

**From Theatrical Silence to Labyrinthine;
In Search of Critical Engagement with Cultural Heritage.
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In the paper, I closely examine the spatial conditions and practises that support two kinds of silence, which permeate institutional engagement with heritage; I then discuss their effects on participants' experience. In particular, I ethnographically investigate the silences that occur during museum-theatre events, mostly designed for engaging the general public (Jackson and Kidd 2011; McConachie and Hart 2006; Shaughnessy 2012), but also the silences that occur during the puzzling surveys of obscure archaeological remains, conducted by heritage professionals (Barker 1993; Carver 2009). The ethnographic passage from public to professional engagement serves the identification of those silences that support more critical and enquiring forms of engagement and an 'in-the-wild' investigation of the spatial conditions and practices that support them.

Throughout the paper, I presuppose that institutional practices of public or professional engagement with past remains are systematic and culturally orchestrated memory practices. I also suggest that while public engagement is predominantly shaped by the theatrical model, professional engagement is structured by what I define in the paper as a labyrinthine one. Taking a critical approach on the theatrical model, I look into the labyrinthine engagement of professional archaeologists for those silences that can support a more enquiring interaction with past remains.

Ultimately, I suggest that during theatrical engagement with heritage, silence most often works as a reception to events of revelation but also of deception. Such a silence is supported by introverted, binary and well-delineated spaces. By contrast, the silence that dominates professional engagement with past remains works as the main hall of 'intensified outwardness' and 'heightened attention'. Such silences are mostly supported by open-ended, fragmented and obscure environments. Focusing on the spatial condition and practices that consistently support critical and enquiring forms of engagement, I turn the spotlight from theatrical silence to labyrinthine one and suggest that it is the former to which we willingly surrender, and the latter that we employ to transgress