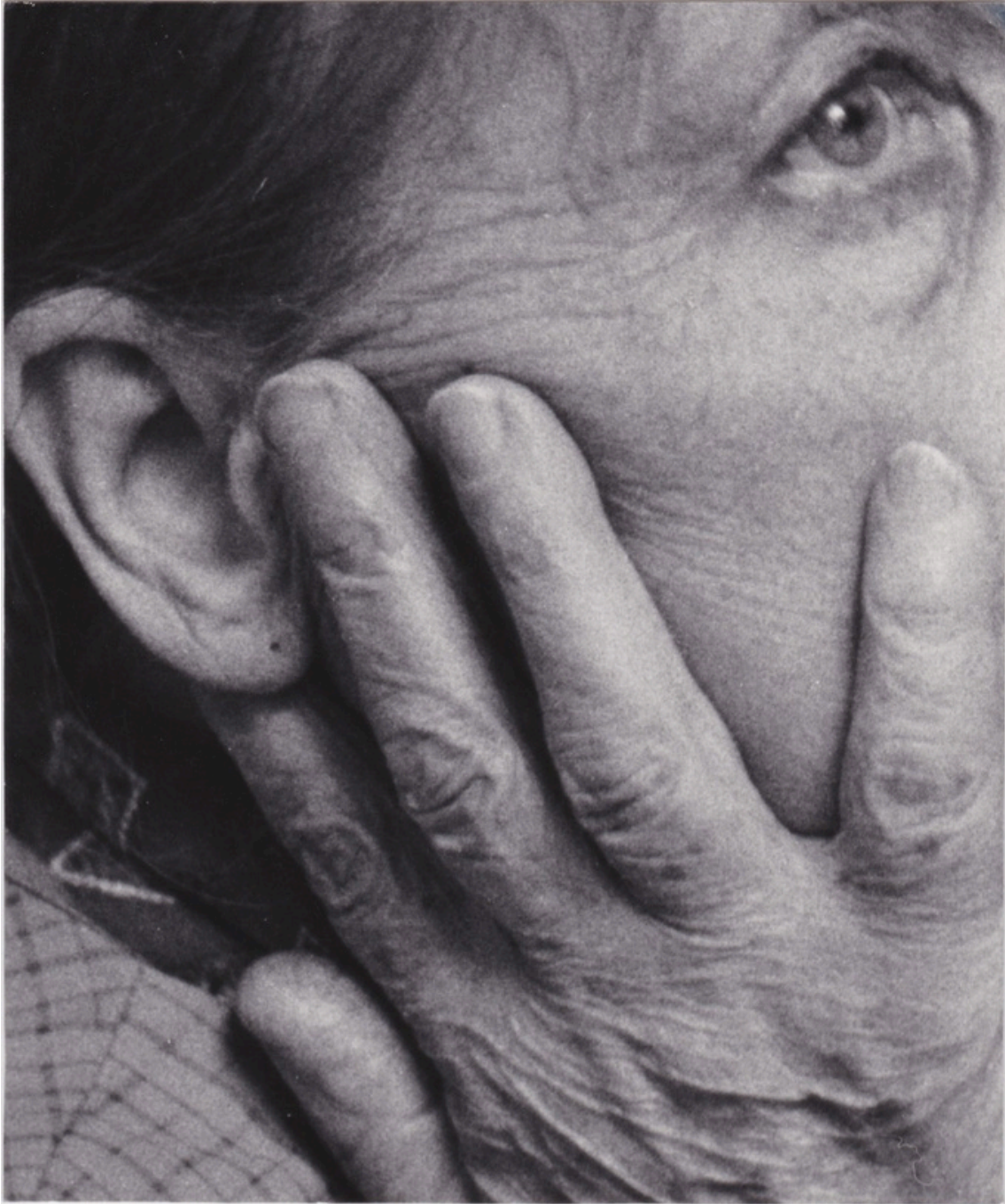

Sigm. Freud
MUSEUM

Trauma and Dialogue



International Conference
Friday, October 9, 2026

Trauma and Dialogue

The international symposium “Trauma and Dialogue” explores artistic representations of dialogue within the context of ongoing national, social, and personal, conflicts and traumatic experiences. Central themes such as loss, violence, discrimination, despair, and anger can be made accessible to a wider audience through this examination, which is essential to coming to terms with the past and present.

Especially in societies affected by cultural and armed conflicts, critically engaging with the past can prevent political radicalization and encourage activism. However, during times of crisis, collective memory is often distorted by social media, which amplifies intolerant and extremist voices. Political elites may also monopolize the conversation to promote historical revisionism or propaganda instead of nuanced, profound dialogue. Though not free from hegemonic power structures and assumptions, dialogue is a language-based practice of mutual exchange founded on empathy and attentive listening. Artistic dialogue permits the asking of questions without requiring answers and can reveal unconscious dynamics and implicit knowledge. This is critical for exploring and understanding the complexities of diverse traumas and their impact on individuals and societies.

International artists, curators, and historians will explore the dialogical potential of artistic interventions from various perspectives, drawing on psychoanalytic concepts. Their multifaceted contributions will address strategies of remembrance, testimony, and conflict mediation in different historical and geopolitical contexts. In light of current global sociopolitical developments and polarization, the “Trauma and Dialogue” symposium will focus on how artistic dialogue can strengthen resistance and resilience against authoritarian change.

Trauma and Dialogue.

Conference on 9th Oktober 2026 at the Sigmund Freud Museum

Library of Psychoanalysis, Berggasse 19, 1090 Wien

Concept and Program: Elana Shapira, Daniela Finzi, and Monika Pessler

Project management: Eva-Maria Kleinschwärzer

9.30

Welcome

Monika Pessler

Introductory Remarks

Elana Shapira and Daniela Finzi

9.45 – 10.45

Opening Lecture

Georges Didi-Huberman:

Trauma, Testimony,

Transmission

10.45 – 11:45

A Conversation

between Karin Berger

and Monika Pessler:

Women's Resistance:

Trauma in Dialogue

Coffee Break

12.00 – 13.00

Lecture

Anindya Raychaudhuri:

“What unmakes us, makes us”:

Food and Dialogue

in Narratives of the 1947

India-Pakistan Partition

Lunch Break

14.00 – 15.00

Dialogue

Galia Bar Or & Said Abu

Shakra: Art as a Bridge in

Times of Crises,

moderated by Elana Shapira

15.00 – 16.00

Dialogue

Pavlo Makov & Lizaveta

German: Revisiting the

“Fountain of Exhaustion”,

moderated by Elana Shapira

Coffee Break

16.30 – 17.30

Dialogue

Anna Kim & Doron

Rabinovici: “People can

handle the truth”,

moderated by Daniela Finzi

17.30 – 18:00

Closing Remarks

by **Roger Frie**

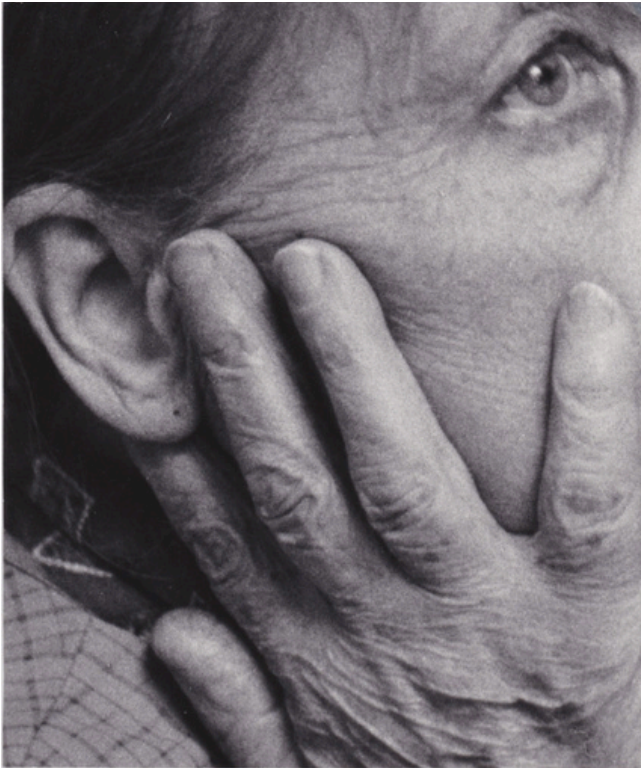


Opening Lecture
Georges Didi-Huberman:
Trauma, Testimony,
Transmission

There are the terrible events of the present and, on the other hand, the disappearance of direct witnesses from the 1930s and 1940s. All of this addresses us with an ethical task that Paul Celan described as logically impossible: that of “bearing witness for the witness.” How does psychoanalysis help us overcome this aporia?

The question raised concerns the relationship between trauma and filiation, but also between the memory and its possibility of being written or represented. A book by the French psychoanalyst Monique Schneider, *Le trauma et la filiation paradoxale* (1988), will help us to identify the various, even divergent, possibilities offered by the transmission of a traumatic memory.

Georges Didi-Huberman, philosopher and art historian, professor at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris). He has published more than sixty books on the history, anthropology, and politics of images. He received various distinctions, such as the Humboldt-Preis, the Max Weber-Preis, the Theodor W. Adorno-Preis or the Aby Warburg-Preis. He has been curator of exhibitions such as *L’Empreinte* in 1997 (Paris, Centre Pompidou), *Atlas* in 2010 (Madrid, Museo Reina Sofía), *Soulèvements* in 2016 (Paris, Jeu de Paume) or *En el aire conmovido* in 2024-2025 (Madrid and Barcelona).



A Conversation between Karin Berger and Monika Pessler: Women's Resistance: Trauma in Dialogue

“Resistance,” the annual theme of the Sigmund Freud Museum for 2026, provides a multifaceted basis for the conversation between film director and author Karin Berger and art historian Monika Pessler. They will discuss the dialogic potential of artistic documentary work, building on Berger’s transmedia exploration of “Women in the Resistance.” Since 1981, Berger has explored this subject with Elisabeth Holzinger, Lotte Podgornik, and Lisbeth N. Trallori. Berger’s films, radio programs, and literary works provide direct and intimate access to lesser-known female historical figures. These personal narratives, artfully rendered with sensitivity and boldness, make significant contributions to Austria’s culture of remembrance. This collective reflection highlights the importance of civic engagement for an open and free society – a particularly relevant topic today.

Karin Berger, born in Gmünd, Lower Austria, is a film director and writer who studied ethnology and political science in Vienna. Since the early 1980s, she has been active as a journalist and scholar in the fields of feminism and contemporary history. Her growing interest in film led to her first feature-length documentary in 1984, *Kitchen Conversations with Rebels*, a collaborative project exploring Austrian women's resistance to the Nazi regime. She has since continued her freelance work as a filmmaker, author, researcher, and university lecturer. She lives in Vienna. For more information, visit: karinberger.at.

Monika Pessler studied art history and was trained as a museum and exhibition curator at the Institute for Cultural Studies at the Danube University Krems. In 2014 she completed a Master's degree in Organizational Development at the IFF, Alpen Adria University Carinthia. She has worked as a curator at what is now the Museum of Modern Art Carinthia, at the contemporary art festival "steirischer herbst", and was director of the Austrian Frederick and Lillian Kiesler Private Foundation in Vienna from 2003 to 2013. Since 2014 she has been director of the Sigmund Freud Museum in Vienna. Extensive exhibition activities, lectures and publications on contemporary cultural and art production, architecture, museum organization and development.



Lecture

Anindya Raychaudhuri :

“What unmakes us, makes us”:

**Food and Dialogue in Narratives
of the 1947 India-Pakistan
Partition**

This talk will focus on a selection of literary, cinematic, and oral history narratives of the 1947 India-Pakistan partition, and, in particular, on the role that food and food-objects play in stopping, or encouraging, dialogue in these narratives. Food encompasses within itself memories of communal harmony, nostalgia for a plentiful past, unbearable loss, prejudice and violence, survival and agency, and so much more.

I will explore a number of examples of food-work and tease out the complex, sometimes contradictory, always multiple meanings that are contained therein. Food helps us knit our lives together, it connects us, one to another, it allows us to recognize ourselves in each other – in and through dialogue. But it also provides us another way to categorize, exclude, hate and murder. It is all of these things, all at once.

Today, almost eighty years after partition, through a mixture of government policy and civic life across South Asia, we are once again, and with renewed brutality, policing what food one is entitled to.

The question of what I can eat to sustain my body and give me pleasure is, once again, a matter of life and death, depending on who I am. In the context of rapid and deepening rise of fascism in contemporary South Asia, a return to these narratives is instructive in terms of thinking through the twin politics of food and dialogue.

Anindya Raychaudhuri is Associate Professor in Cultural Studies at Maastricht University. He is the author of three monographs: *Homemaking: Radical Nostalgia and the Construction of a South Asian Diaspora* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2018), *Narrating South Asian Partition: Oral History, Literature, Cinema* (Oxford University Press, 2019) and *A Cultural History of Vertigo: Unbalanced* (Bloomsbury, 2025). In 2016, he was named one of the BBC/AHRC New Generation Thinkers. His research interests include critical theory and Marxism, postcolonial studies, memory studies, and medical humanities.



Dialogue
**Galia Bar Or and
Said Abu Shakra:**
Art as a Bridge in Times of Crisis

Decades ago, Galia Bar Or, a curator and former director of the Kibbutz Ein Harod Museum of Art, met Said Abu Shakra, an artist and the current director of the Um El Fahem Museum of Art. Their connection is personal and professional, based on their shared vision of nurturing Palestinian cultural creation within Arab society in Israel and fostering open dialogue with the general public in Israel and abroad. This conversation reflects on the potential of dialogic art to counter historical erasure and establish mutual trust in contemporary multi-ethnic Israeli society.

Umm el-Fahem is an Israeli Arab city and the social, cultural, and economic center for residents of the Wadi Ara and Triangle regions in northern Israel. Thanks to the artistic talent, political courage, and entrepreneurial spirit of Abu Shakra, as well as the extensive knowledge of and commitment to art and cultural justice of Bar Or, the Umm el-Fahem gallery became an esteemed museum – a bridge between worlds and a platform for progressive cultural action.

Bar Or curated groundbreaking exhibitions, including the Abu Shakra family artists' exhibition at the Ein Harod Museum (2022) and the Said Abu-Shakra solo exhibition at the Maya Gallery in Tel Aviv (2024). Through these exhibitions, Abu Shakra and Bar Or successfully established a platform for dialogue between individuals crossing the borders erected by populism and radicalism between Arab and Israeli societies. In light of the devastating trauma resulting from the ongoing conflict, the Um El Fahem Museum of Art and other venues in Israel have expressed their commitment to promoting Palestinian culture and exploring its deep social context and political awareness.

Galia Bar Or is a freelance curator working in Israel and internationally. She holds a Ph.D. in History and Philosophy of Sciences and Ideas from Tel Aviv University. She was director and curator of the Mishkan Museum of Art in Kibbutz Ein Harod and curated *Pyramida* and *Social Bauhaus* in Haifa.

Bar Or has curated numerous exhibitions in Israel and abroad and published books and catalogs on art and history. She curated the Israeli pavilion at the International Art Biennales of Venice, São Paulo, and Istanbul, and participated in international projects and symposia including Documenta in Kassel and Athens (2017). Her exhibitions have been presented at institutions including Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Berlin, Kunstmuseum Bochum, Bauhaus Dessau, Milan Cathedral, and museums in Tokyo and Kamakura.

She received the Ministry of Culture's Curator Award in 2007 and the Ben Zvi Institute Researcher Award in 2010. Her curatorial practice is distinguished by a commitment to artists from diverse Israeli communities and to both established and emerging contemporary artists, while her monographs and exhibitions have brought renewed attention to artists overlooked by history.

Said Abu Shakra is an artist, cultural entrepreneur, and resident of Umm el-Fahem. He founded and directs the first Arab museum in Israel and co-founded the Forum for Arab Cultural Institutions in Israel. His artwork has been exhibited since 1992 and is held in major private and public collections in Israel and Europe.

In 1996, Abu Shakra founded the Umm el-Fahem Art Gallery, the first Arab art institution in Israel, as an act of social protest and commitment to his community and its future, and has developed it into a vibrant cultural center for contemporary art, community programs, and intercultural and international dialogue – a space for hope between communities.

Abu Shakra has received several awards for his community engagement, including the title Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres from the French Government (2013) and the Abraham Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award (2017). He recently initiated the creation of the first information center for Palestinian art. In 2025, he received an honorary doctorate from the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem.



Dialogue

Lizaveta German and Pavlo

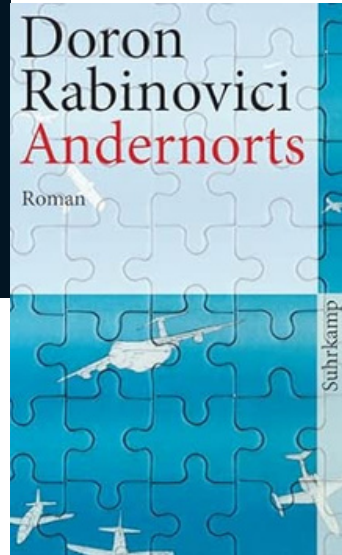
**Makov: Revisiting
the “Fountain of Exhaustion”**

A fruitful collaboration and dialogue emerged between artist Pavlo Makov and curator Lizaveta German, along with co-curators Maria Lanko and Borys Filonenko, in the widely publicized Ukrainian Pavilion at the 59th Venice Biennale in 2022. Makov is from Kharkiv, and German is from Kyiv. They both stand out as prominent figures in the Ukrainian art scene. At the Biennale, the focus was on Makov’s “Fountain of Exhaustion” accompanied by a series of discussions titled “Decolonising Art: Beyond the Obvious,” which took place during the exhibition period. Originally created in 1995, it reveals how a local concern grows to echo the global conversation. Accordingly, the discussion program that accompanied the exhibition addressed the question, “How has the Russian war against Ukraine changed the art world?”

Their subsequent works largely engaged and are still engaging with the experience of living in Ukraine as it goes through its 13th year of Russian invasion. Their respective practices contribute to sustaining art-making and curating in times of crises and preserving a sense of normality during times of crisis, whatever meaning normality may have nowadays. Makov recently had a retrospective titled *Abracadabra* at the Andrey Sheptytsky National Museum in Lviv. German co-curates a competition to design a memorial for civilian victims in the town of Irpin that was heavily attacked at the very start of the full-scale invasion in 2022.

Lizaveta German, PhD, is a freelance curator and art historian whose current interests include the art of the Sixties, ways and methods of (re-)writing art history, as well as the intersection of memory culture and contemporary art in recent projects of artists in Ukraine. She was a co-founder of The Naked Room, Kyiv and co-curator of the Ukrainian Pavilion at the 59th Venice Biennale in 2022. Lizaveta received her MA as well as a PhD degree in Art History at the National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture in Kyiv. She is currently working on a book about the artist Hryhorii Havrylenko and a book on curatorial practices in Ukraine since 2022. She currently teaches at the Lviv National Art Academy.

Pavlo Makov was born in 1958 and has lived and worked in Kharkiv since 1991. The city – with its Constructivist architecture and corresponding scale – is the central subject of the artist's practice. Yet Makov's work is far from documentary reproduction. His large-format graphic prints, sculptural objects, and artist's books are better understood as collections of symbols from his own visual alphabet. After the start of the full-scale invasion, the artist's focus gradually shifted from a human optic to a natural one. Colour broke into his black-and-white imagery, drawing replaced printmaking, and domesticated flowers became the main protagonists in place of urban structures. The artist graduated from the Crimean Art College named after M. S. Samokish (1979) and the Kharkiv State Academy of Design and Arts (1984). Since 2006, he has been a corresponding member of the Academy of Arts of Ukraine. He is a laureate of the “Shevchenko National Prize” (2018) and more than 20 international awards, the latest was Grand Prize at “The Leonardo Sciascia Prize for Print Lovers” (2024–2025). In 2022, he presented the project “Fountain of Exhaustion” at the National Pavilion of Ukraine at the 59th Venice Biennale.



Dialogue

Anna Kim & Doron Rabinovici: “People can handle the truth”

Can literature depict the indescribable? What responsibility does writing have toward those whose trauma it recalls? These are the questions Anna Kim and Doron Rabinovici explore in their conversation, starting from Ingeborg Bachmann’s conviction that truth is something we must be able to bear – indeed, that it must be bearable.

In *The Search for M. and Elsewhere*, Rabinovici navigates the layers of transgenerational memory. Since October 7, however, he has also been tracing new forms of trauma. He has dedicated himself to memory, stating, “Art may not be able to solve the riddle, but it can at least name the mystery. In this way, I give voice to what leaves me speechless.”

In *Anatomie einer Nacht* (Anatomy of a Night), Anna Kim approaches trauma from a different angle.

During a single Arctic night, eleven people take their own lives in a small community in eastern Greenland. With great care, Kim follows the individual life stories of those who died – and the colonial legacy inscribed into that night.

Both authors agree that writing about trauma does not equate to distancing or resolving it. Rather, it requires mutual examination. As Bachmann said, “We examine ourselves through one another.” Through their dialogue, the authors explore the roles of research and imaginative communion with characters in their writing. They also discuss how literature can touch upon the impossible in order to expand the possible.

Anna Kim was born in Daejeon, South Korea, in 1977 and lives in Vienna. She studied philosophy and theater studies at the University of Vienna. Selection of her publications include *Anatomie einer Nacht* (2012, Anatomy of a Night), *The Great Homecoming* (2020 [2017]), *Geschichte eines Kindes* (2022, Story of a Child). All three were published by Suhrkamp Verlag Berlin. Kim has received numerous fellowships and awards for her work, including the Veza Canetti Prize, the European Union Prize for Literature, and a Creative Writing Fellowship from the German Literature Fund. For more information, visit:
<https://annak.im>

Doron Rabinovici was born in Tel Aviv in 1961 and lives in Vienna. He is a writer and historian. His publications include *The Search for M.* (2000 [1997]), *Instanzen der Ohnmacht. Wien 1938–1945. Der Weg zum Judenrat* (2019, Instances of Powerlessness: Vienna 1938–1945. The Road to the Judenrat), *Neuer Antisemitismus? Fortsetzung einer globalen Debatte* (2024, New Antisemitism? Continuation of a Global Debate), which he edited with Christian Heilbronn and Natan Sznajder, and *Elsewhere. Novel* (Haus publishing 2014), *Die Einstellung. Roman* (2020, The Attitude. Novel) and *Die letzten Zeugen* (2013–2015), The Last Witnesses): a theater project of the Burgtheater in Vienna in collaboration with Matthias Hartmann. Rabinovici is a member of the Academy of Sciences and Literature in Mainz. Awards include the Clemens Brentano Prize, the Anton Wildgans Prize, and the Honorary Prize from the Austrian Book Trade for Tolerance in Thought and Action. For more information, visit:
<http://www.rabinovici.at/>

Roger Frie: Closing Remarks

Roger Frie, PhD, PsyD, RPsych, is Professor of Psychoanalysis and Education at the University of Vienna, Austria, Affiliate Professor of Psychiatry at the University of British Columbia, and Emeritus Professor at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada. He is also Faculty and Supervisor at the William Alanson White Institute of Psychiatry, Psychoanalysis and Psychology, the New York University Postdoctoral Program in Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis, and associate member of the Columbia University Seminar on Cultural Memory in New York.

Frie is a practicing psychologist and psychoanalyst as well as a trained historian and social philosopher. His academic career bridges psychology and the humanities. He publishes and lectures widely on historical trauma, memory and social responsibility. His newest books are *Wounds of Silence: Legacies of Genocide and Racism* (Oxford, 2026), *Edge of Catastrophe: Erich Fromm, Fascism and the Holocaust* (Oxford, 2024), and *Not in My Family: German Memory and Responsibility after the Holocaust* (Oxford, 2017). His most recent edited book is *Culture, Politics and Race in the Making of Interpersonal Psychoanalysis: Breaking Boundaries* (Routledge, 2022). He is in addition an editor of *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, a former editor of *Psychoanalysis, Self and Context* and editorial board member of *Psychoanalytic Psychology*.

Moderation

Daniela Finzi is a historian of literature and cultural studies scholar, and has been on the scientific staff of the Sigmund Freud Museum Vienna since 2009. Finzi has been the scientific director and a board member of the Sigmund Freud Private Foundation since 2016, and on the board of aka — Arbeitskreis Kulturanalyse, and a member of the publishing committee of aka/Texte, published by Turia + Kant, since 2014. Finzi is also the co-editor of the “Sigmund Freuds Werke. Wiener Interdisziplinäre Kommentare” book series published by Vienna University Press. Extensive exhibition and publication activities on psychoanalysis in connection with topics in the history of science and cultural studies.

Publications (selection): *The Case of Freud. Documents of Injustice* (ed., with M. Pessler, Vienna 2025); *Narrating Violence. A Comic-Exhibition* (ed., with M. Pessler, Wien 2023); *Freud and the Émigré. Austrian Émigrés, Exiles and the Legacy of Psychoanalysis in Britain, 1930s-1970s* (ed. with E. Shapira), London 2020; *Freud. Berggasse 19. Origin of Psychoanalysis* (ed., with M. Pessler), Berlin 2020; *Sigmund Freud. Bruchstück einer Hysterie-Analyse* (ed. and comm., with P. V. Haute und H. Westerink), Göttingen 2020.

Elana Shapira, a cultural and design historian, lectures in the Department of Cultural Studies at the University of Applied Arts Vienna. She has organized international symposia and workshops on topics such as psychoanalysis and Austrian émigrés in Britain, art and psychoanalysis, Viennese modernism, Central European émigrés in the United States, women artists and designers, and dance, art, and design. She is the co-editor of the anthologies *Émigré Cultures in Design and Architecture* (2017), *Freud and the Émigré* (2020), *Gestalterinnen: Frauen, Design und Gesellschaft in der Wiener Zwischenkriegszeit* (2023), and *It Hurts! Violence against Women in Art and Psychoanalysis* (2025). She is also the editor of *Design Dialogue: Jews, Culture, and Viennese Modernism* (2018), *Designing Transformation: Jews and Cultural Identity in Central European Modernism* (2021), *Austrian Identity and Modernity: Culture and Politics in the 20th Century* (2025), and *Eine Wiener Schule in Berlin 1900–1933* (2026). She co-authored *Finding Ella Briggs: The Life and Work of an Unconventional Architect* (2025) in collaboration with a group of international experts. Her forthcoming co-edited book is *Crossing Borders: Central European Women in the Arts* (2026).

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Image Credits

Georges Didi-Huberman: Trauma, Testimony, Transmission

Morceaux d'écorce de platane conservés par Paul Celan dans un tiroir de son bureau parisien. Photographie publiée dans la Correspondance Paul Celan – Gisèle Celan-Lestrange (1951–1970), dir. B. Badiou et É. Celan, Paris, Le Seuil, 2001, II, pl. II.

**A Conversation between Karin Berger and Monika Pessler:
Women's Resistance: Trauma in Dialogue**

Film still "Kitchen-Talks with Rebel Women" (1984),

© Karin Berger

**Anindya Raychaudhuri : "What unmakes us, makes us": Food
and Dialogue in Narratives of the 1947 India-Pakistan
Partition**

Picture of Tenuulosa ilisha from the Bell Pettigrew Zoology collection, University of St Andrews (Item no. BPM1553)

**Galia Bar Or and Said Abu Shakra: Art as a Bridge in Times
of Crisis**

Said Abu Shakra and Galia Bar Or in dialogue: War Diary exhibition, Maya Gallery, Tel Aviv, © Galia Bar Or

**Lizaveta German and Pavlo Makov: Revisiting the "Fountain
of Exhaustion"**

Pavlo Makov, Fountain of Exhaustion. Acqua Alta, project for Ukrainian pavilion at the 59th International Art Exhibition — La Biennale di Venezia. © Sasha Maslov.

**Anna Kim & Doron Rabinovici: "People can handle the
truth"**

Book cover Anna Kim, *Anatomie einer Nacht*, (Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2013).

Book cover Doron Rabinovici, *Andernorts* (Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2010).