

# The Institute of Architecture Documentation

The Institute of Architecture Documentation of the Silesian Library was established in November 2018. It is an extension of the “Creators of Silesian Architecture. Portraits” project, carried out in the Silesian Library since 2014. It is also the result of the active, social involvement of the Interdisciplinary Research Team “Reflektory”, which has been cooperating with the Silesian Library for the last several years. The team consists of architects, art historians, photographers, academics, students, as well as researchers and artists from outside the academic community. They were among the first to notice the value and beauty of “misbegotten” Silesian architecture and decided to study, describe, promote and protect it.

The project was initiated by Iga Herok-Turska (Silesian Library) in collaboration with prof. dr hab. Ewa Chojecka and academic staff from the Faculty of Architecture at the Silesian University of Technology and the Art History Department at the University of Silesia, the Association of Polish Architects, the Silesian Regional Chamber of Architects, the Technical College in Katowice and the Museum of Architecture in Wrocław. In 2019, a 9-person Scientific Council was established to cooperate with the Institute, supporting the Institute’s activities with its knowledge and experience.

## Objectives of the Institute of Architecture Documentation

- Conducting archival and documentary activities and digitising materials concerning the architectural heritage of Upper Silesia and the Silesian Voivodeship,

as well as taking action to protect objects at risk of loss.

- Creating a source base for present and future research on post-war architecture and biographies of its outstanding creators.
- Conducting interdisciplinary scientific, research, educational and dissemination work in the field of the architectural heritage of Upper Silesia in the second half of the 20th century.
- Honouring the doyens among Silesian architects by organising benefit celebrations.
- Integration of artists, researchers and students around the issues related to the architecture of the region and the problem of “new heritage” and its protection.

## **Projects carried out by the Institute of Architecture Documentation**

- Archiving and documentation activities
  - Architects' Archive – collecting, developing, digitising and sharing collections.
  - Architects' Studio – reconstruction of the architects' workshops from the 2nd half of the 20th century.
  - New Archive – acquiring new source materials (interviews, films, photographic material)
- Research activities
  - The “Reflektory” series of publications dedicated to the creators of post-war architecture. The first volume of the series entitled “Reflektory. Interdyscyplinarne spojrzenie na dziedzictwo architektury Górnego Śląska drugiej połowy XX wieku” [“Spotlights. An Interdisciplinary Look at the Architectural Heritage of Upper Silesia in the

Second Half of the 20th Century”] was published in 2017 and received the Minister of Investment and Development Award (2019) for publication in the fields of architecture and construction, planning and zoning, and housing.

- Grants and research projects: participation in a Polish-German research project devoted to the architectural heritage of the Ballestrem family.
  - “Architectural Triad” – regular lectures (professor, student, guest) on the architecture of Silesia and its creators.
  - Participation in scientific sessions and conferences in Poland and abroad.
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- Educational and dissemination activities
    - The series “Creators of Silesian Architecture. Portraits” – includes the implementation of architectural exhibitions, publication of “Szlakiem Architekta” [“Architect’s Route”] maps, preparation of catalogues and “Portret architekta” [“Architect’s Portrait”] film notations, as well as the organisation of benefit celebrations for doyens among architects. So far, there have been 4 editions of the project dedicated to such architects as: Henryk Buszko (2014), Aleksander Franta (2015), Jerzy Gottfried (2016) and Jurand Jarecki (2018). Further editions of the series are in the preparation stage.
    - “Złota 10 Architektury Miast Metropolii Śląskiej” [“The Golden 10 of Silesian City Architecture”] – a series of plebiscites, exhibitions and presentations which are a form of promotion of objects of Silesian post-war architecture.
    - Architectural and historical open-air venues – a return to the tradition of freehand drawing, which was the domain of the architectural profession. It

is also a way to popularise small towns, e.g. “Dębowiec – a small centre of the world in Cieszyn Silesia”.

- Exhibitions – exhibitions and vernissages in Poland and abroad.

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