Walking through time
Oct 19 – 29, 2015
Workshop Report prepared by Alisha Sadikot (facilitator)

Workshop Aim: This programme aimed to encourage critical engagement with, and build rigorous understanding of, the theory and practice, the art and the science, of creating and leading successful heritage tours in the city of Mumbai. The workshop was conceptualised in response to the college’s need to offer its students practical experience of some of the thought processes and skills that they will need as future professionals in the fields of heritage, history, tourism.

Workshop Objectives:
• At the conclusion of this intensive programme, students will have conceptualised, researched and led tours on themes of their choice
• They will have worked together successfully in teams to execute their ideas
• They will be comfortable communicating with and leading large groups of people
• They will be able to go ahead and build/lead further tours in future.

Participant Details:
Number of registered participants: 17
Cost per student: INR 2000

Session Details:
1. Monday, October 19: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
In this first session, participants were introduced to the concept of Heritage Interpretation, and its central place in any activity aimed at public engagement with heritage. Other focal points of the interactive discussion on the day included what heritage meant to each participant, the different categories of heritage and different ways of engaging audiences with that heritage. Finally, we discussed the various steps and elements involved in creating and leading effective heritage walks.
A copy of the presentation prepared for the session has been shared with all the students and Prof. Fleur D’souza via email.

2. Tuesday, October 20: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
A discussion and recap of the previous day’s session was followed by a group activity where participants suggested themes and ideas that interested them for the tours they would create. Based on their choice of theme and subject, students were taken out of their friends’ circles and comfort zones and mixed into teams of 2 or 3 with colleagues who were at the time strangers. Their ability to work together as teams would be a critical part of the entire exercise.
A point to note is that none of the teams could choose the geographical area of Fort, Mumbai, or the ‘history of Mumbai’ as their theme as they would all be attending a walk through the heritage precinct with the facilitator. Their walks had to be based on original ideas; this also helped them get creative and expand what they thought came under the tag of ‘heritage’. Needless to say, they came up with some fantastic ideas and themes.

3. Wednesday, October 21: 8:30 am – 10:30 am
The group then joined me on a heritage walk through the centre of Mumbai’s historic fort district, which for many of them was a first time visit! We discovered the story of the city’s origins and growth, but focused equally on practical lessons in leading walks; many previously new ideas would come to seem so obvious to them, once they experienced them as an audience would. I purposefully did a few things wrong, and part of their exercise was to critique me and call me out on what didn’t work and why.
4. **Friday, October 23: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm**

This session was spent analysing the group’s experience as the audience for the previous day’s heritage walk; for several participants this was the first experience attending any kind of heritage walk/tour experience. Being cast into the role of the audience, and being made to think and share what they liked and didn’t like, meant that they were now so much better prepared to create their own heritage experiences for others. The group then broke into their teams to continue planning their tours for the following week, with each team sharing their ideas and receiving some initial help and feedback from the facilitator. We ended the session with a mutually decided schedule for the next week!

5. **Monday, October 26, 2015**

8:00 – 10:00 am*
Newcomers to Mumbai and the skills they need to survive! Led by Vaishnavi Kukillaya, Irene Leo and Natasha Fernandes. 10:30 am – 12:30 pm

Exploring Crawford and Manish Markets: Led by Tamara Rasquinha, Purav Shah and Andre Charan; 3:00 – 5:00 pm
Food tour of Mohamed Ali Road by Fabian Rodrigues, Clarissa Fernandes and Vishaka Menon; 5:30 – 7:00 pm
7.  Wednesday, October 28, 2015

Bandra’s Art, Architecture and Spaces led by Eleanor Pinto, Cristine Cardoz and Angela Rodrigues; 8:00 – 10:00 am
Food tour of Bandra by Pearl Shroff and Rita D’Souza; 10:30 am – 12:30 pm

8.  Evaluation: Thursday October 29; 9:00 – 11:00 am

The critical final session focused on feedback and evaluations. Whilst I have conducted similar workshops for colleges over the last four years, this was the first time that it was planned over two intensive weeks. I was worried that it might be too long for students during their holidays, so it was gratifying to hear from the group that they would have liked it even longer! We discussed the overall aim of the workshop, its defined objectives, the learnings each one took away and their biggest
challenges. I am grateful for their openness and cautiously optimistic that the workshop met its objectives and provided the learning it was intended to.

• In response to the workshop’s defined objectives, all students who shared their feedback agreed that these had been met.
• Several students detailed how they have a new appreciation of the complexity involved in conceptualising, organising and leading a heritage walk, where earlier this had seemed a much more simplistic activity.
• One of the workshop’s primary learning aims was to underline the central importance of the audience, over even content, in planning for any kind of interpretive heritage activity. Several students acknowledged this particular shift in their understanding.
• From their feedback it is clear that the students have understood the importance and difficulties of working together as a team. This understanding will hold them in good stead in any professional role they assume in future.
• All students said that they would recommend this workshop session to their friends and colleagues.

About the Facilitator
Alisha Sadikot is an independent museums and heritage education professional working to instigate critical and creative public engagement with museum collections and heritage spaces in Mumbai. Her practice, through the Inheritage Project (founded 2011), focuses on educational, family and other groups from the city. Alisha was Curator, Education & Outreach, at the Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum from 2012 to 2015 where she developed and built the Museum’s popular learning programme.
Alisha has a Bachelor of Arts in History, with Honours, from St. Xavier’s College, University of Mumbai, a Masters degree in History of Art from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, and a Post-Graduate Diploma in Heritage and Museum Education and Interpretation from the International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies (ICCHS), Newcastle University. She has been leading heritage walks and visits in Mumbai for the last 11 years. Museums are her happy place.

Thank you.