020.

Outcomes

- (1) A project website that contains substantial information about the project and interpretive resources.
- (2) 8 podcasts giving insights into different aspect of the project.
- (3) An accompanying leaflet for *Expanded Interiors* in Spanish, German, French, Italian and English.
- (4) A series of workshops with local community groups in Ercolano and the Bay of Naples.

The project was funded by the AHRC.

Research Questions

- (1) How can contemporary fine-art practice provide new insights on specific Roman wall paintings?
- (2) How, in turn, can Roman wall painting inform and enhance contemporary, site-specific, fine-art practice?
- (3) How might these investigations inspire new ways of displaying Roman artefacts (in replica format) on archaeological sites, while also allowing for creative exploration of these replicas?

The artistic research allowed for a new re-interpretation of some of the compositional, perspectival and contextual methodologies used by the Roman painters (e.g., use of irregularities to create rhythm within wall paintings). It also revealed relevant strategies/methods for contemporary fine-art making. These include use of specifically designed perspectival systems to help create immersive environments.



Expanded Interiors at Pompeii



Expanded Interiors at Herculaneum





House of the Cryptoporticus, Pompeii









House of the Beautiful Courtyard, Herculaneum

Context

Site-specific installations, interdisciplinary collaboration, and on-site object display.

How critical spatial practice can transform sites and imagine alternatives is a hotly debated topic within site-specific art and architecture (e.g., Rendell 2006; Hirsch/Miessen 2011). The relationship between public and private, and hegemonic and subversive spaces offers a particularly rich field of investigation (e.g., de Certeau 1988; Lefebvre 1974). Consequently, contemporary site-specific fine art practice is often evaluated according to how it engages with the social, economic, cultural, and political aspects of any given space (Doherty 2015; Kwon 2002; Rugg, 2010). The research team were unaware of any work considering Roman art, and specifically Roman wall painting as a source that can offer new perspectives and surprising practical strategies to negotiate public and private space within contemporary, site-specific fine-art practice.

The idea that there are valuable dialogues to be had between fine art and archaeology is evidenced in a small but growing body of academic literature (e.g., Russell & Cochrane 2014; Renfrew, Gosden & DeMarrais 2004), and a range of events (e.g., Conversations/ Artistic Practice/The Artist as Archaeologist, panel discussion with Hans Ulrich Obrist at Art Basel 2015; Emerging Trends: Contemporary Art and Archaeology with Tom Morton, talk at the Contemporary Art Society, London 2014). *Expanded Interiors* situates itself within a particular set of archaeological debates and explorations regarding Roman architecture and interiors. It asks questions about how these paintings negotiated space (Hales 2003; Owen 2010; Wallace-Hadrill 1994), and how they resonated with objects within the house (Allison 2004; Clark 1991; Haug 2020). To the team's knowledge, no one had previously probed these questions via, and for, site-specific art practice - or with the aim of establishing the relevance of such investigations for site-specific object display within contemporary on-site contexts.

Replicas of artefacts found and known to be used at these sites have been integrated into the site-specific installations. Originals were scanned and 3D printed. The artefacts were reproduced as technical replicas, and also creatively altered and distorted. A prominent theme within the discussions of archaeological artefacts is the use of 3-D replicas. While they are frequently used within museum displays and for educational purposes, replicas can also be seen as a threat to the original, opening-up discussions around copyright (Younan & Treadaway 2015). The project aimed to further these discussions, exploring the creative use of replicas for on-site display. To the research team's knowledge, replicas had not been used in displays at archaeological sites in this way (e.g., creative manipulation, and inclusion into fine-art, on-site installation), hence the project was a case study for other archaeological and site-specific fine art contexts.

Methodology

The questions have been answered through an innovative and interdisciplinary methodology centered upon a creative, practice-led research process combining archival and archaeological object-based research with visual site investigation, fine art installation, 3-D scanning and digital modeling techniques.

Practice-led research

Research Phase 1:

Huber analysed through photography and drawings the specifics of the respective Roman wall paintings and how they are integrated within actual spaces. At this stage, particular attention was given to artistic decisions regarding 2D/3D space (composition, perspective); open and closed walls; multiple ways of integrating imagery and of encoding meaning; colour and light relationship to surrounding room/building; the movement of viewers.

Research Phase 2: Practice-led research in this phase consisted of:

- **A.** Testing the strategies of Roman wall paintings through and for contemporary practice. This happened through an experimental creative approach using drawing, photography, collage, painting, and working with 3D models.
- **B.** 3D experimentation with replica (e.g., scale, material and form) drew attention to particular aspects of the original artefact, while dislodging the replica out of its original context. This allowed for a different viewer and object relationship.
- **C.** The testing of a variety of potential interactions between replicas and Roman and contemporary wall paintings through drawing, photography, collage, painting, and the use of 3D models.
- **D.** Building on steps one, two and three, the development of site-specific installations.

Research Phase 3: This phase saw the realisation of the site-specific installations on site. Through the design, making and presentation of the two installations the team learned about the potential for synergy between ancient and contemporary forms and methods of wall painting; and opened up new visual explorations into the relationships between the original Roman paintings and the placement of three-dimensional objects within these room spaces.

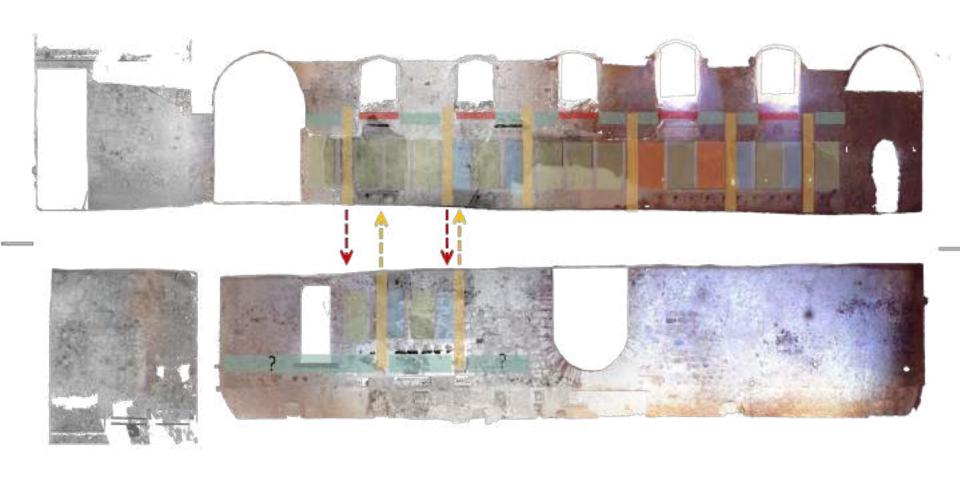
Documentation of methodology House of the Cryptoporticus, Pompeii







Site-visits at the House of the Cryptoporticus in Pompeii: site research and 3D scanning / 3D modeling







Site-visits to store-rooms in Pompeii: 3D digital model of a Roman face pot

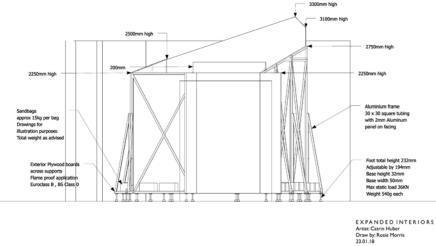






Huber's studio with drawings for wall paintings, collages and models





Fabrication drawings for the installations at the House of the Cryptoporticus, Pompeii





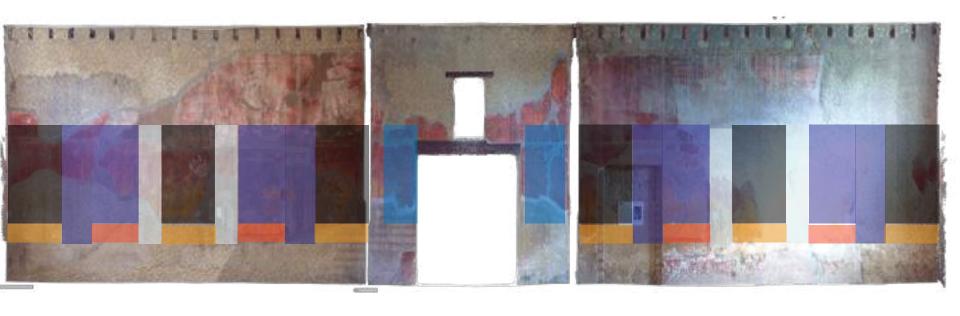


Documentation of methodology House of the Beautiful Courtyard, Herculaneum



3D scanning at the House of the Beautiful Courtyard and digital 3D model, Herculaneum





Study of wall paintings: drawings on 3D scans, House of the Beautiful Courtyard, Herculaneum



3D scanning of objects in Herculaneum



Huber's studio with 3D printed Roman objects,



Isis Lactans replica and original at Herculaneum and in Huber's studio









Experimentation with digital images and prints of women statues from Herculaneum

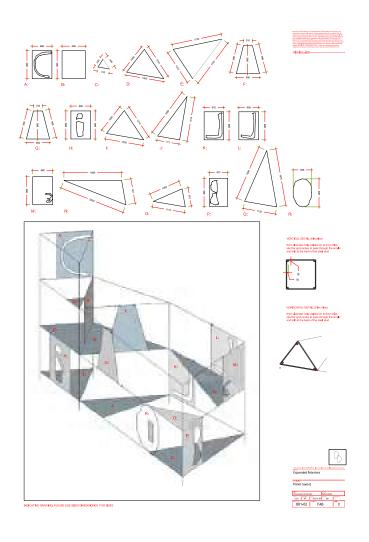




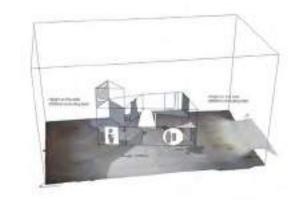




Huber's studio with images/collages of Roman objects; A 3D model of the House of the Beautiful Courtyard, Herculaneum









Installation process of *Expanded Interiors* at the House of the Beautiful Courtyard, Herculaneum

Outputs

- **1.** Three site-specific installations for exhibitions in two Roman houses one installation in Herculaneum and two installations in Pompeii. Constituting an original investigation into the significance of Roman wall paintings for contemporary art practice.
- **2.** A book *Expanded Interiors* (in English, Italian, German) with essays by curator Dieter Roelstraete (University of Chicago), critic and writer Sean Ashton, and art historian Fiona Anderson (Newcastle University), a text by artist Catrin Huber, and introductions by all partners in Italy.
- **3.** A chapter about *Expanded Interiors* in 'Contemporary Art in Heritage Spaces', published by Routledge in May 2020.

Outcomes

- **1.** A website that contains substantial information about the sites, contexts, houses, wall paintings, exhibitions, and contains a blog and podcasts section, and resources such as learning/teaching materials https://research.ncl.ac.uk/expandedinteriors/
- **2.** 8 podcasts giving insights into: the whole project, 3D scanning and printing, the archaeological perspective onto the research, the exhibition and installation process at the House of Cryptoporticus, the exhibition and installation process at House of the Beautiful Courtyard, the *Expanded Interiors* Contemporary Art and Archaeology Symposium.
- **3.** An accompanying leaflet for *Expanded Interiors* at Casa del Bel Cortile, providing further information on the objects of the exhibition. Available in Spanish, German, French, Italian and English.
- **4.** A series of workshops with local community groups in Ercolano and the Bay of Naples (local guides, teachers, students of the Accademia di Belli Arte di Napoli, local school children).

Expanded Interiors has resulted in invitations to the team to talk at a range of institutions (e.g., Parco Archeologico di Ercolano; Parco Archeologico di Pompeii; Newcastle Society of Antiquaries), and to speak at conferences (e.g., AHRC Heritage conference, British Academy, London, 2017; Association of Art History Annual Conference, Kings College, London, 2018; Contemporary Art in the Heritage Environment Conference, Newcastle University, 2019).

The exhibitions of *Expanded Interiors* have garnered substantial press coverage (see press coverage and hard copies).

Expanded Interiors was supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, (PI Catrin Huber) fEC grant value £345,560 and all its partners: Parco Archeologico di Pompei, Parco Archeologico di Ercolano, the Herculaneum Conservation, and Newcastle University.

Output 1: Exhibition 1

Expanded Interiors at Herculaneum (solo exhibition)
House of the Beautiful Courtyard
Parco Archeologico di Ercolano

https://research.ncl.ac.uk/expandedinteriors/art/ 16 May 2018 – 15 January 2019

The installation in the House of the Beautiful Courtyard (CdBC) related to the painted, thin, linear architectural framework within the reception room. These Roman paintings depict several objects (e.g., a vase with flowers; a jug) in niche spaces or sitting on painted constructions. These objects seem to come right up to the viewer. They sit on the border between painted illusion and concrete reality and thus address the viewer.

The installation at CdBC was a large-scale permeable construction that combined 2D prints/collages of objects with 3D replicas, both also directly confronting the viewer. The construction allowed the viewer to look at Roman wall paintings through a contemporary installation, and vice versa. It thus formed a strange composite of these two realms. The replicas operated between these fields of contemporary and historical practice, allowing for a possible merging of its function as historical replica and contemporary artwork.

The exhibition also tied in with the history post-eruption of the house: In 1956, Maiuri (archaeologist and director of the site) opened a small museum in this very room. He assembled archaeological finds from all over the archaeological site with the intention of showing objects from the daily lives of ancient Romans.

Herculaneum used *Expanded Interiors* as an example of good practice re artists' intervention on Heritage sites at its January 2019 conference.



Expanded Interiors at Herculaneum



Expanded Interiors at Herculaneum



Expanded Interiors at Herculaneum - details







Expanded Interiors at Herculaneum - details



Expanded Interiors at Herculaneum

Output 1: Exhibition 2

Expanded Interiors at Pompeii (solo exhibition)
House of the Cryptoporticus
Parco Archeologico di Pompei

http://pompeiisites.org/en/exhibitions/expanded-interiors/
14 July 2018 – 15 January 2019

Expanded Interiors at Pompeii consisted of two installations: One installation was in the rare underground passageway or cryptoporticus. This was decorated with a gradually unfolding frieze as part of a sequence of painted panels and herms (sacred objects made from stone). Huber's work juxtaposed the Roman frieze with the painted colonnade. It also incorporated replicas of everyday Roman objects such as an oil lamp and face pots, bridging the Roman and contemporary worlds together, and suggesting designs for the future.

The second installation was a room of contemporary wall paintings. These related to the rare Roman bathroom area of the house, with its richly painted, complex and illusionistic architectural designs. The contemporary paintings responded to and explored a complex play of 2D and 3D space, open and closed walls, inside and outside space, and perspectival shifts.

Pompeii has only allowed a small number of artists' work so far to be exhibited on their grounds: e.g. Picasso [Museum; 2017], Pistoletto [Palaestra; 2017], with Huber's installation being the first within a Roman house.



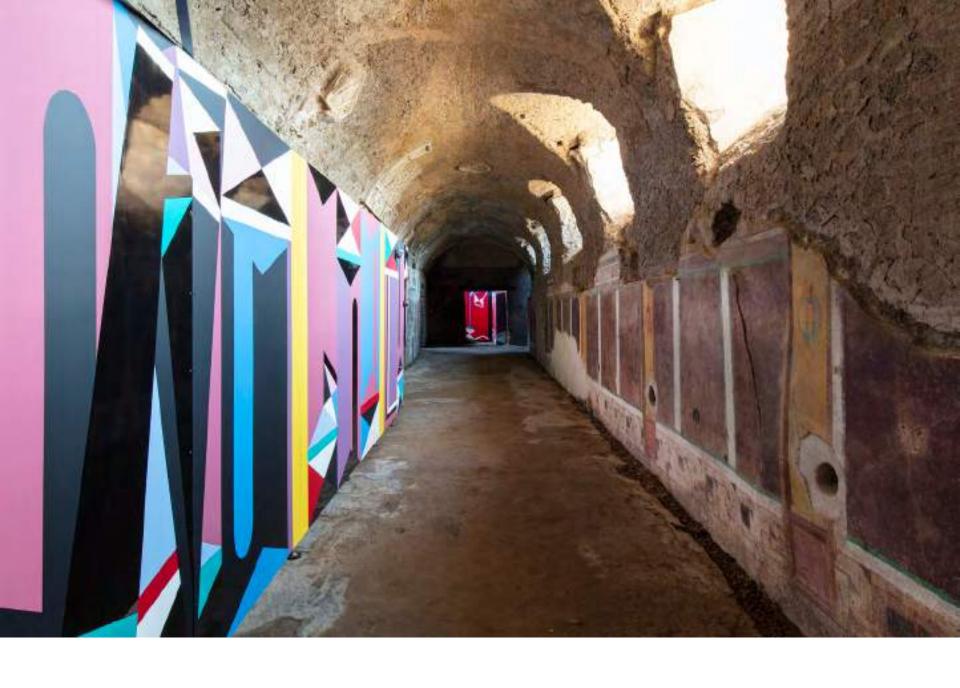
Expanded Interiors at Pompeii



Expanded Interiors at Pompeii







Expanded Interiors at Pompeii



Expanded Interiors at Pompeii



Expanded Interiors at Pompeii



Expanded Interiors at Pompeii

Output 2:

Expanded Interiors at Herculaneum and Pompeii, Book

in English, Italian, German

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A copy of the book is available in the box file for this portfolio.

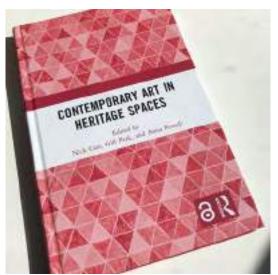
With essays by curator Dieter Roelstraete, critic and writer Sean Ashton, and art historian Dr Fiona Anderson, a text by artist Catrin Huber, and introductions by the directors of Herculaneum and Pompeii, and the Herculaneum Conservation Project. Published by Kerber ISBN 978-3-7356-0641-9

Output 3:

Chapter on Expanded Interiors for

Contemporary Art in Heritage Spaces, published by Routledge in May 2020

https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/expanded-interiors-catrin-huber/e/10.4324/9780429053498-12







A copy of the open-access chapter is available in the box file for this portfolio.

Reviewers highlighted the 'really innovative and engaging approach to the contemporary art/heritage discussion' and that it 'demonstrates first-hand the way in which artistic practice can impact upon historical interpretation'.

Huber, C, *Expanded Interiors*. In Cass, N., Park, G., Powell, A. *Contemporary Art in Heritage Spaces*, Routledge (2020), pp. 133 - 148, ISBN: 978-0-367-14805-8

Outcome 1: Website

https://research.ncl.ac.uk/expandedinteriors/

In English and Italian



The *Expanded Interiors* website provides thorough information and context about the *Expanded Interiors* project and the archaeological sites. It is aimed at a general public as well as specialised audience. It contains a blog section, podcasts, links to *Expanded Interiors* social media channels, and a resource page, with additional information that can be downloaded.

In the past three year we have had over 1900 users, with the largest numbers coming from the UK (50.54%), Italy (15.76%), and the US (11.85%). the remaining users came from Australia, Germany, France, Spain, Netherlands, Canada, United Arab Emirates, Romania, China, and Ireland, with users often returning to the page: the overall sessions are recorded as 3534 sessions.

Overall page views: 12 028. (February 2021)

Outcome 2:

Expanded Interiors podcasts

- 1. An introduction to *Expanded Interiors*: https://research.ncl.ac.uk/expandedinteriors/blogpodcasts/videopodcastanintroductiontoexpandedinteriors.html
- 2. Archaeological perspective on *Expanded Interiors*:

 https://research.ncl.ac.uk/expandedinteriors/blogpodcasts/videopodcastarchaeologicalperspectiveonexpandedinteriors.html
- 3. Digital scanning & modelling in 3D: https://research.ncl.ac.uk/expandedinteriors/blogpodcasts/videopodcastdigitalscanningmodellingin3d.html
- 4. Herculaneum Installation Timelapse: https://research.ncl.ac.uk/expandedinteriors/blogpodcasts/videopodcastherculaneuminstallationtimelapse.html
- 5. Pompeii Installation Timelapse: https://research.ncl.ac.uk/expandedinteriors/blogpodcasts/videopodcastpompeiiinstallationtimelapse.html
- 6. Expanded Interiors at Herculaneum: https://research.ncl.ac.uk/expandedinteriors/blogpodcasts/videopodcastexpandedinteriorsatherculaneum.html
- 7. *Expanded Interiors* at Pompeii: https://research.ncl.ac.uk/expandedinteriors/blogpodcasts/videopodcastexpandedinteriorsatpompeii.html
- 8. Expanded Interiors I Symposium I Contemporary Art and Archaeology:
 https://research.ncl.ac.uk/expandedinteriors/blogpodcasts/videopodcastexpandedinteriorsisymposiumicontemporaryartandarchaeology.html

Outcome 3:

Leaflet for Expanded Interiors at the House of the Beautiful Courtyard

in Italian, Spanish, German, French, and English

https://research.ncl.ac.uk/expandedinteriors/resources/herculaneumexhibitionleaflet/



A copy of the leaflet is available in the box file for this portfolio

Outcome 4: Workshops in Herculaneum / Ercolano / Newcastle

In January 2018: 3 workshops with teachers, heritage guides and art students in Herculaneum.

In May 2018: Inspired by January workshops schools exhibited pupils' work at Herculaneum; artist tours for school children of the exhibition; art laboratories offered by art students to school children.

In October 2018: Workshops with 7 classes in two schools in Ercolano.

In July 2019: Workshops with 2 classes in a primary school near Newcastle.









May 2018



October 2018

Press coverage - print media - available as hard copy in box file for this portfolio:

Current World Archaeology, magazine, May 2018, UK, *Art among the ruins*

The Guardian, newspaper, 15 July 2018, UK, *Installation breathes life into the ruins*

Kunstzeitung, newspaper, September 2018, Germany, *Frohes Unheil. Pompeij:*Catrin Huber lässt Gegenwart auf Antike prallen

Current World Archaeology, magazine, January 2019, UK *Art meets archaeology*









Selection press coverage - online media - available as hard copy in box file for this portfolio:

El Pais, online, 17 July 2018, Spain,

Pompeya y Herculano se visten de arte contemporaneo

https://elpais.com/cultura/2018/07/17/actualidad/1531816249_788905.html











The Art Newspaper, online, 21 May 2018, UK

Expanded Interiors at Herculaneum and Pompeii

New art rises among the ruins of Pompeii
https://www.theartnewspaper.com/blog/new-art-rises-among-the-ruins-of-pompeii

ElleDecor, online, 17th July 2018, Italy

Apollo, online, 17 May 2018, UK

L'artista tedesca che ha dipinto le case romane di Pompei ed Ercolano https://www.elledecor.com/it/viaggi/a22177628/installazione-catrin-huber-pompei-ercolano/

https://www.apollo-magazine.com/art-diary/expanded-interiors-at-herculaneum-and-pompeii/

Metalocus, online, 22nd May 2018, Spain

Roman Houses in Herculaneum and Pompeii in a new dialogue with Expanded Interiors project

https://www.metalocus.es/en/news/roman-houses-herculaneum-and-pompeii-a-new-dialogue-expanded-interiors-project

Artribune, online, August 2018, Italy

Expanded Interiors, Catrin Huber, Pompeii https://www.artribune.com/arti-visive/2018/09/giornate- 2018-nord-sud-itinerario-5-eventi-italia/attachment/5-expanded-interiors-catrin-huber-pompei-casa-del-criptoportico/

Selection press coverage - online media - available as hard copy in box file for this portfolio:



Condé Nast Traveller, online, 18th July 2018, UAE

UNESCO sites with incredible art installations

https://www.cntravellerme.com/europe/unesco-sites-with-incredible-art-installations

Musica, arte y cultura, online, 18th July 2018, Spain Expanded Interiors opens_in Pompeii https://aliciaperris.blogspot.com/2018/07/expanded-interiors-opens-in-pompeii.html



The Guardian, online, 15 July 2018, UK

Artist brings a splash of colour to Pompeii and Herculaneum

https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2018/jul/15/artist-catrin-huber-brings-splash-colour-pompeii-herculaneum-world-heritage-sites-newcastle-university (copy + paste)

Archinect News, online, 21st May, UK

Contemporary art project opens in ancient ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii

https://archinect.com/news/article/150065476/contemporary-art-project-opens-in-ancient-ruins-of-herculaneum-and-pompeii

The Protagonist Magazine, online, October 2018; UK 2000 Years Through The Walls: Catrin Huber in Pompeii and Herculaneum https://www.theprotagonistmagazine.com/exhibitions/2000-years-through-the-walls





Current World Archaeology, online, January 2019, UK

Art meets archaeology

https://www.world-archaeology.com/features/art-meets-archaeology/

Selection press coverage - other media:

Italian TV, RAI, July 2018;

Italian radio, radio 1/RAI, January 2019



eCampagnia, 13th July 2018, Italy (TV)

A Pompei la mostra Expanded Interiors

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ip1v5xSPMio

Catrin Huber

UoA32, Fine Art, Newcastle University

Expanded Interiors: Bringing contemporary site-specific fine-art practice to Roman houses at Herculaneum and Pompeii.

1st May 2017 – 31st December 2019

Explored through site-specific installations, 3D scanning and 3D printing, exhibitions, drawings, collages, publications, slide talks.

Team:

Prof. Catrin Huber (Principal Investigator, Artist, Newcastle University)

Prof. Ian Haynes (Co-Investigator, Roman Archaeologist, Newcastle University)

Rosie Morris (RA Fine Art, Artist, Newcastle University)

Dr Thea Ravasi (RA Archaeology, Roman Archaeologist, Newcastle University)

Alex Turner (Archaeologist, Digital Technology Expert, Newcastle University)

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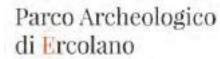
In partnership with



Arts and Humanities Research Council







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