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A Retrospective of the “Fluid Geographies” Conference in Venice in June

FLUID GEOGRAPHIES

Reconsidering the Notion of Border
in Contemporary Art

International Conference

18-19 June 2025, Venice

German Center for Venetian Studies
(Palazzo Barbarigo della Terrazza)

Teatrino di Palazzo Grassi

Organized by

Cristina Baldacci
Ca' Foscari University of Venice

Christina Hainzl
University for Continuing
Education Krems

DAY 1 - 18 June 2025



After a welcome by Richard Erkins, the director of the German Center for Venetian Studies, the two conference organisers, Cristina Baldacci (Ca' Foscari University of Venice–DFBC, NICHE) and Christina Hainzl (University for Continuing Education Krems) introduced the topic of the conference.



Curator Jeanette Pacher (Secession, Vienna) shared her insights on various borders during the workshop “(Un)Defining Borders” at the German Center for Venetian Studies – drawing on her extensive experience as a cultural practitioner. She also highlighted important contemporary artworks.



Noemi Quagliati presented her research on Bird's-Eye Views and aerial photography during the workshop. Noemi Quagliati is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Postdoctoral Fellow at Ca' Foscari, University of Venice and affiliated with THE NEW INSTITUTE Centre for Environmental Humanities (NICHE), among others.

Film still on screen: ©Samuele Gottardello



Marco Baravalle discussed the influence of major cultural players in Venice and the concept of the centre and the margins during the workshop. Marco Baravalle is a researcher, curator and activist. He is a member of Sale Docks, a collective and independent space for visual arts, activism, and experimental theater in Venice.



Angelika Burtscher and Daniele Lupo work for Lungomare, a platform for cultural production and design. They presented their definitions of borders and some projects on the topic of borders that they developed during the workshop – some of their projects were presented in more depth on the second day of the conference.

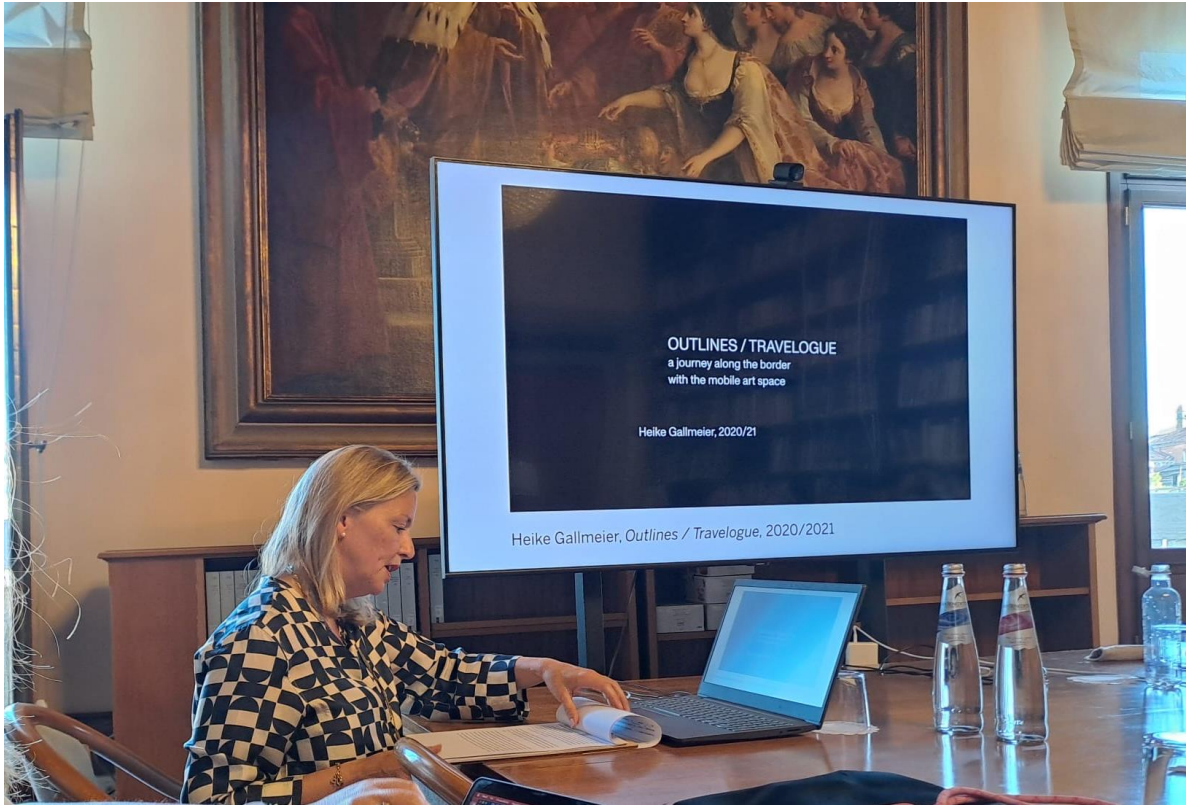


Viola Rühse works as a researcher at the Department for Arts and Cultural Studies at the University for Continuing Education Krems. At the workshop, she discussed the important role of the Iron Curtain in the oeuvre of the Romanian artist Dan Perjovschi.

Photo on screen: ©Dan Perjovschi



Adrian Praschl-Bichler works as a researcher at the Platform for Sustainable Development (SDGs) at the University for Continuing Education Krems. At the workshop, he discussed the concepts of transhumanism and posthumanism and examined the border between humans and machines.



Petra Schaefer explained Heike Gallmeier's Projekt "Outlines" along the Inner German Border. She works at the German Centre for Venetian Studies in the field of art promotion – fine art, architecture, literature and composition. In addition to her curatorial activities, she is an editor of art catalogues, an author and correspondent of *Weltkunst*, the art magazine of *DIE ZEIT*, since 2010.

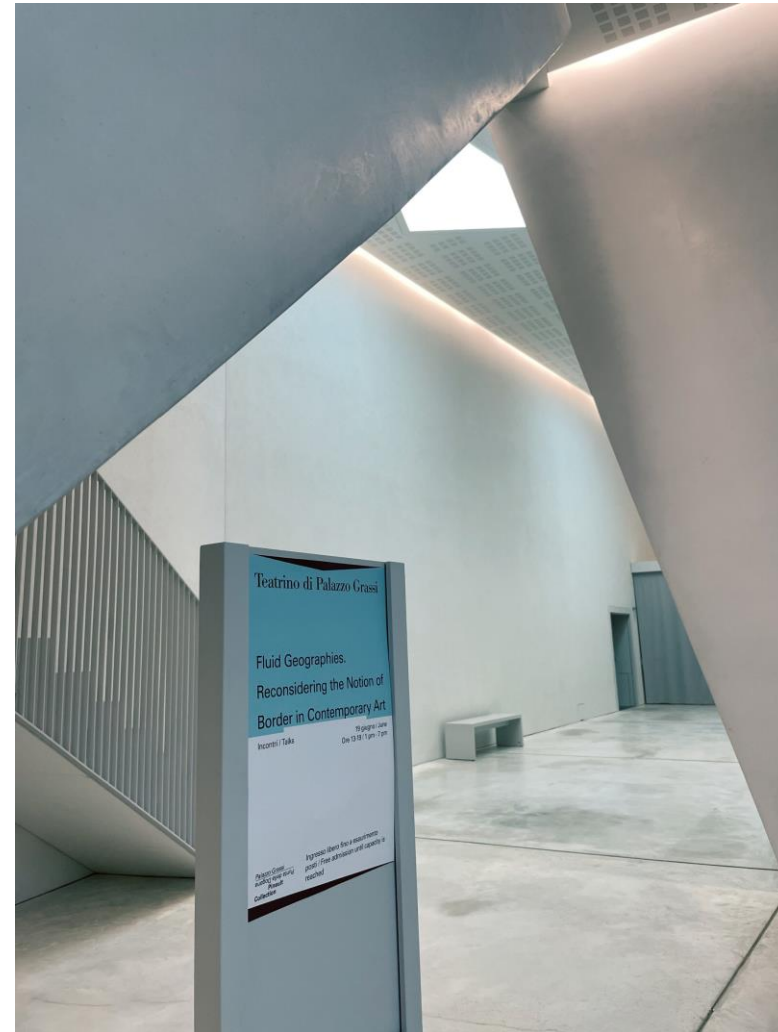
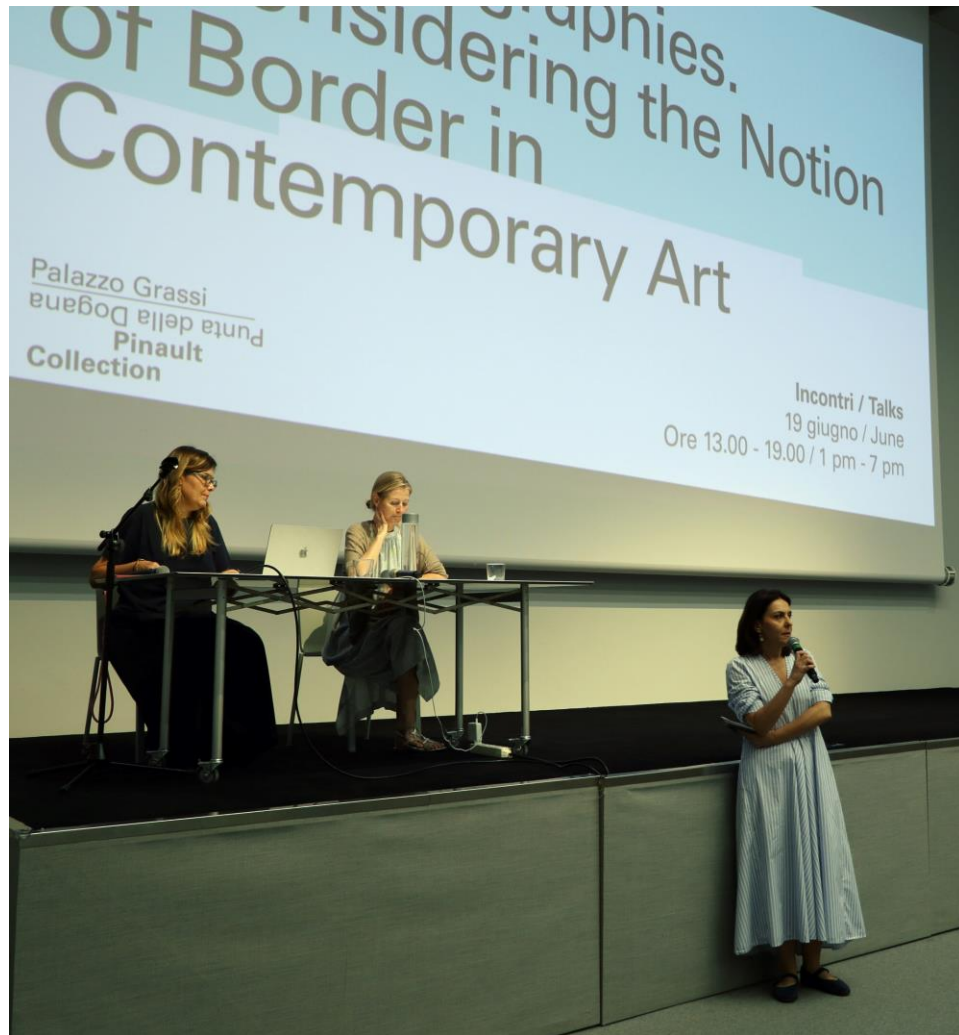


Following the roundtable presentations as part of the '(Un)Defining Borders' workshop, lively discussions took place on the beautiful terrace of the Palazzo Barbarigo della Terrazza, home to the German Center for Venetian Studies. On the left, conference co-organiser Christina Hainzl is talking to artists Randa Mirza and Lara Tabet.





DAY 2 - 19 June 2025



On the second day of the conference, which took place at the Teatrino di Palazzo Grassi, Francesca Colasante from the Palazzo Grassi – Pinault Collection Venezia warmly welcomed all the participants.



Christina Hainzl (University for Continuing Education Krems) and Cristina Baldacci (Ca' Foscari University of Venice–DFBC, NICHE), the two conference organisers, opened the second day of the conference in the Teatrino di Palazzo Grassi with introductory remarks.



Photo on screen: ©Randa Mirza

The second day started with the session “Social Perceptions of Borders”. In her presentation, “Power Structures and Remains”, artist Randa Mirza discussed several photo series in detail with Christina Hainzl, the co-organiser of the conference (University for Continuing Education Krems).



Ilaria Campioli (Musei Civici Reggio Emilia) first explained her curatorial approach in the Palazzo dei Musei a Reggio Emilia. Afterwards presented a talk titled “Linea di confine: A Reflection on the Concept of Borders within the Landscape Presentation”. Afterwards, a conversation with Cristina Baldacci (Ca’ Foscari University of Venice–DFBC, NICHE), the co-organiser of the conference followed. The “Linea di Confine” collection is the result of over 30 regional and national research projects conducted between 1990 and 2022.

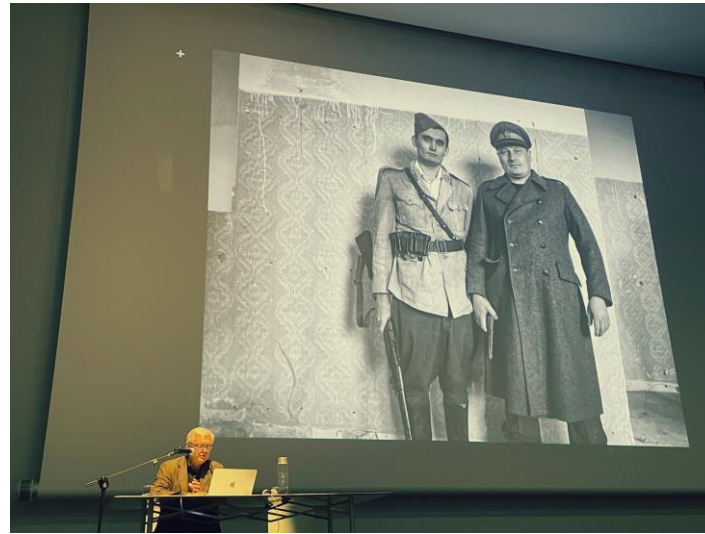


Photo on screen: ©Kurt Kaindl

Christina Hainzl (University for Continuing Education Krems), the co-organiser of the conference, introduced Kurt Kaindl, a photographer and co-founder of Fotohof Salzburg in Austria. In his talk titled “Travels in No Man’s Land: From Lübeck to Trieste”, Kurt Kaindl presented his photographs taken along the former Iron Curtain.



Angelika Burtscher (Lungomare, Bozen-Bolzano) introduced Anna de Manincor from the “ZimmerFrei” group. A part of de Manincor's film “The Answer is Out There” (2025) was screened and afterwards explained by the artist. The film focuses on the sparsely populated region of Strandja, specifically the Rezovo River area, which serves as the natural division between Bulgaria and Turkey, as well as the coast of the Black Sea, one of Europe’s southernmost borders. The film project was commissioned by Lungomare, a platform for cultural production and design as part of their “B-Shapes” project.



Film on screen: ©Virginia Eleuteri Serpieri

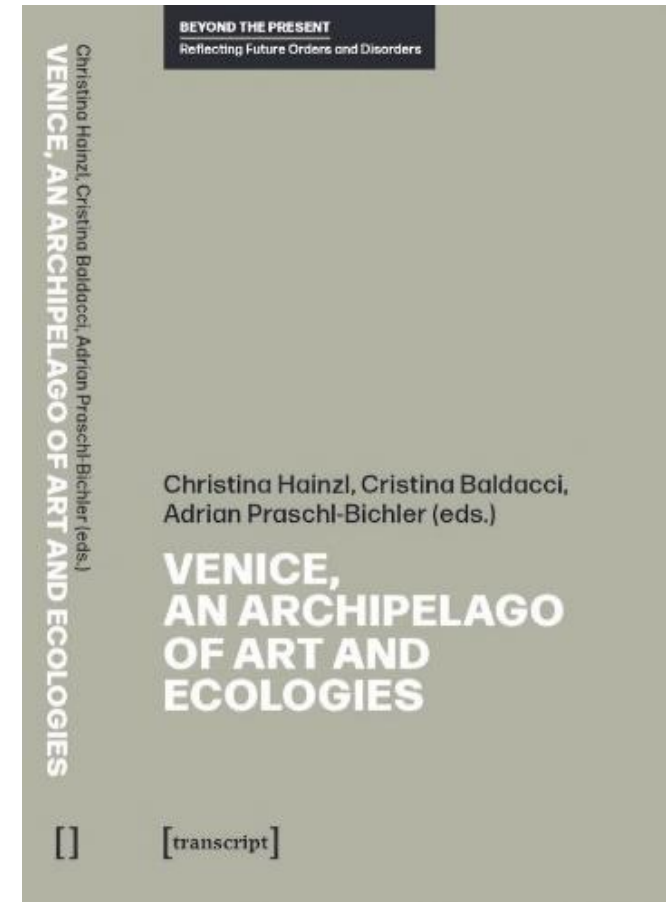
As part of the session “Rivers as Liminal Spaces“, Angelika Burtscher (Lungomare, Bolzano) introduced the Italian director and video artist, Virginia Eleuteri Serpieri. The artist's short film “The Water's Tale” (2020, 6 minutes) was screened and discussed. The film explores various soundscapes of the Tiber in Rome in memory of the director's mother's death.



Elisa Del Prete (Lungomare, Bozen-Bolzano) talked with filmmaker Amedeo Sartori about his new photo book “Nel vedere, lungo il fiume” (In Seeing Along the River, 2025). Amedeo Sartori portrays intimate encounters between humans and nature along the Eisack/Isarco river.



The session “Rivers as Liminal Spaces” ended with a roundtable discussion with Virginia Eleuteri Serpieri (artist), Amedeo Sartori (filmmaker), Angelika Burtscher and Elisa Del Prete (Lungomare, Bozen-Bolzano), and Giacomo Covacich (bruno books, publisher of Sartori's new photo book.)



At the end of Day 2 the new book “Venice, an Archipelago of Art and Ecologies” (transcript, 2025) which delves into the fragile but resilient Venetian cultural ecosystem at the time of the climate crisis, was presented and discussed by the editors Christina Hainzl, Cristina Baldacci and Adrian Praschl-Bichler as well as selected authors - Viola Rühse, Giorgio Andreotta Calò and Alice Ongaro Sartori. The book originates from a collaboration between the **Research Lab Society in Transition / SDGs** (University for Continuing Education Krems) and **NICHE** (Ca’ Foscari University of Venice).