

The changes that are imposed onto cultural artifacts are an essential part of their dynamic careers. Perhaps if they remained unchanged and unmoving we would no longer be able to see them clearly. The paintings in Dresden reveal a sensitive and understated approach to cleaning and the removal/reapplication of paint coupled with a delight in gloss varnish (damar varnish rather than the optically clear synthetic varnish used on Veronese's *Wedding at Cana*).

Restoration styles vary from country to country, from person to person, and from generation to generation. Originality was once an *aura*, a singular wisp on the edge of nothingness. Facsimile was a dirty word associated with fakes and falsification. The perception is shifting. Facsimiles in the twenty-first century are opening the door to truth and verification. The word copy does not need to be derogative. It comes from the same etymology as "copious," and thus designates a source of *abundance*, a proof of fecundity. If originality is redefined as something that is fecund enough to produce an abundance of copies, the future for our shared cultural heritage is very bright.

ON SELF-EFFACEMENT: THE AESTHETICS OF PRESERVATION

Jorge Otero-Pailos

Just as Linda Nochlin asked why women had been excluded from the art world,¹ one might wonder why there are no famous preservation architects, male or female. It is not for shortage of prestigious commissions. Everyone knows the Parthenon, for instance, but even architects are hard-pressed to name their colleagues who created its contemporary image. Architectural education is partly to blame. Introductory courses teach about the Acropolis as if it had come down to us in its present form, without ever a mention of Leo von Klenze (1784–1864), Nikolaos Balanos (1860–1942), or the Ottoman town and Frankish fortress from which they extricated the Periclean stones we see today. Only preservation insiders know such figures and their accomplishments in the preservation field, even though preservationists have reworked almost every major building older than half a century. There are cultural reasons too for why preservationists are not acknowledged. When we visit monuments we like to suspend disbelief in the same way as when we attend theatrical performances. We allow ourselves to think that we are witnessing the untainted evidence of the past, when in fact it has been heavily manipulated, and we can only grasp it as such thanks to the staging effects produced by preservationists. Without discounting all these factors, I would like to focus on the active role that preservationists play in keeping their creative achievements undetected. Contrary to other design fields where creativity is judged in terms of recognizable self-expression, preservation's central expressive ideal is self-effacement. To understand the relative anonymity that preservationists pursue and enjoy, what follows traces the common theme of self-effacement through some of the emblematic twentieth-century theories of preservation aesthetics. What preservationists have achieved through their self-effacement is nothing short of a new art form, which is like all other art forms in that it aspires to explain our contemporary moment. These architectural interventions are also different in that they confront us with the question of how long our contemporary moment will last. They ask us to imagine that temporal horizon by presenting us with the fact that the ability of objects to endure intelligibly into, or be undone by, the future depends on our ability to preserve them.

1 Linda Nochlin, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists," *ArtNews* 69, no. 2 (January 1971), pp. 25–71.

2 On the supplementary character of frames and their importance in making artworks intelligible, see Jacques Derrida, *The Truth In Painting* (1978), trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Ian McLeod, Chicago, 1987, pp. 45–76.

As with any aesthetic ideal, self-effacement is seldom achieved. Yet it serves as a standard against which excellence is judged according to the familiar scale that begins at the top with documentation, a version of the Hippocratic “do no harm,” through which preservationists record the existing state of old objects and take into account the negative effects of possible interventions. Further down the scale are progressively more intrusive interventions such as conservation, which intervenes only enough to maintain objects as they are; restoration, which completes objects as they might have been; adaptation, which changes objects to fit contemporary uses; and replication, which completely substitutes the object. Each of these terms acknowledges the need to manipulate objects in order to prolong their existence. At the same time they establish an aesthetic threshold beyond which the intervention is thought to undermine the authenticity of the original. This aesthetic threshold marks the border between affirming and denying the ideal of self-effacement. It must be invisible enough not to interfere with the experience of the work but sufficiently visible not to disappear completely, for pure self-effacement would be totally indiscernible and therefore appear as a falsification of the original.

SUPPLEMENT

Preservation can only claim the aesthetic ideal of self-effacement if it can show itself to be less important—that is, less real—than the original. Aesthetically, this means that it must be qualitatively inferior to the original. For example, documentation omits aspects of artworks or buildings that are unimportant, such as slight imperfections, or later alterations, in order to record what is truly important. Preservation’s instrumental loss of quality in comparison to the real object produces an aesthetic effect of opacity, or abstraction, that is intended to distinguish it from the real object. Opacity effaces the insignificant qualities of the work with the goal to better call attention to what is significant, to put it into relief, and to give it specificity. Through its own opacity, preservation aesthetics organizes our attention toward the old object, invites the viewer to consider what is clear and ignore what is unclear, and provides a framework for our intellection of the object as *historic*.

The contrasting play of obscuring and clarifying draws contours that divide between meaningful and meaningless elements in the old object. Aesthetically, preservation functions like a frame: it is meant to be supplementary, even invisible, yet visibly establish the boundaries of what is constitutive and external to the artwork.² This frame operates semantically, establishing a baseline of physical aspects

without which we would lose the ability to grasp the work’s meaning. It also operates pragmatically, identifying the materials that need to be preserved in order for the work to continue to be understood as art or architecture.

Preservation aesthetics aim at establishing the material needed to support our image of the old object’s aesthetic integrity, and make it understandable as a complete artwork or building. Yet, completeness is inextricable from loss, and inconceivable without it. Loss operates at two distinct but equally important levels. First, as with documentation, it constitutes preservation aesthetics by providing the basis of distinction (in other words, loss in quality) from the aesthetics of the original work. Second, it justifies preservation by setting up a threshold of intelligibility, associated to a given amount of physical material integrity without which the artwork is deemed irreparable, and which must therefore be protected from damage.

Preservation aesthetics are, in other words, an index of intelligibility. More precisely, they are an expression of the belief that losses to the material integrity of art and architecture can be read as losses in their meaning, or authenticity. This is why preservation techniques have been ranked according to the degree of material loss they inflict on the object preserved. Today we place documentation at the top, and substitution at the bottom. But this has not always been the case, and indeed as preservation evolved from its modest fifteenth-century beginnings, it slowly developed into a discourse defined by struggles to change the hierarchy.

STAGING ARCHITECTURE

Since Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–1768), one of the forefathers of art history, preservation has been charged with creating a proper setting for old art and architecture to be perceived as objects of knowledge. The intellectual content in decayed fragments of ancient sculptures was not immediately apparent, as the stones were dug up accidentally from the ground, mostly by tilling farmers, but also increasingly in the eighteenth century by amateur archeologists. Architects and sculptors, who today we would call preservationists, were called upon to restore the fragments into comprehensible images, which could be understood by their contemporaries to embody classical ideals of beauty. Winckelmann and his Neoclassical contemporaries sanctioned restoration methods that filled in the losses in ancient objects with undistinguishable new material, such as Bertel Thorvaldsen’s (1768–1844) acclaimed restoration of the Aegina Marbles, a group of ancient

3 Camillo Boito, "Restoration in Architecture: First Dialogue" (1893), trans. Cesare Birignani, *Future Anterior* 6, no. 1 (Summer 2009), pp. 68–83.

sculptures that once graced the pediment of the Doric temple of Aphaia (fifth century BCE). Preservation was expected to work somewhat akin to a primeval stage, which creates the aesthetic frame within which theatrical action acquires meaning. A stage must of course be present but also obviated in order to be effective. In the same way, preservation involves aesthetic devices that can both claim and deny their role in staging art and architecture as objects of knowledge. For instance, James Wyatt (1746–1813), Britain's revered Neoclassical architect and restorer, favored demolishing houses around Gothic cathedrals and re-placing them with lawns like those of Georgian mansions, in order to create proper stages for appreciating the monuments.

As an instrument of historical knowledge, preservation was never free from politics. With the rise and development of nationalism from the nineteenth century, preservation aesthetics became identified with national cultures and their degrees of civilization. A hagiography of national preservation heroes developed and their intellectual defense of one or another preservation technique were interpreted aesthetically, made exemplary, and turned into national schools, each with clear parentage: what John Ruskin (1819–1900) is to English conservation, Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc (1814–1879) is to French restoration, Ann Pamela Cunningham (1816–1875) to American preservation, Nikolaos Balanos (1860–1942) to Greek anastelosis, Sicheng Liang (1901–1972) to Chinese preservation, Lúcio Costa (1902–1998) to Brazilian *patrimônio*, and so on. Significantly, this search for a national differentiation coincided with the internationalization of preservation as a movement beyond Western Europe. The division of preservation aesthetics according to national schools was fully internalized by the end of the nineteenth century, when Camillo Boito (1836–1914) couched his bid to create an Italian school of *restauro* as a blend of the best in "French" and "English" schools.³ These nationalist preservation schools upheld distinct aesthetic expressions mostly by celebrating a single preservation technique, deemed to be superior, and inhibiting other (inevitably foreign) techniques. Thus we have the association of Britain with conservation, France with restoration, China with substitution, and so on. Beginning with the French Commission des monuments historiques (1830), national government-funded preservation bureaucracies were set up as much to protect (by then national) works of art and architecture as to construct nationalist preservation aesthetics, and to provide evidence of a national history.

REVERSIBILITY

By the interwar period, the pursuit of a way to replenish losses without incurring further damage on the original material coalesced into the concept of reversibility. Technically, this meant that whatever materials were added to the work in the process of protecting it or restoring its form should be entirely removable, and its former, incomplete, or damaged condition should be recoverable. Reversibility freed preservation aesthetics to be more visibly assertive, so long as they remained temporally ephemeral, and physically prophylactic.

Cesare Brandi (1906–1988), the founding director of the Istituto Centrale del Restauro (Central Institute for Restoration) in Rome (1939), became known as one of the principal theorists of reversibility with his concept of *tratteggio*. Both as technique and aesthetic, *tratteggio* referred to the inpainting of areas of chromatic loss in a painting in order to restore its aesthetic integrity. Brandi defined restoration as the production of a "methodological moment" in which the damaged thing before us ceases to be a meaningless object, and is instead appreciated as "art" in a state of decay that has compromised its aesthetic integrity. "Restoration," he continued, "must aim to establish the potential [aesthetic] unity of the work of art, as long as this is possible without producing an artistic or historical forgery and without erasing every trace of the passage of time left on the work of art."⁴ The damaged thing needed to be supplemented by restoration, its losses replenished, and its aesthetic image completed in order to be staged as an object of knowledge: a meaningful artwork.

To insure material reversibility, all retouching was to be done in a medium that differed from the original and could be easily removed, such as using watercolors to retouch an oil painting. More importantly for our purposes, *tratteggio* was also an aesthetic expression of reversibility. From a distance it was intended to make it impossible to perceive any difference between the restored and original portions of the canvas. But up close, the restored areas were to reveal themselves easily to the trained eye, as minute linear brushstrokes of color. Technically, aesthetically, and conceptually, *tratteggio* claimed (from afar) and denied (from up close) being the work of art in order to stage the original as the object of knowledge. Inversely, it also claimed (from up close) and denied (from afar) being preservation. In other words, *tratteggio* expressed preservation aesthetics as an endless play of substitutions between art-work and preservation-work.

Tratteggio expressed reversibility mostly as a problem of the artwork's surface. It therefore had less traction in architectural preservation, where reversibility created different technical challenges given the primacy of the need to maintain structural stability. The concept

4 Cesare Brandi, "Theory of Restoration" (1963), trans. Gianni Ponti with Alessandra Melucco Vaccaro, in *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, ed. Nicholas Stanley Price et al., Los Angeles, 1996, pp. 230–35, 339–42, 377–79.

1 Tasos Tanoulas, Anastelosis of the east front of Propylaia, Acropolis, Athens, 1990–2010. New blocks of Pentelic marble are slightly lighter than the original ones.



of *anastelosis* was introduced by Balanos during the interwar period to describe the process of re-erecting carved stones (stelae) fallen from ancient temples. Balanos put his theory into practice as director of the anastelosis of the buildings on the Acropolis, including the Parthenon. Balanos filled in the areas of loss with Pentelic marble, but took liberties to cut the ancient ashlar blocks to facilitate their adhesion to new stones. The question was how recognizable the new stones should be from the old. He articulated similar aesthetic principles to *trateggio* within architectural preservation, arguing that the new should only supplement the old fragments enough to give visitors a sense of the ancient building's form.⁵ Anastelosis was codified in the influential Charter of Venice (1964) as the "conservation of a monument and the reinstatement of its form" to make it more comprehensible, using

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new materials to replenish the losses, and cementing the detached fragments back onto the building, but being careful to treat the new material in such a way as to make it theoretically possible for a trained viewer to distinguish it from the old.⁶ Architect Tasos Tanoulas, director of the ongoing restoration of the Propylaia during the 1990s and 2000s, adapted Balanos's theories elevating the standards of scientific exactitude in establishing the original location of stone blocks. New and old blocks are distinguishable by their level of surface erosion and relative state of patination. Tanoulas's new blocks are carved to the original sizes, and are therefore slightly bigger and whiter than the weathered ancient originals (fig. 1). Despite the fact, or perhaps because, structural changes are often irreversible, anastelosis emphasized the visual expression of reversibility on the surface even more strongly than *trateggio*. But in essence, it also theorized the relation between new and old material as a visual play of substitution.

Because the theory of reversibility was based on the ability to distinguish between art-work and preservation-work, it also encouraged the development of aesthetic expressions unique to preservation. The notion that mistakes could be reversed also freed preservation aesthetics to be more creative and experimental. Brandi worried that preservation's newfound aesthetic freedom would entice preservation expressions that would overpower the original artworks. He quickly imposed limits on reversibility insisting that preservation aesthetics had to remain subservient to those of the original artwork. He codified the aesthetics of reversibility as a visual game of substitution between expression and effacement. In the process, he inadvertently cast creativity in preservation as a search for an aesthetic that could simultaneously reveal and conceal itself. Brandi insisted more radically than ever on the aesthetic ideal of self-effacement, but also gave it a new temporal inflection. The play of substitution was meant to express the provisional character of preservation aesthetics. Its goal was to both convincingly offer and strategically defer a final aesthetic solution to the artwork.

CREATIVITY

Perhaps because architects had more professional leverage against art historians like Brandi than artists, they also resisted more strongly the directive to make preservation aesthetics subservient to those of the original building. During the post-World War II years, Italian architect Roberto Pane (1897–1987) successfully advanced *critical restoration* as a defense of more assertively contemporary preservation aesthetics.⁷ He argued that there were many aesthetic means to achieve preservation's goal to make old objects intelligible for contemporary viewers. The equally important thing was to also allow all viewers to clearly

5 Nikolaos Balanos, *È Anastélōsis : tōn mnēmeiōn tēs Akropoleōs: Propylaia, Erechtheion, Parthenōn*, Athens, 1940.

6 International Council of Monuments and Sites, *Il monumento per l'uomo. Atti del II Congresso internazionale del restauro, Venezia, 25–31 maggio 1964*, Padua, 1972. The Venice Charter is also available online at http://www.international.icomos.org/charters/venice_e.pdf.

7 Roberto Pane, *Città antiche, edilizia nuova*, Naples, 1959.

distinguish original from restorative material. *Tratteggio* and anastelosis required a trained eye to detect the play of substitution between new and old. They therefore came dangerously close to deceiving the general public into taking highly reworked objects for primary historical evidence. Preservation had a responsibility to reveal itself more, to make itself intelligible. Indeed, Pane thought that aesthetic contrast was the only honest way to give meaning to the original object. Preservation had to show old objects to be staged by, in, and according to the aesthetic conventions understandable by everyone as belonging to the present. Pane applied his theory in highly acclaimed projects, like his restoration of the Church of Santa Chiara in Naples, badly damaged by Allied bombs in 1943, where he retained the remaining medieval outer walls and completed the missing parts and roof in a modernist idiom. He thought that preservation, conceived in this new way, could include a creative element, and itself become a work of art.

Preservation as a creative process starts with a response to a damaged object in the form of a projected model for its completion. It then indexes the difference between the object and the model as loss, and thus suggests the need and basis for replenishing it. This creative process can be read as evidence of a consciousness about the inextricability of completeness from loss. There can be no preservation without a model of the aesthetic integrity of the old object, without a fantasy of completion. By the postwar period there was a consensus in the field that this fantasy must never be satisfied, because if it were to be fully consummated in reality it would be a crime: a forgery. Restoration would kill the old artwork by substituting it with a completed version of itself. The artwork had to take precedence over preservation's fantasy of completion, which meant its losses needed to remain visually expressed.

SUBSTITUTION

Many architects of the last quarter of the twentieth century explored the range of creative expressions possible within preservation's game of substitution, and attempted to make the inextricable nature of completeness and incompleteness visually intelligible. Venturi and Rauch's 1976 restoration of Benjamin Franklin's House in Philadelphia is representative of this broader movement (fig. 2). Franklin's house was entirely missing, save for the foundations, and there was scant documentary evidence as to its precise look and materiality. A traditional restoration would have been impossible, because it required the presence of a material object to restore. Dangerously close to a poor replica, Venturi and Rauch were still able to claim their work as a restoration by producing a cartoonish outline of the

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house's volume in white steel that simultaneously claimed and denied being the lost structure. It also provided periscopes to look down at the archeological dig of the foundations—the necessary authentic object grounding the restoration, materially and intellectually. The project revealed what was missing (documentary evidence) as much as what was there (the foundations). Precedents to Venturi and Rauch's aesthetic of substitution can be found in architect Franco Minissi's (1919–1996) experimental preservation projects in Italian archeological sites, such as his 1957 steel, glass, and polycarbonate recreation of the architectural volumes of the Villa Romana del Casale in Sicily (fig. 3).⁸ Projects such as these resist categorization

8 Franco Minissi, *Conservazione dei beni storico artistici e ambientali. Restauro e musealizzazione*, Rome, 1978.



2 Venturi and Rauch, Restoration of Benjamin Franklin's House (background) and Printing Press (foreground), Philadelphia, 1976.



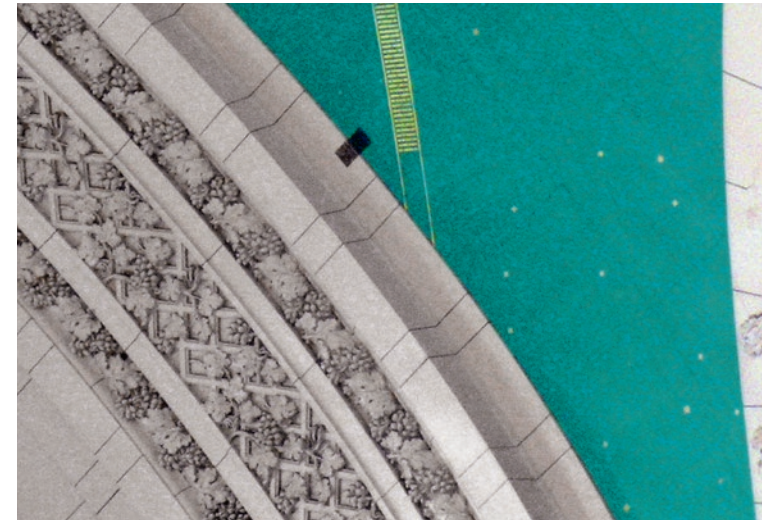
3 Protective structures designed by Franco Minissi in 1957 over the foundations and mosaic floors of the Casale villa (4th century CE) in Piazza Armenina, Sicily.

as either model or execution, and instead encourage viewers to play a mental game of substitution between projection and recovery, where each figures only as the anticipation of the other.

Another distinguishing peculiarity of preservation aesthetics in the late twentieth century was the paramount importance given to their materiality as an enabling element of the aesthetic play of substitution. For Brandi, "the physical medium to which the transmission of the image is entrusted does not accompany it; on the contrary, it is coextensive with it."⁹ He insisted that preservation's medium of transmission must not interfere with the artwork's intended message. In tacit opposition to Brandi, 1970s preservationists explored ways in which the medium could scramble the message. They hypostatized the unintentional aesthetics of the material medium, such as the accidental deposits of dust and pollution, and presented them as competing with the intended message; for example, by leaving distracting rectangles of old soil on the cleaned surfaces of buildings, such as the vaulted ceilings of the Sistine Chapel (cleaned by Gianluigi Colalucci, Maurizio Rossi, Piergiorgio Bonetti, and others between 1980 and 1994) or Grand Central Station in New York (cleaned by Beyer Blinder Belle Architects between 1987 and 1997). These patches of soil were meant to disturb attentive viewers, to frustrate their appreciation of the restored building as an object belonging to a single original period in time (fig. 4). The interfering visual shapes were meant as cues to draw visitors' attention, and involve them in a mental game of reconstructing how the building might have appeared when it was dirty. The intended play of substitution between this mental projection and the object's cleaned present reality was meant to evoke considerations of the building's multiple temporalities. These preservation techniques staged buildings in compelling new ways that made them intelligible as temporal artifacts.

TEMPORALITY

The concept of reversibility acquired a new relevance in this context. Reversibility became more than a simple guarantee that the artwork's original material would not be damaged. It also embodied an awareness of the limited temporal horizon within which preservation aesthetics would be understandable as such. Reversibility anticipated a future moment when the material added to an artwork in order to make it intelligible would no longer help to make sense of the artwork because the cultural conventions of aesthetic understanding would have changed. All contemporary preservation work would eventually have to be removed, only to be replaced by new preservation work, which only future generations will understand.



4 Beyer Blinder Belle Architects, rectangular field of soiling on the ceiling of the main hall of Grand Central Station in New York City (Warren and Wetmore, 1929), produced during the restoration and cleaning of the building between 1987 and 1997.

The precise date when current preservation aesthetics would cease to make sense could not be foretold, but reversibility anticipates it as a given in the temporal mode of the future anterior. The belief, inherent in the theory of reversibility, that preservation's aesthetic expressions will have been effaced, is also a wish for the eventual replacement of our contemporary cultural understanding of monuments by a more or less advanced one. This peculiar sense of preservation as aesthetic expressions of the future anterior has become the enabling element for a new conception of monuments as objects whose cultural use is not only that of elucidating the past but also that of visualizing the future and horizon of contemporary culture.

By the late 1970s, Evgenii Mikhailovskii (1907–ca. 1985), perhaps the most influential Soviet preservation architect of the period, and a scholar working for the Central Scientific Research Institute of the History and Theory of Architecture in Moscow, became famous for his theory that the aim of preservation aesthetics was not to change monuments but rather to change the viewer's understanding of them.¹⁰ More importantly, he theorized preservation aesthetics as discontinuous, punctual expressions that must resist becoming complete in themselves. Instead, they must appear only to supplement the aesthetic unity of the original building. The supplementing role of preservation was like that of a postscript to an ancient text, which explains it for contemporary audiences. The supplement seems dispensable but, once it appears, it becomes in fact intrinsic to the contemporary meaning of the work. Mikhailovskii differentiated between the original artistic value of monuments and the contemporary aesthetic value that preservation granted them, which varied in

10 Evgenii Vasil'evich Mikhailovskii, "The Methods of Restoration Architectural Monuments: Contemporary Theoretical Conceptions," trans. Igor Demchenko, *Future Anterior* 8, no. 1 (Summer 2011), pp. 84–95.

each historic period. The certainty that preservation aesthetics will cease to properly supplement the artwork, that they will no longer be able to claim and deny being the object they stage, produced an effect of ephemerality that made them all the more precious. Certainty that changing preservation aesthetics will vanish makes us appreciate them as appearing to be vanishing already.

VANISHING EFFECTS

From the late twentieth century to the present, the objects that have come to be subject to preservation have increased dramatically from traditional artworks and buildings to landscapes, oral traditions, ritual performances (such as folkloric dances), pre-modern hunting practices, and so on. These new “objects” have challenged the twentieth century’s theoretical framework of preservation, which gave primacy to material interventions as the basis of preservation aesthetics. There is now renewed interest in preservation’s techniques that do not require acting upon the object’s materiality, such as, among others, legal enactments, which act upon the object’s institutional substance, reenactments that intervene in the object’s social performativity, and documentary techniques, such as photography and film, that alter the object’s discursiveness. This expanded field of preservation techniques makes it clear that preservation aesthetics are not exhausted in material traces.

A representative example of emerging preservation aesthetics can be appreciated in the whistled language of La Gomera, Spain, which involves projecting whistles onto the mountain faces of canyons that in turn echo the whistling sounds across long distances. UNESCO designated the Silbo Gomero as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2009, calling attention to this unique practice and the peculiar geography that serves as its material amplifying support. As a work of preservation, UNESCO’s designation did not change the language or the face of the mountains that are its instruments. Gomeros are whistling the same way today as they were in 2008. The designation of the Silbo Gomero aims to be aesthetically self-effacing and indistinguishable from what it preserves. Preservationists used many different aesthetic techniques to organize cultural attention toward the Silbo by supplementing it: digital publications demarcated what sort of whistling falls into and outside of the realm of heritage; education programs made the Silbo a requirement in grammar school education on the island; encounters were staged between whistlers and audiences according to the tourist calendar; plaques were installed in the canyons that echo best. Preservation supplemented the Silbo with the institutional gravitas of UNESCO, inflected it with

connotations of worldwide significance, which it did not previously have, and exalted it as protected by the very same tourist operators that presumably endangered it. Taken together, all of these supplementary mediations subtly objectified the Silbo and altered its meaning; for once we become aware that it has been brought under the aegis of preservation our perception of the Silbo Gomero changes. It becomes intelligible in a new way. Both the whistlers and their audiences now perceive each whistle with new urgency, as an act of defiance against the pressures of vanishing.

Preservation aesthetics involve installing vanishing effects in objects as expressions of the discipline’s receding ideal of self-effacement. Historically, vanishing effects were achieved through compensatory material interventions that set in motion visual plays of substitution between the original object and the derivative preservation work. Today, preservation aesthetics occur in an expanded field of supplementary media that allow vanishing effects to be framed within the cultural reception of objects as much as within the objects themselves. This expanded field, materially detached but not conceptually free from the responsibility to make historic objects intelligible, suggests the onset of a new turn in preservation aesthetics that has yet to find eloquent expression.