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Uzbekistan Art and Culture Development Foundation (ACDF) Presents the First Conference on Preservation of Tashkent's Modernist Architecture

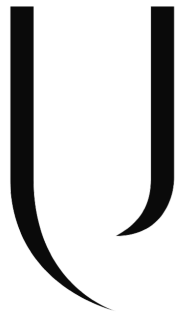
Uzbekistan Art and Culture Development Foundation is pleased to announce the inaugural conference dedicated to the preservation of modernist architecture in the Uzbek capital. The conference titled *Where in the World Is Tashkent* will be held on October 18-19, 2023, as part of the *Tashkent Modernism XX/XXI* research and preservation project. The event will be dedicated to the memory of architect and historian **Jean-Louis Cohen** (1949–2023), who was an important contributor to this project.

The conference will feature a keynote lecture by architect **Rem Koolhaas** and talks by other distinguished speakers including the General Director of the Pinacoteca di Brera and Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense **James M. Bradburne**; Principal of Counterspace and Professor of Practice, UCL **Sumayya Vally**; writer and curator **Shumon Basar**; Director of the Anthropology and History Museum of the State of Mexico **Eduardo A. Escalante Carrillo**; Advisor for Heritage Projects, Bahrain Authority for Culture & Antiquities **Noura Al Sayeh-Holtrop**; Director of the Swiss Architecture Museum S AM **Andreas Ruby**; Director of MAXXI Architettura **Lorenza Baroncelli**; Associate professor of Architectural Restoration at Politecnico di Milano **Davide Del Curto**; Chairperson of Uzbekistan Art and Culture Development Foundation **Gayane Umerova**, and various other Uzbek and international preservation experts, architects and historians.

The event will take place at the State Museum of Arts in Tashkent, one of the most remarkable buildings within the project that will be partially renovated in the run-up to the conference.

The conference is going to shed light on Tashkent's modernist heritage and bring it to the world stage. By raising awareness about its significance, the conference aims to gather expertise from around the globe and foster an exchange of ideas to implement a comprehensive preservation strategy for Tashkent's architectural legacy.

The program of the conference will cover a diverse range of topics relating to the preservation of modernist heritage. These discussions will also reimagine public spaces, explore the role of cultural institutions in promoting a critical revision of architectural history, and address the potentialities and challenges related to Tashkent's candidacy for the UNESCO World Heritage status.



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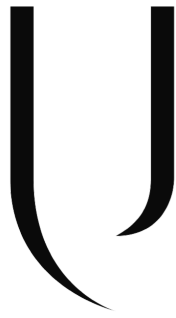
The conference will take place alongside the *Tashkent Modernism. Index* exhibition, a crucial component of the project that will present to the Tashkent public the results of two years of meticulous research. Initially inaugurated to a professional audience at the Triennale Milano 2023 in April, the show consists of two interdependent layers: the specially commissioned photographs by artist **Armin Linke** and the archival display that articulates the research themes and showcases the elements of the preservation strategies. The Tashkent edition of the exhibition will be expanded and enriched by original archival documents as well as artworks from the collection of the State Museum of Art from the 1960–80s that celebrate the culture and architecture of these decades.

The attendees will be invited to partake in a walking tour along the cultural trail created by the ACDF and **Laboratorio Permanente**. This route connects the two dozen buildings featured in the project, many of which are proposed for heritage status. The trail will be available through an iOS and Android app presented in three languages and enriched with videos and archival photos.

Tashkent Modernism XX/XXI is an extensive research project initiated and commissioned by the ACDF and coordinated by **Grace**, a Milan-based architecture studio founded by architect **Ekaterina Golovatyuk**. The research team is composed of architects, historians, and preservation experts from across the globe, including art historian and curator **Boris Chukhovich**, **Laboratorio Permanente**, and the **Department of Architecture and Urban Studies at Politecnico di Milano**.

The history of Tashkent modernism traces back to the ambitious redevelopment plans of the early 1960s that aimed to radically modernize the city. After the devastating earthquake of 1966 had leveled large portions of Tashkent, the implementation of these plans hastened. Architects from all over the Soviet Union joined forces with local specialists to rebuild Tashkent, creating a unique form of architectural modernism that incorporated elements of Islamic architecture, local vernacular ingenuity, and the most advanced engineering feats of that time.

In the years following the collapse of the Soviet Union, much of this architectural heritage was neglected, redeveloped, or threatened with demolition. As more and more buildings were disappearing, the ACDF started a large-scale campaign to raise awareness about their value and save them from destruction.



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The title of the conference *Where in the World Is Tashkent* references a panel organized by the American Institute of Architects in 2000. The event was called *Where in the World Is Chicago?* and was focused on the state of architecture in the city that occupies a very special place in the history of modern architecture. Alluding to the event, the conference in Tashkent seeks to retroactively align the Uzbek capital with other cities around the globe that significantly contributed to the modernist movement.

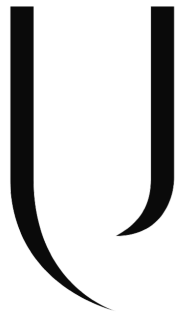
In November 2023, the ACDF will present an exhibition about Tashkent Modernism at the Sharjah Architecture Triennial. Curated by architect **Wael Al Awar**, the exhibition will offer a reflective exploration of the transformations undergone by three modernist buildings in Tashkent—the State Museum of Arts, Zarafshan Restaurant, and Samarkand Teahouse (now Oriental School)—since their construction. Ekaterina Golovatyuk of Grace serves as a scientific advisor for the project.

Another exhibition on Tashkent Modernism will take place at the S AM Swiss Architecture Museum in 2024, coinciding with Architekturwoche Basel and Design Miami/Basel. Curated by the S AM team and Ekaterina Golovatyuk, the show will serve as an example for other countries involved in the preservation of modernist heritage.

In addition, the ACDF will collaborate with Rizzoli and Lars Müller publishing houses to release books dedicated to *Tashkent Modernism XX/XXI*.

UZBEKISTAN ART AND CULTURE DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION (ACDF)

Uzbekistan Art and Culture Development Foundation was founded in 2017 by the decree of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. It fosters international cooperation and promotes the culture of Uzbekistan on the international stage. Its aim is to showcase national heritage by initiating projects related to fine arts, architecture, literature, theater, music, craft, design, and dance. The mission of the Foundation is to create an inclusive and accessible environment in the country's cultural institutions, contribute to the renovation of museums, and develop cultural patronage and professional training for the arts and culture sector.



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GAYANE UMEROVA

Gayane Umerova is the Chairperson of Uzbekistan Art and Culture Development Foundation (ACDF) and Secretary-General of the National Commission of the Republic of Uzbekistan for UNESCO. Gayane holds BA in Business Administration from Westminster University and MA in Art Business from Sotheby's Institute of Art and Manchester University. She is a commissioner of the Uzbekistan National Pavilion at La Biennale di Venezia. She recently commissioned two major exhibitions in Paris: *The Splendours of Uzbekistan's Oases* at the Musée du Louvre and *The Road to Samarkand: Miracles of Silk and Gold* at the Institut du monde arabe.

GRACE

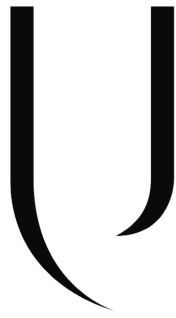
Grace is a Milan-based international studio of architecture, design, and research. Co-founded by Ekaterina Golovatyuk and Giacomo Cantoni, a substantial part of Grace's portfolio is dedicated to exhibition design, museum architecture, and preservation of heritage. In 2019, Grace was selected by Domus Magazine among the top 100 best architectural practices worldwide.

LABORATORIO PERMANENTE

Laboratorio Permanente is a Milan-based practice founded by Nicola Russi and Angelica Sylos Labini which works at different scales, from architecture to interior design and urban design. All its projects build on a sensible observation of their context and its multiple features: the natural environment, the material culture of each place with its own norms, the identity of local communities, and even the personal history of individuals.

BORIS CHUKHOVICH

Boris Chukhovich (b. 1962, Tashkent) is a leading historian specializing in Central Asian art and architecture and an independent curator and author. He curated multiple exhibitions of Central Asian art in Montreal, Ottawa, Venice, Bishkek, and Almaty. Chukhovich is an associated researcher at the University of Montreal and president of the Observatory of Central Asian Cultural Heritage Alerte Héritage. Currently, he serves as a visiting scholar at Politecnico di Milano.



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POLITECNICO DI MILANO – DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN STUDIES

The Department of Architecture and Urban Studies is an interdisciplinary research structure of the Politecnico di Milano, established in 2013. It carries out research, design experimentation and training activities in the field of architectural and urban design, spatial planning and territorial governance, urban policies, preservation and intervention on the built and natural heritage, and historical and critical interpretation of architecture and the city.

For photos and archival images click [here](#).

Instagram: [tashkentmodernism](#)

Press contacts:

Florian Vanicatte
florian@sendreceive.eu
+33 617 216 932

Send/Receive
www.sendreceive.eu
Rosa-Luxemburg-Straße 45
10178 Berlin
Germany