# MEMHIST

ICOM international committee for historic house museums

# 2025 Open Talks Online Event

PARALLEL NARRATIVES
IN HOUSE MUSEUMS



Interpreting
Overlapping Histories



Shifting Perspectives

Video presentations Virtual cafe Interactive discussions and workshops

11-12

June 2025 Online 16.00-19.00 CET

Save the date!!



# PARALLEL NARRATIVES IN HOUSE MUSEUMS

**Dates: 11-12 June 2025** 

(Wednesday - Thursday)

Timeslot: 16 - 19 pm CET

(Paris Time)





# THEME





History isn't a single story. It's a tapestry woven from countless threads — some bold and celebrated, others fragile and almost forgotten. More than any other places, historic house museums are places where these threads meet, inviting us to listen to these many voices. Join the DEMHIST Open Talks 2025, and explore what happens when house museums move beyond a single, linear narrative and embrace the layered, sometimes contradictory stories that dwell within their walls.

Historic house museums are far more than beautifully preserved interiors or collections of historic artifacts. They are living witnesses to the complexities of history — spaces where stories converge, overlap, and sometimes compete. Yet too often, these museums are presented through a single, dominant narrative, carefully curated to offer a coherent and uncomplicated story. The truth, however, is rarely so neat. Behind every carefully arranged room and every curated object lies a tangle of perspectives: the voices of those who built the house, those who lived within its walls, those who worked in its shadows, those who were excluded from its history, and those who visit it today. These parallel narratives — sometimes harmonious, sometimes in tension — are what make historic house museums so rich, relevant, and meaningful.

This year's DEMHIST Open Talks invites us to lean into this complexity.

Rather than smoothing over contradictions or silencing uncomfortable histories, how can we embrace these multiple narratives as opportunities for deeper understanding? How do we open space for contested memories, overlooked voices, and new interpretations — while still offering meaningful, accessible experiences for diverse audiences?



# THEME





Our 2025 theme, "Parallel Narratives: Expanding Interpretations in Historic House Museums", will explore these questions from a variety of perspectives. We'll investigate how house museums can:

- Acknowledge and interpret overlapping, conflicting, or marginalized histories
- Navigate tensions between official narratives and unofficial memories
- Foster inclusive storytelling that reflects a plurality of voices and experiences
- Engage with communities to shape shared, participatory interpretations of the past
- Balance truth-telling with visitor engagement, care, and ethical responsibility

Through examples from historic house museums from all over the world, our speakers and participants will reflect on the challenges and opportunities of navigating parallel narratives. We'll look at how evolving interpretations can reshape the visitor experience, address difficult pasts, and offer new ways of connecting house museums to the societies they inhabit.

This isn't about finding easy answers — it's about embracing the idea that history is layered, complex, and often unresolved. And by doing so, historic house museums can become not just places of memory, but spaces for dialogue, reflection, and change.

We look forward to welcoming you to DEMHIST Open Talks 2025 — to share ideas, exchange experiences, and imagine together new possibilities for interpreting the past in ways that resonate today.



# **PROGRAM**





Two online meetings both dealing with different aspects of historic house museums and parrallel narratives. The sessions include presentations, virtual tours, discussions, and interactive activities. Virtual cafes are openmic sessions held during breaks for casual conversations.

## **SCHEDULE**

\*\* [PROGRAM SUBJECT TO CHANGE]

	Wednesday 11.06.25 DAY 1	Thursday 12.06.25 DAY 2
16.00	Introduction	Introduction
16.30	Keynote speech Franklin Vagnone	Paper Session 2
17.00	Break	Video Tour Session 2
17.30	Paper Session 1	Break
	Break	Daner Cassian 7
18.00	Video Tour Session 1	Paper Session 3
		Break
18.30	Gamification	Gamification
19.00	Summation/discussion	Summation/discussion



# FAQ





#### **REGISTRATION**

How to attend the Open Talks? Registration for the Open Talks will be open from May 10<sup>th</sup> to June 5<sup>th</sup>. You will be able to register through the DEMHIST website. The event is free of charge for all participants. A single link will be provided for accessing the sessions, through the Visio Agent platform (no personal account required; on registration you will be required to sign a GDPR compliance form).

**Technical Requirements:** Ensure you have a stable internet connection. Use a device with audio and video capabilities (e.g., computer, tablet, smartphone). It is recommended to use updated browsers such as Chrome, Firefox, or Edge for the best experience.

**Joining the Sessions:** The Open Talks link will be sent to registered participants 3 days before the event date. Simply click the link to join the conference sessions. Follow the prompts to enter your name and join the session. Please remember to connect with the same email account you used for registration, and to properly identify yourself (name, institution) when joining the sessions.

**Support and Assistance:** If you encounter any issues with registration or accessing the conference, please contact our support team via the contact information that will be provided on the DEMHIST website.

#### **PROGRAM**

The posted program is subject to change, the full and final schedule of speakers will be posted by May 25<sup>th</sup>.

#### **PROCEEDINGS**

Will ICOM-DEMHIST publish the papers or will there be any other chances for wider engagement? The conference proceedings will be published online, there will be no printed version and it will be accessible on DEMHIST website.