

BEYOND RETURN: REMATRIATION, TEMPORAL REPAIR, AND LIVING HERITAGE

Date: 3 July 2026

Time: 3:30 PM – 7:30 PM (CET)

Venue: Yellow Room, Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum

Address: Cäcilienstraße 29–33, 50676 Cologne, Germany

Programme Outline

I. Opening & Framework

3:30 – 3:40 PM

Welcome Address and Opening Remarks

Speaker: Nanette Snoep (Director, Rautenstrauch-Joest-Museum)

Welcome to participants and opening remarks introducing the workshop's commitment to rematriation, temporal repair, living heritage, and decolonial museum practice.

3:40 – 3:50 PM

Introduction and Moderation

Speaker: Sonia Tesfaye Abebe

Introduction to the workshop's conceptual framework and the broader ReMatrification Project, presenting the themes of gendered heritage, living knowledge systems, embodied memory, artistic practice, and community-centred approaches to cultural heritage.

II. Gendered & Living Heritage

3:50 – 4:10 PM

Matrimoine, Gendered Heritage, and African Collections in European Museums

Speaker: Dr. Bansoa Sigam

Drawing on her research on African patrimoine within European museum collections, Dr. Sigam explores the intersections of gender, memory, museum collections, and decolonial approaches to cultural heritage. Her presentation highlights the importance of recovering women's histories, cultural knowledge, and their contributions to African heritage.

4:10 – 4:25 PM

Discussion and Audience Q&A

4:25 – 4:45 PM

Objects, Provenance, and Living Heritage: Perspectives from Cameroon

Speaker: Paule-Clisthène Dassi Koudjou

Drawing on Cameroonian cultural histories, Paule-Clisthène Dassi Koudjou examines the central role of women in precolonial African societies and their artistic, spiritual, educational, and culinary contributions to community life. Her presentation explores how colonialism contributed to the invisibilization of women's heritage and considers rematriation as a process of reclaiming female knowledge, cultural memory, and the histories of objects and cultural productions now held in Western museum collections.

4:45 – 5:00 PM

Discussion and Audience Q&A

III. Embodied Knowledge, Environmental Resilience, and Living Heritage

5:00 – 5:15 PM

Environmental Resilience and Social Networks

Speaker: Ana Rosa

Ana Rosa explores the relationship between environmental resilience, community care, and social networks, highlighting how ecological stewardship, collective action, and local knowledge systems strengthen communities in the face of environmental and social change. Her presentation examines the importance of reciprocal relationships between people, place, and nature, emphasizing resilience as a collaborative and intergenerational practice rooted in care, sustainability, and community well-being.

5:15 – 5:40 PM

The Body as a Living Archive: Movement, Memory, and Inherited Knowledge

Speaker: Ana Valeria González

Ana Valeria González examines the body as a living archive through movement, embodied memory, and inherited knowledge. Drawing on artistic and community-based practices, her presentation explores how the body preserves cultural memory across generations and serves as a site for transmitting ancestral knowledge, identity, resistance, and collective healing. By centering embodied practices, she reflects on the body as a space where memory, history, and cultural continuity are continuously enacted and renewed.

5:40 – 6:00 PM

Recovering Overlooked Histories: Women, Resistance, and Anti-Colonial Struggles in Kenya

Speaker: Dr. Rahab Njeri

This presentation explores the overlooked contributions of women to anti-colonial resistance in Kenya, highlighting women's political agency, everyday acts of resistance, and the importance of recovering gendered histories within broader decolonial memory work.

6:00 – 6:15 PM

Discussion and Audience Q&A

IV. Artistic Intervention & Closing

6:15 – 6:55 PM

OVUM: Embodied Liberation, Ancestral Care Practices, and Ancient Knowledge Systems

Artist: Safiya Yon

Through a multidisciplinary artistic intervention, Safiya Yon explores ancestral care practices, embodied liberation, fertility, memory, and Indigenous knowledge systems. The performance invites participants into a shared space of reflection, healing, and reconnection with ancestral ways of knowing through movement, installation, ritual, and collective participation.

6:55 – 7:10 PM

Collective Reflections

An open discussion among speakers, artists, and participants reflecting on the workshop's themes of rematriation, temporal repair, living heritage, embodied knowledge, environmental resilience, and decolonial futures.

7:15 – 7:30 PM

Networking and Informal Exchange

Participants are invited to continue conversations, build new collaborations, and engage in informal networking over refreshments.