



# Rethinking Meštrović - Artist's residency manifest



Sveučilište  
u Splitu  
University  
of Split



The Meštrović Gallery



UNIVERSITY OF SPLIT,  
FACULTY OF CIVIL ENGINEERING,  
ARCHITECTURE AND GEODESY

COLUMBIA  
GSAPP

Zaha Hadid Architects



## About

Rethinking Meštrović: Artist's residency manifest is a 5-day course integrated into the Split Summer School organized by the University of Split. The workshop will be held from August 28<sup>th</sup> to September 1<sup>st</sup> 2023, in Split, Croatia. The participants will acquire theoretical knowledge and learn about architectural interventions through examples of the world's temporary cultural pavilions, art installations and preserved landscapes.

During the workshop, attendees will have a series of lectures by guest professors on the given topic (architecture, art, historic preservation, cultural landscapes, 3D scanning, preservation methods, art installations in public spaces, materialization, exhibition design, museums, curatorial approaches, the artwork of Ivan Meštrović), discussions, field trips, final presentation with guest critics, and an exhibition at the Gallery Meštrović. Participants will be divided into two groups: The first group will design an architectural landscape design proposal for the renovation of the Meštrović Gallery garden, with predetermined micro-locations for the installation of sculptures. The group will also design a sustainable temporary exhibition pavilion with predetermined guidelines. The second group will study and research exhibition design methods based on the selected sculptures. Before starting the design, all attendees will learn about historic preservation within the cultural landscape, including 3D scanning methods, allowing them to polish essential skills for the final design outcome. The result of their work will be an interior design proposal for the selected rooms at the Gallery, following the selected display of Ivan Meštrović's artworks.



## Timeline

### Day 1

- Introduction to workshop task (1h):
- Division of the students into two groups: 1st group will work on the landscape redesign and outdoor temporary pavilion design; 2nd group will work on the interior design task – including exhibition design for the selected sculptures and rooms at the Gallery Meštrović
- Lectures (4h) introduction to landscape design, historic preservation and exhibition design
- Meštrović Gallery visit (3h)
- Individual work /exercise /design

### Day 2

- Lectures (4h) and discussion (30 min)
- Desk critics (1h)
- Individual work/exercise/design

### Day 3

- Lectures (2 h) and discussion (30 min)
- Desk critics (1h)
- Individual work/exercise/design

### Day 4

- Lectures (2h) and discussion (30 min)
- Desk critics (1h)
- Individual work/exercise/design

### Day 5

- Final project presentation
- Discussion with guest critics

Final works exhibition at the Meštrović Gallery – opening reception & ceremony at the end of the course week

Awards certificate – each student will receive a confirmation of the course attendance (2 ECTS study credits - equivalent to the US educational system) at the Exhibition opening



Programme lecturers

Christos Passas (in person)  
Director, Zaha Hadid Architects

Halley Ramos (online - with possibility of attending in person - depends on number of applicants)  
Columbia University, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, The Preservation  
Technology Lab

Andre Jauregui (online - with possibility of attending in person - depends on number of applicants)  
Columbia University, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, The Preservation  
Technology Lab

Barry Bergdoll (online)  
Columbia University, Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation  
Meyer Schapiro Professor of Art History and Archaeology

Samantha Pavić Džanko (in person)  
Columbia GSAPP Alumni Ambassador for Europe  
University of Split, Faculty of Civil Engineering, Architecture and Geodesy, Department of  
Architectural Design, Split, Croatia

Vesna Bulić Baketić (in person)  
Director, City Museum of Split

Saša Begović (in person)  
Professor, University of Zagreb, Faculty of Architecture, Department of Architecture,  
Founder, 3LHD Architects

Iris Marinović (in person)  
Art Curator, The Meštrović Gallery Split



### Important dates:

Course dates: August 28<sup>th</sup> - September 1<sup>st</sup> 2023

Deadline for application: ~~31/07/2023~~—extended, please contact directly Samantha Pavic via email: [spavic@gradst.hr](mailto:spavic@gradst.hr)

Confirmation of the course: 01/08/2023 - extended

Payment due by: 10/08/2023 extended

Price of the course: 300 € (tax included)

Certification: 2 ECTS credits (or US educational equivalent)

### Application

Please apply through the official website:

<https://split-summerschool.com/rethinking-mestrovic/>

### Accommodation

Individual arrangement or special accommodation offer partially supported and funded by the University of Split.

The deal includes accommodation in the recently built dormitory Kampus, 5 nights, 3 meals per day (breakfast, lunch, dinner).

Price: 255 Euros (ensuite single room) 280 Euros (ensuite shared twin room). The price includes all taxes and fees.

Dormitory Kampus:

<https://www.booking.com/hotel/hr/rooms-dr-franjo-tudman-.hr.html>

<https://www.scst.unist.hr/smjestaj/studentski-domovi/dom-kampus-dr-franjo-tudman>





The Bowman and The Spearman by Ivan Meštrović at Chicago Grant Park

### About the Artist

Ivan Meštrović was born on August 15, 1883, in Vrpolje, Slavonia, where his parents were temporarily employed. Soon after his birth the family moved back to their home village of Otavice near Dmiš. The young Ivan showed his skills in modelling at a very early age. Having grown up in a traditional and patriarchal family, his contact with the motifs of folk epics and the Bible gave him an inexhaustible source of inspiration that was to accompany him throughout his creative life.

After his talent had been noticed, with the help of people from Dmiš, young Meštrović took his first steps in stone carving in the workshop of Pavao Bilinić in Split, where he arrived as a 17-year-old. His departure for the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna in 1901, however, marked the beginning of a brilliant artistic career. After his education at the academy came years of work and exhibiting in many European cultural centres - Rome, Paris, London, Geneva and Cannes.

The inter-war period, one of the most packed and significant times of Meštrović's life and work, was spent in Croatia. At that time he created a series of superlative works of architecture and sculpture. After World War II Meštrović emigrated to the USA, where he worked as a professor of sculpture at Syracuse University (New York) and Notre Dame University (South Bend, Indiana).

He demonstrated his affection for his own people in 1952, when in a Deed of Gift to the Croatian People he donated his 132 artworks and four properties: his family house and studio in Zagreb; the religious complex of Orikvine - Kaštilac and the villa at Meje in Split; and his family mausoleum, the Church of the Most Holy Redeemer, near Otavice. The buildings donated, later converted to make them suitable for museum spaces, together with the large number of artworks gifted, today make up the Ivan Meštrović Museums.

Ivan Meštrović died on January 16, 1962, in South Bend; he is buried in the family mausoleum near Otavice.

## The Meštrović Gallery

Throughout the second decade of the 20th century, Ivan Meštrović bought plots in the area of Meje, the western part of Split, with the intention of building his future residence. Construction works began at the end of the 1920s. The land is fenced in by a southern wall with two auxiliary buildings right next to the entrance (according to the project by Fabijan Kaliterna) over which a promenade with stone columns and wooden beams would be erected at a later point, and farther in the direction from the east a villa would be built. For this representative architectural structure Ivan Meštrović, the alpha and omega of the idea of the project, collaborated with architect Lavoslav Horvat and for the construction of the building project with Harold Billinić and construction entrepreneur Marin Marasović, the head of the performance of the entire structure.

The construction of the eastern wing with the studio and office in the ground floor and the living spaces on the first floor began in 1931. In the course of the works, the terrain is straitened, the supporting and new fence walls are erected, the auxiliary studio for modeling sculptures in clay is built (1934), and outside the complex of the villa, towards the sea, two workshops are built for the carving of caryatids of the Monument to the Unknown Hero on Avala. In 1937, the entrance porch is extended, the vehicle access road is constructed, the central ground-floor part of the house is built and, finally, during 1938 and 1939, the west wing of the building with a storage room for models and the central hall of the first floor are built.

According to Meštrović's instructions, the park horticulture is designed and Mediterranean herbs are planted. Meštrović's concept of the villa in Meje was based on three purposes: work, living and exhibiting, which are becoming more and more spatially defined as construction progresses. The functions merged under the attribute private were placed in the spacious wings, while those of public character were placed in the central body of the house. Today, when the gallery content prevailed, only the original appearance of the dining room evokes the intimacy of what was then the artist's home and his life in it.

The villa at Meje was the favourite residence of Ivan Meštrović and his family since the summer of 1932, but despite the artist's desire, it did not become his permanent residence. In April 1941, on the occasion of the death of Marta Meštrović, Ivan's mother, the family gathered there for the last time. They were caught by the Italian occupation of the city. To avoid arrest, Meštrović goes to Zagreb where he will soon find himself behind bars of Ustaša prison, while his wife and children will finally leave the Split home one year later. Their correspondence from the time is preserved in the Meštrović Gallery as part of the family archive. After the family had left, the property and the house were first looked after Meštrović friend, writer Milan Ćurčin, who lived on site, followed by art historian Cvito Fisković. The artist's relatives, as well as other families, lived in the villa until 1965.

In the Deed of Donation of 31 January 1952, Ivan Meštrović donated four of his buildings and 132 works of art to the Croatian people. According to the attached list, the works were included in the composition of each building, creating thus the preconditions for the formation of the Meštrović Gallery as a museum institution.

The Gallery holds the artist's masterpieces made of marble (*Psyche*, 1927; *Contemplation*, 1924), bronze (*Distant Chords*, 1918; *Cyclops*, 1933; *Persephone*, 1946; *Virgin and Child*, 1917; *Job*, 1946), wood (*Grieving Angels* and *Merry Angels*, 1916), and plaster (*Pietà*, 1946), which cover all of the periods of the artist's prolific creation until 1946.



The permanent setting follows the spatial-thematic definitions. The central hall in the ground floor is decorated as a representative entrance space. It mostly holds marble sculptures. The dining room has kept the original character of the artist's home. It contains Meštrović's furniture, several paintings and bronze portraits of family members. The large exhibition hall on the eastern side of the ground floor is dedicated to sacral sculpture, an important theme of Meštrović's art. The hall is dominated by wooden sculptures of Adam and Eve (1939 – 1941). Alongside the sacral setting, a special space is dedicated to the monumental sculpture Pietà. The hall of the western wing on the first floor displays Meštrović's works inspired by Impressionism, Secession and Art-Déco. The eastern hall holds sculptures created mainly between the two world wars. Next to it, there is an interesting special hall dedicated to the theme of Job. The large central hall of the first floor is intended for exhibiting sculptures, but also for occasional cultural events in the Gallery. Additionally, the permanent exhibition of the sculptures on the first floor is completed by Meštrović's drawings.

In addition to museum artefacts (sculptures, drawings, paintings, architectural drawings and furniture), the Gallery preserves documentation referring to the life and opus of Ivan Meštrović – photographs of his first works of art taken at the beginning of the century in Vienna and Paris, as well as archive materials, primarily the family archive found in the house in 1952, containing letters from family members and friends, their personal documents, etc.

Literature:

*Šeparović, Maja. Review of the activities of the Ivan Meštrović Gallery, Cultural Heritage 34, Split, 2007*  
*Ivan Meštrović Gallery, permanent exhibition catalog, Ivan Meštrović Foundation, Zagreb, 2005*



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