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EUROPEAN HERITAGE AWARDS / EUROPA NOSTRA AWARDS

LAUREATES 2023

## 2023 LAUREATES

### EUROPEAN HERITAGE AWARDS / EUROPA NOSTRA AWARDS

#### Editorial Team

Audrey Hogan (Coordinator)

Elena Bianchi

Joana Pinheiro

Camilla Scopigni

#### Graphic Design

Krzysztof Radoszek – Radoszek Arts

#### Printing

Quantes



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#### Europa Nostra

The European Voice of Civil Society Committed to Cultural Heritage

#### International Secretariat

Lange Voorhout 35

NL – 2514 EC The Hague

+31 (0) 70 302 40 50

info@europanostra.org

#### Brussels office

Rue de l'Industrie 10

B-1000 Brussels

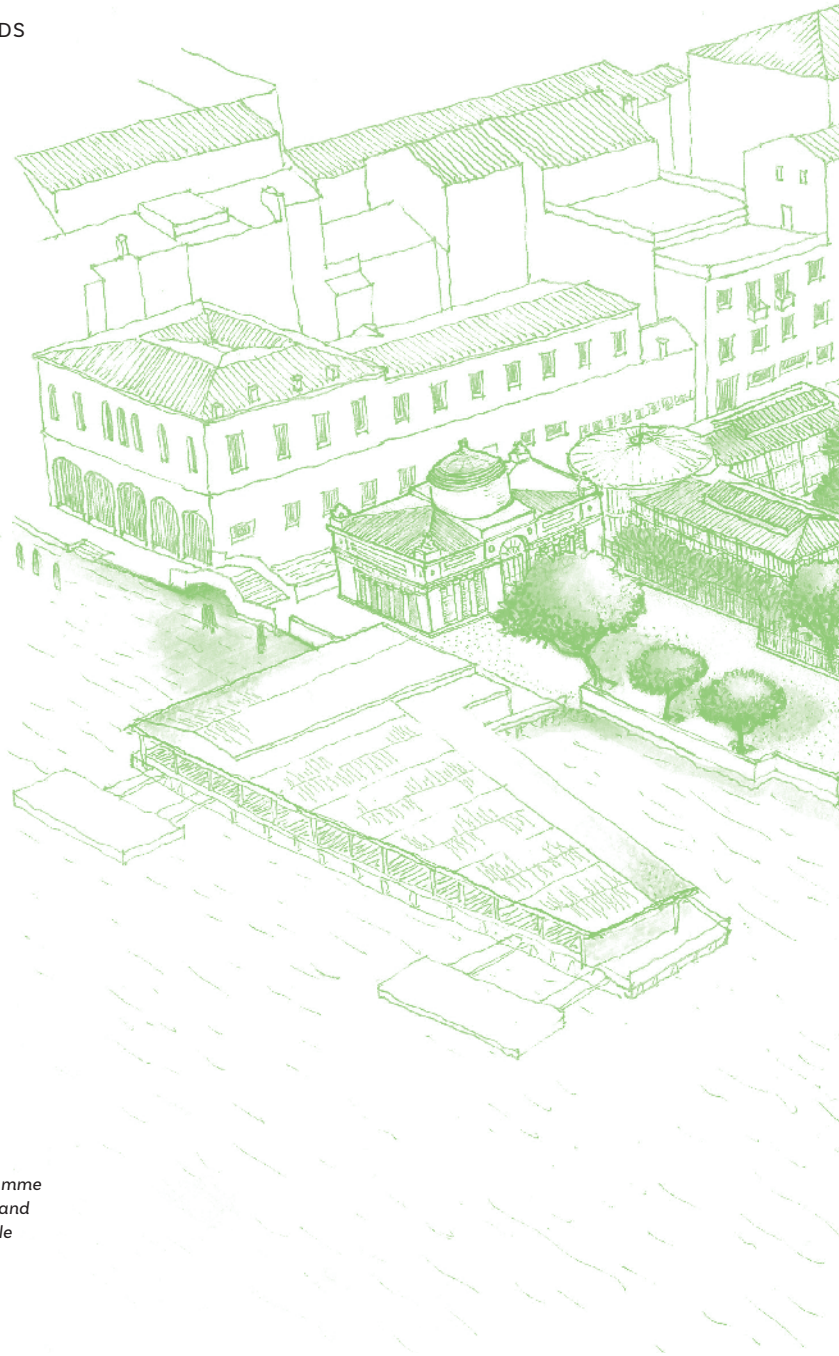
+32 (0)2 894 74 99

bxl@europanostra.org

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Elena Bianchi  
Programme Manager  
European Heritage Awards  
[eb@europanostra.org](mailto:eb@europanostra.org)

Audrey Hogan  
Programme Coordinator  
European Heritage Awards  
[ah@europanostra.org](mailto:ah@europanostra.org)

## European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards

The European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards were launched by the European Commission in 2002 and have been run by Europa Nostra ever since. For 20 years, the Awards have identified and raised awareness of best practices in the heritage field, encouraged connections among practitioners and stakeholders, and demonstrated the multiple values of cultural and natural heritage to Europe's society, economy and environment.

The Awards bring major benefits to the winners, such as greater (inter)national exposure, follow-on funding and increased visitor numbers. In addition, the Awards programme fosters a greater care for our shared heritage amongst Europe's citizens.

The Awards honour up to 30 remarkable heritage achievements from all parts of Europe every year. The Grand Prix laureates, each with a monetary award, are chosen from among the laureates and one laureate receives the Public Choice Award, also now with a monetary award, that is chosen in an online poll. Since 2002, independent expert juries have selected 618 award-winning projects from 34 countries. The Awards are funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union.

The Awards are presented to the winners at the European Heritage Awards Ceremony, taking place during the annual European Cultural Heritage Summit, organised on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the foundation of Europa Nostra. The European Heritage Awards Ceremony 2023 took place in Venice, Italy and was organised with the support of the European Commission.

The Grand Prix and Public Choice Award laureates are not recorded in this publication and are instead recorded on the official website of the Awards.

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\*Europa Nostra Awards are presented to remarkable heritage achievements from European countries not taking part in the EU's Creative Europe programme.



# Introduction

We take great pride in presenting the winners of the **European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards 2023**. This year, Europe's most prestigious awards for heritage go to thirty remarkable heritage achievements from twenty-one countries across the continent.

With this publication, we invite you to discover and explore the exceptional work of the winners of this year's awards. We encourage you to draw inspiration from their achievements and take bold steps towards transforming your own ambitious plans into reality.

Many of the winners serve as bright examples of how the principles of the **New European Bauhaus**, an initiative by the European Commission that enhances the cultural dimension of the **European Green Deal**, can enrich the quality of our daily lives and living spaces. These winners perfectly respond to the call to collectively envision and achieve a more sustainable, more inclusive and more beautiful future for Europe and its citizens.

An outstanding example is the conservation and contemporary adaptation of the **Friluftsskolen Open-Air School** in Copenhagen, Denmark. This project has carefully restored a functionalist masterpiece on the basis of thorough research and elegantly incorporated new facilities for its students and teachers. It exemplifies how architecture can contribute to health and well-being, serving as a model for other schools or other public buildings across Europe.

In terms of fostering the spirit of togetherness across our continent, the **Museum of Literature Ireland (MoLI)** in Dublin powerfully demonstrates how an inclusive museum can challenge elitist perceptions and create a sense of belonging through the enjoyment and care for our shared heritage. In a similar vein, thanks to the remarkable efforts of the musicologist **Sergio Ragni** from Italy, a wealth of knowledge about the life and cultural significance of one of Europe's most influential composers, Gioachino Rossini, has been collected, analysed and shared with the public. Another powerful example is **Hambis Tsangaris** from Cyprus who has dedicated his entire life to celebrating connections between people and building understanding among their communities in his country, and this through the intangible heritage of printmaking and folk tales.

2023 has been designated as the **European Year of Skills** to emphasise the crucial role of a skilled workforce in achieving sustainable growth, fostering competitiveness, and driving innovation across industries in Europe. This is also true of the wider heritage field. We are delighted, therefore, to witness how many of this year's winners vividly demonstrate the value and diversity of skills, with numerous laureates placing the acquisition and transmission of heritage skills at the heart of their activities.

For instance, the **MADE IN: Crafts and Design Narratives** project, an initiative with partners from Austria, Croatia, Slovenia and Serbia, compellingly showcases the contemporary value of traditional crafts and sustainable, locally sourced materials in enriching modern design and stimulating creative industries in town centres. Another innovative project, **ACTA VISTA**, based in Marseille, France, unequivocally demonstrates that equipping individuals with craft skills leads to their successful reintegration into the workforce, benefitting heritage while fostering a more equitable and cohesive society.

The **Pathfinders of the Water** initiative in Romania also serves as a wonderful example of how heritage skills are being transmitted to the next generation. By teaching school children the art of canoe-making, this initiative not only imparts valuable skills but also educates participants about local heritage and its connection to environmental sustainability, all while highlighting the value of the social diversity of the Danube region.

The 2023 winners were selected by leading experts from various disciplines in the cultural heritage field, who generously contributed their expertise on a voluntary basis. We extend our sincere gratitude to the members of the Selection Committees, the Heritage Awards Jury, and the local assessors for sharing their extensive knowledge. Their dedication ensures the exceptional quality and prestige of this annual awards scheme which is proudly organised by Europa Nostra and the European Commission.



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**Margaritis Schinas**  
European Commission  
Vice-President for Promoting  
our European Way of Life



**Cecilia Bartoli**  
President of Europa Nostra



# Laureates

In 2023, a total of 224 applications were submitted to the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards by organisations and individuals from 34 countries across Europe.

★ **Conservation & Adaptive Reuse projects, including the restoration of buildings and their adaptation to new uses; new buildings in historic settings; urban and rural landscape rehabilitation; the conservation and interpretation of archaeological sites, and the care for collections of works of art and objects;**

★ **Research projects in the field of cultural heritage, including studies, digitisation projects and/ scientific publications which lead to tangible effects for the safeguard and enhancement of cultural heritage and/or to improve the access, enjoyment and understanding of heritage assets by communities;**

★ **Education, Training & Skills initiatives in the field of tangible and/or intangible cultural heritage that foster knowledge transfer, capacity-building and/or enhance traditional or new skills and crafts related to heritage;**

This year, the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards honoured 30 remarkable achievements from 21 countries.

All entries were evaluated by the Selection Committees (see pages 68–70), one per category, who shortlisted a total of 60 entries. The shortlisted entries were then assessed in situ, whenever possible, by independent experts (see page 71). The Heritage Awards

Each year, the Awards are presented to outstanding achievements of European significance in the newly defined categories:

★ **Citizens' Engagement & Awareness-raising initiatives in the field of tangible and/or intangible cultural heritage which foster social cohesion, inclusion, multicultural dialogue and understanding, nurture a sense of place and belonging, celebrate diversity and multiple identities as well as stimulate citizens' engagement, ownership and civic responsibility;**

★ **Heritage Champions, that is, influential and inspiring individuals or organisations whose exemplary action demonstrates an exceptional level of dedication, impact and civic engagement in the safeguarding and enhancement of cultural heritage.**

Jury (see page 70), composed of the Chairs of each of the Selection Committees and additional experts in the field, then chose the 30 winners from among the shortlisted projects. The Selection Committees and the Heritage Awards Jury are composed of experts from all over Europe.



● Conservation & Adaptive Reuse projects

● Research projects

● Education, Training & Skills

● Citizens' Engagement & Awareness-raising

● Heritage Champions



The brewery in Lobeč, Czechia, is a valuable monument with a rich history dating back to 1586. The brewery is located in a picturesque village of 140 inhabitants in the Kokořínsko protected landscape area. The long-term project to restore the brewery has once more enlivened the small village and has ensured that the brewery can be enjoyed for generations to come.

The project was mostly funded by the owners' own financial resources with support also being provided from the Czech government through the Programme for the Care of Village Conservation Reserves of the Ministry of Culture, as well as the Programme of Culture for the Central Bohemian Region and the "Green Savings" Programme of the Ministry of the Environment. The European Union's Rural Development Programme also helped finance the restoration.

The brewery and malt house had been in continuous operation since the 16th century while the present-day structure has its origins in the first half of the 17th century. In the 1890s, the brewery was modernised into an industrial brewery with a steam engine. Production stopped in 1943; the site had been abandoned since the 1980s and had fallen into disrepair.

The architects **Jana and Pavel Prouza** discovered the forgotten brewery when they were 30-years-old. Over a 15-year period they worked to revive the monument while fulfilling their dream of living in a monument and developing cultural activities in the countryside.

The initial phase of the restoration focused on the physical preservation of the site, followed by a careful structural restoration. From 2014 onwards, the site was opened to the public with a balanced mix of cultural and business activities to ensure its future sustainability. After the restoration, the original function of beer production was re-established in the form of a small craft brewery.

Environmental responsibility has been emphasised throughout the project, for example, the site uses a system of part heat pumps and part geothermal energy for heating.

The project has also had a wider impact on heritage conservation practice as an example of successful project management with limited financial resources.



The revival of the brewery has brought life back to the village, with new families arriving. The village is flourishing socially; the brewery, the local chateau and the community activities make the small village a unique place to visit. The local community is proud of its brewery once again. The brewery has also joined the **ERIH – European Route of Industrial Heritage**, helping to raise its profile on a European level.

*"This restoration is a good example of a sensitive rehabilitation of industrial heritage that has preserved the original character and the original use of the brewery in Lobeč very well",* the Awards' Jury stated.

*"This is a great achievement for individuals who invested a lot of time and personal resources to achieve their ambitions. It is a courageous project which sends a strong message about the importance of strong community engagement and collaboration between many different stakeholders",* the Jury added.

## Steam Engine Brewery, Lobeč | Czechia

For over 15 years, the architects Jana and Pavel Prouza worked to revive this brewery with a rich history dating back to 1586. It was reopened with a mix of cultural and business activities to ensure its sustainability.



Friluftsskolen Open-Air School in Copenhagen, built in 1938, was designed with a focus on light, health, fresh air and proximity to nature. The design by the Danish architect **Kaj Gottlob** aimed to prevent the development of tuberculosis in children, reflecting health concerns of the period. The school was listed as a first-grade building in 1990 by the **Danish Agency for Culture and Palaces** due to its architectural and pedagogical significance. The restoration project for the building aimed to balance conservation values with the contemporary functional needs of a school for children with motor disabilities. The project was financed by various administrations at the **Municipality of Copenhagen**.

Friluftsskolen was designed as a day school where sick or disabled children received auxiliary education, meals, rest, as well as medical care. The building is characterised by its ceramic tiles, linoleum and asphalt floors, veneered doors, plastered walls painted in colours inspired by **Le Corbusier's** colour palette, glass facades and window systems that could be ingeniously opened and provide ventilation. Functions were clearly separated and grouped around a large inner courtyard: a south wing with six pavilion-like classrooms, – with the dormitory on the first floor; a north wing with rooms for health and hygiene; and, finally, to the east, a building for treatment and gymnastics. It is a masterpiece of functionalist school architecture.

Though the school remained in use, the building needed renovation. Many of its historical details had been lost due to insufficient maintenance as well as some adaptations to meet new functions.

The goal of the restoration team was to preserve the purpose and function of the school while once again making the buildings appear full of light, colours and air. Extensive research was carried out to restore **Gottlob's** original colour scheme. One of the most remarkable features of the restoration process is that it involved a thorough process of user collaboration across all professional groups to balance conservation priorities with the needs of the teachers and children. Efforts were made to create and restore pedagogical and architectural features, for example, by moving



the new modern functions to suitable rooms rather than rebuilding rooms so that they conflict with the original design.

The restoration project has preserved and strengthened the original ideas about outdoor and indoor spaces, light and fresh air, and can serve as inspiration for other European open-air schools.

*“This beautiful project demonstrates the significance of architecture for health and well-being. It has helped revitalise and reinstate the original concept of the building, showing that health is a holistic matter and that architecture has a part to play in this”,* the Awards’ Jury said.

*“The restoration process of the Open-Air School (“Friluftsskolen”) in Copenhagen was inclusive and can serve as a model for other schools in Europe, especially in the post-COVID era. It can also serve as a strong example for the contemporary design of schools. The restoration is based on good research with a very well-documented process”,* the Jury added.

## Friluftsskolen Open-Air School, Copenhagen | Denmark

This masterpiece of functionalism, designed by the architect Kaj Gottlob and built in 1938, demonstrates how architecture can contribute to health and well-being. Its restoration serves as a model for other schools in Europe.



The monumental **Hôtel de la Marine** is located in one of Paris' most famous squares, the **Place de la Concorde**, between the **Avenue des Champs-Élysées** and the **Tuileries** gardens. It has been carefully restored in an extensive, high-quality project that has brought the site back to its original splendour, replicating the atmosphere of the 18th century while creating a new cultural hub for Paris.

Funding for the project came partly from the French government and several private sponsors, but for the most part from a bank loan. Revenue generated from retail sales, fees from various concessions of the site and advertising on the monument's scaffolding during the works, all contributed to financing the project. However, most of the funding came from leasing workspaces to a co-working firm, which will in turn repay the loan. The innovative business model of the **Centre des monuments nationaux CMN** (National Centre for Monuments) has therefore had a minimal impact on public finances.

The **Hôtel de la Marine** dates to the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. Until 1789, the palace housed the royal department that managed the royal furnishings (**Garde-Meuble de la Couronne**). In that year, it became the Navy Ministry's headquarters until 2015, when the CMN was entrusted with managing and restoring the building.

From 2017 to 2021, the CMN carried out a complex restoration project that covered the entire 12,700m<sup>2</sup> surface area of the monument. Significant work was done to meticulously restore its decorative elements, while the original layout and structure was also reinstated. Special attention was paid to reusing the original materials to the greatest extent possible. Over 60 trades in crafts were called upon and 1,000 tradespeople and restorers worked on the project.

Approximately half of the building is now accessible to visitors with part of the interior also redeveloped to make it accessible for people with reduced mobility. The central **Cour d'honneur** can be entered for free, which provides a pathway from **Place de la Concorde** to **Rue Royale**. Visitors can also visit the apartments of the Intendant of the **Garde-Meuble de la Couronne**, dating to the mid-18th century, the French Navy's grand salons of the 19th cen-



tury, and the Al Thani gallery in the former upholstery warehouse. A restaurant, café and bookshop have also opened there.

*“The outstanding restoration project of the Hôtel de la Marine is characterised by its exceptional quality and a genuine commitment to preserving the authenticity of the interior decoration, with special attention also paid to incorporating original furniture from the time period, made possible through the collaboration with the Mobilier National, the agency for the collection of state furniture. This integration of historical elements adds an extra layer of authenticity and contributes to the overall immersive experience for visitors”, the Awards’ Jury commented.*

*“The large-scale project encompasses mixed functions that cater to the cultural needs of Parisians and tourists alike, serving as a powerful example for the revitalisation of similar buildings. The restoration is also notable for its innovative financing model”, the Jury concluded.*

## Hôtel de la Marine, Paris | France

A high-quality project brought this mid-18th century building at the Place de la Concorde in Paris back to its original splendour, while creating a new cultural hub. Its financing model is particularly innovative.



Following decades of neglect, the Royal Gardens of Venice, once a treasured historical amenity, have now been fully restored and reopened to the public. The restoration, management and future conservation of the gardens was entrusted to **Venice Gardens Foundation** by the **State Property Office** and the **City of Venice** in 2014.

The restoration project was carried out by the Foundation headed by Adele Re Rebaudengo and was guided by several principles and objectives, first among them the conservative restoration of the site's botanical and architectural elements. The vital role of the site for society and the community was also recognised, as was the importance of fostering harmony between people and nature.

As a result of a challenging series of restoration works, the **Napoleonic-era gardens** are once more connected to **St Mark's Square** by the reinstated drawbridge and have recovered their formal beauty and botanical complexity. Situated as it is in a **World Heritage Site**, the historical complex has thus reacquired its former importance for the city of Venice and is again a source of pride, offering a wonderful green sanctuary for the enjoyment of all.

To ensure the Gardens' continuing wellbeing, its management and maintenance is carried out directly by the Foundation's own team of gardeners working to specially designed schedules that are a synthesis of ancient knowledge and new techniques.

In terms of botanical restoration, the intervention proposed by **Paolo Pejrone**, the landscape architect commissioned by **Venice Gardens Foundation**, is conservative in terms of design and architecture - with its rigorously articulated 19th-century Italian garden layout - while experimental in botanical and in gardening terms: contrasting approaches that are both handled with great freedom and exuberance.

The large pergola, covered with numerous varieties of Wisteria and Bignonia, forms the central element of the garden. Over the summer months, the blooms of the 6,000 Agapanthus are an unmissable spectacle.



The garden is cultivated without the use of synthetic chemicals and the focus is on the conservation of natural resources, re-use, recycling, and the enhancement of existing physical elements.

A composting system in tanks contributes to soil fertility, while the introduction of trees and shrubs, flowering plants, and rows of aromatic herbs attract bees and other pollinating insects, increasing biodiversity. The garden also supports the resident bird population with the installation of nesting boxes and bird baths.

*"The restoration of the Royal Gardens of Venice is a remarkable achievement that has opened up a previously hidden part of a city that is rich in heritage. It required extensive research into planting and vegetation; the selection of plants was carefully considered with regards to the effects of climate change and the ecological impact of the garden, as well as to future management. The collaboration of institutional and private partners was crucial for the successful completion of the restoration, contributing a beautiful green space that is accessible for both locals and tourists to enjoy",* the Awards' Jury stated.

## Royal Gardens of Venice | Italy

Following complex renovation works, these abandoned gardens from the Napoleonic-era have been given new life and their architectural link to St. Mark's Square reinstated. The gardens are a beautiful, ecologically sustainable oasis.





This 19th-century wooden building is a treasure of Vilnius' historical wooden architecture. Despite its beauty, the building had been left abandoned for decades, leading to its significant deterioration. In 2019, **Vilnius City Municipality** decided to establish the **Museum of Urban Wooden Architecture** in the building and restore this architectural gem to its former glory. The project to establish the museum and restore the building was funded by the **European Union** and the **Vilnius City Municipality**.

During the restoration, specialists aimed to preserve the building's authenticity as much as possible, retaining 80% of the exterior decoration elements and 70% of the authentic walls and structures. The interior wall decoration was preserved and partially restored in accordance with polychrome research results. Where elements of the building did not survive, specialists replaced them with elements from other demolished wooden buildings to reduce the use of new materials. The restoration work was carried out by an interdisciplinary team, including woodworkers, polychrome researchers and restorers.

The Museum of Urban Wooden Architecture includes an exhibition which connects the past, present and future of urban wooden architecture, revealing how wooden architecture is an integral part of a sustainable and environmentally-friendly city. The museum also established a consultation centre to help owners and residents of wooden buildings in Vilnius learn how to maintain and preserve their homes in a way that is sustainable and historically sensitive.

Since its opening, the museum has become a meeting point for the people of the district, and its initiatives have promoted and raised awareness among citizens of the protection of wooden heritage. The consultation centre has already helped around 100 citizens with questions related to the maintenance and restoration of wooden buildings. The museum also has a workshop where citizens can work on the architectural elements of their wooden houses. The centre has created a contact base of craftsmen and masters who work with wooden buildings, published a catalogue of architectural wooden elements in Vilnius and organised an international conference on issues related to contemporary wooden architecture.



*“The restoration of the building that houses the Museum of Urban Wooden Architecture is particularly significant given the delicate conservation of the materials used in its construction. The building's restoration also improved the heating and cooling system, ensuring the preservation of the building for future generations. The museum's focus on wooden architecture also promotes public engagement with the country's heritage”, the Awards' Jury said.*

*“The project is important for Lithuania due to the country and the wider region's long tradition of wooden architecture. The careful restoration, using high-level craftsmanship and authentic techniques, helps ensure the continuation of these skills. Additionally, the project has revealed gaps in national fire safety regulations for wooden buildings, and the knowledge gained has been passed on to authorities to facilitate the adaptation of other wooden buildings to contemporary needs. The building, now a museum and community centre, has a symbolic value and serves as an example for other similar buildings in Vilnius and beyond”, the Jury concluded.*

## Museum of Urban Wooden Architecture, Vilnius | Lithuania

This 19th-century wooden building was restored using high-level craftsmanship and authentic techniques. Its an important example for other similar buildings in Vilnius and beyond.



The Historic Centre of Kraków with St. Mary's Basilica was recognised as one of the first **UNESCO** World Heritage sites in 1978 for its outstanding heritage value. St. Mary's Basilica is particularly famous for its Gothic altar of the Dormition of the Blessed Virgin Mary, carved by **Wit Stwosz** (Veit Stoss) between 1477 and 1489. A remarkable project to restore the altarpiece, undertaken in situ, has returned it to its former beauty.

The project was co-financed by the Civic Committee for the **Restoration of Kraków Heritage (SKOZK)**, the **Polish Ministry of Culture and Cultural Heritage in Poland**, the **Municipality of Kraków** and **St Mary's Parish**.

The altarpiece originally stood at 18m high and 11m wide and its figures are based on residents of medieval Kraków, who sat as models for the artist. It is therefore an interesting source of knowledge on the culture, customs, and history of the city at the time.

In 2012, concerns were raised about the condition of the altarpiece and a commission was established to assess its stability. It concluded that the altarpiece was "stable, yet threatened". To preserve this priceless piece of heritage, a programme of research, conservation and preventive measures was required.

In 2015, in order to keep the altarpiece in place in the Basilica, a workshop was established behind the altar where conservators would continue their work for over 1000 days. Special scaffolding was built in front of the altar, allowing visitors to watch the conservators at work. The team worked on over 200 figures, with the largest weighing in at 250kg and exceeding 3m in height, as well as thousands of individual sculpted elements.

The conservation performed by the experts from the **Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków** involved a full spectrum of scientific possibilities. The structural wood was consolidated, cracks were filled and the original fillers were respected. Remnants of repainting from a later period were removed, and the arrangements of figures and microarchitecture on the corpus and predella were amended. These works uncovered the original Gothic complexion of the figures and the framing, revealing the original intentions of the Nuremberg



master. Research and analysis also served in developing guidelines for fire prevention and emergency evacuation.

Extensive international consultations were an essential part of the project, involving experts in Gothic sculpture conservation from Poland and Europe, who exchanged knowledge and ideas, in turn yielding many new discoveries.

*"The restoration of this magnificent altarpiece is a unique and exceptional achievement. The meticulous conservation of the Wit Stwosz Altarpiece in St. Mary's Basilica, based on thorough research, was carried out by professionals who demonstrated great respect and sensitivity towards the original work. The project brought together people from different countries, reflecting the international importance of the site and the need for cooperation in preserving European heritage",* the Awards' Jury commended.

*"At the same time, it is an achievement on an impressive scale, being one of the largest Gothic altars in the world",* the Jury added.

## Wit Stwosz Altarpiece in St. Mary's Basilica, Kraków | Poland

This altarpiece is widely regarded as a masterpiece of Gothic art. Its meticulous restoration, based on thorough research, was undertaken in situ for over 1,000 days and involved a team of top professionals from across Europe.



The Cathedral of Funchal boasts one of Portugal's most exceptional architectural and decorative features – its ceilings, all in Mudéjar style, over the main and lateral naves and transept. The conservation and restoration of these rare ceilings, covering 1500 m<sup>2</sup>, were carried out in partnership with the **Diocese of Funchal**, the **José de Figueiredo Laboratory** and the **HERCULES Laboratory** of the **University of Évora**; and financed by **FEDER Madeira**.

The Cathedral of Funchal, in addition to its historical and cultural significance, continues to be an essential site for the daily lives of its religious community and a vital attraction for tourists. Located in the historic centre of Funchal, the monument represents a crucial stop on the cultural itinerary of the city and the island of Madeira.

The preliminary research on the Mudéjar ceilings was concluded in 2019 and the work to restore the ceilings commenced at the end of that year. The work was carried out in three phases, starting with the north body, featuring the transept and the and side nave; followed by the south body, comprising the transept and side nave; and, finally, the central nave.

Carried out by a team of 36 professionals of different nationalities, the conservation was grounded in the principle of minimal intervention to preserve the formal integrity and authenticity of the ceilings. The work involved consolidating the supporting wood beams, cleaning the surface polychrome and gilding, filling gaps in the chromatic layer, and achieving chromatic integration, all while using components compatible with the original materials. The intervention was concluded with an opening concert and presentation of the completed work to the public at the end of 2021.

During the restoration, special efforts were made to demonstrate the importance of the heritage and its restoration to the local community. The conservation team provided guided tours to explain the complexity of the ceilings and the reason for the long duration of the conservation work, as well as the importance and need to assemble a specialised and experienced technical team. This also helped to build understanding and cooperation among the religious community of the need to adapt some rituals to ensure



the long-term conservation of the ceilings, such as the use of wax candles and real plants on altars, as well as the need to change some methods of cleaning and maintenance.

*“The unique style of the Cathedral of Funchal, along with its significance in Portuguese and European history, make it an invaluable piece of cultural heritage. The restoration was carried out using the best practices in wood conservation and involved an interdisciplinary approach with the participation of several research centres”, the Awards’ Jury said.*

*“The restoration, which has recovered a heritage asset of immense symbolic value to the community, provided an opportunity to teach about the value of restoration among the general public and to train professionals. This is an important model for others to follow in future restoration projects”, the Jury concluded.*

## Mudéjar Ceilings of the Cathedral of Funchal, Madeira | Portugal

The restoration of these rare Mudéjar style ceilings, covering 1500 m<sup>2</sup>, was carried out using the best practices in wood conservation and involved an interdisciplinary team of top professionals of various nationalities.



The stone bridge over the Deba River is an exquisite example of civil engineering, protected as a historic landmark along the famous **Way of St. James** in Spain. Designed by **Antonio Cortazar**, the construction of the bridge was completed in 1866, connecting communities through a pedestrian-only route. On 5 July 2018, the bridge's central pier suffered a sudden settlement, which severely damaged its two adjacent vaults, leaving the structure on the brink of total collapse. A rehabilitation project was urgently required to restore the bridge to its original aspect.

To achieve this in a 21<sup>st</sup>-century context, engineers had to recover and update many forgotten techniques of 19th-century bridge construction. This required extensive documentation and research as well as practical experimentation. Their remarkable efforts and the successful completion of the Deba Bridge restoration therefore also created new knowledge about the technical construction of stone bridges. The entire project was financed by the **Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa** while the bridge is jointly owned and operated by the **Deba and Mutriku local governments**.

During an inspection after the settlement, it was discovered that the wooden piles supporting the pillar were progressively weakened by marine woodworm, leading to a reduction in their load-bearing capacity and risking their eventual collapse. After evaluating various options, engineers decided to install a gantry falsework over the structure, extending between the two adjacent piers from which the damaged and deformed vaulted arches could hang from above. This falsework also played a vital role in maintaining pedestrian use of the bridge throughout construction.

Once stability was ensured, work began on the detailed rehabilitation design, which required historical research and interdisciplinary technical cooperation. After considering different alternatives, engineers decided to underpin the collapsed central pier, carefully dismantle the damaged vaults, and rebuild them to their original geometry while reusing as much of the original stone as possible. Out of the 1,400 ashlar used in the reconstruction, 1,250 were recovered from the damaged bridge.



To educate society about the value of heritage structures in general and masonry bridges in particular, a project information booth was opened in the vicinity of the bridge throughout the works and several talks and guided tours were offered.

The challenges of working in a marine environment subject to tidal changes, the technical complexity together with the cultural significance of the bridge set this project apart.

*“This is a marvellous, high-quality project on a bridge with great heritage significance. The effort to reconstruct the Deba Bridge has been huge. At a technical level, this project is truly remarkable and is especially important thanks to the transfer of knowledge on the applied techniques. The environmental impact was minimal with special efforts made to not cause any pollution to the surrounding landscape. Also notable is the care paid to the local community, in informing them about the restoration and keeping the bridge in operation throughout the intervention”,* stated the Awards' Jury.

*“Such an approach, which helps to minimise the need for interventions, could help in safeguarding other bridges in Europe in the future”,* the Jury concluded.

## Deba Bridge, Gipuzkoa | Spain

The remarkable rehabilitation of this 19th-century stone bridge, an exquisite example of civil engineering, required extensive historical research into materials and forgotten techniques and benefitted from interdisciplinary technical cooperation.





The Monastery of San Pedro de Eslonza was founded in 912 between the Esla and Porma rivers in León, Spain. The present ruins are the remains of a Benedictine monastery that underwent various alterations throughout its history until attaining its full glory following reconstruction in the 16th century.

More recently, the monastery has undergone an intervention that included archaeological investigation, consolidation and rehabilitation for tourist visits. The project was designed with a focus on technical, economic and social sustainability, with the aim of ensuring landscape integration, environmental conservation and tourist safety.

Various public authorities funded the project within a broader programme targeting historical buildings linked to the **Way of St. James pilgrimage route**, including the **Spanish Ministry for Development**, the **Castile and León Regional Government**, the **León Provincial Government** and **Gradefes Town Council**.

The Monastery of San Pedro de Eslonza had lain abandoned since 1835 and had fallen into disrepair. Despite being classified as a monument in 1931, parts of the monastery had subsequently been dismantled and plundered, leaving it in a state of complete ruin, standing among rubble, overgrown by vegetation and stripped of all former splendour.

Rehabilitation for tourist visits involved the restoration of the monastery's original layout, consolidation of the walls, installation of timber supports in archways, restoration of the original floor level with gravel for better circulation and the erection of signposting that respects the monument.

The intervention project was also intended as a landscape integration project. As such, the monastery ruins are now discretely integrated into the Eslonza valley, with the ruins forming a key element of the landscape.

The intervention was guided by a focus on sustainability, encompassing technical, economic and social aspects. This is evidenced by the use of certified materials, a tight budget and the site's subsequent positive impact on the surrounding area. Restoration



of the ruins has generated an even greater sense of pride in their shared heritage among the local population and is an important source of economic resources for the region's inhabitants through a programme of guided tours that attracts cultural tourists to the area.

*"This is an excellent, minimal intervention with high-quality design on a ruin of archaeological importance. It is a strong, balanced example of how to undertake the delicate consolidation of a ruin in order to preserve it and render the site accessible. Local materials and sustainable resources were used throughout the intervention on the ruin of the Monastery of San Pedro de Eslonza. Certain details, such as the arch supports, are particularly well executed. The project also demonstrates the potential of heritage to bolster depopulated rural communities through development, and as such, is a shining example for similar sites in Europe",* the Jury stated.

## Ruins of the Monastery of San Pedro de Eslonza, Gradefes | Spain

The ruins of this 16th-century monastery have undergone a comprehensive intervention. Its technical, economic and social sustainability is commendable.



The Cleveland Pools in Bath, dating to the 19th-century, had a significant place in the hearts of the people of Bath and the surrounding region but remained closed and disused since the 1980s. This unique historic site with a rich cultural heritage has now undergone a comprehensive restoration thanks to a community-based campaign.

The project was initiated in 2004, when a campaign to oppose the sale of the site for commercial development gained significant support from heritage organisations in the **city of Bath** and at **national level**. This led to the development of proposals for the reuse of the site, with a focus on restoration and conservation, environmental sustainability, and the needs of children and people with disabilities.

The **Cleveland Pools Trust**, an independent registered charity and company, played a crucial role in the project by prioritising community engagement and involving large numbers of volunteers with a diverse range of backgrounds, skills and knowledge. The project received financial support from the **National Lottery Heritage Fund**, **Historic England**, **Bath & North East Somerset Council**, and the **Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund**, as well as from individual donors, charitable trusts and foundations, and crowdfunding.

The project has restored lost elements of the original aspect of the site as well as its function as a swimming pool. New facilities to complement and support this purpose have also been incorporated in a minimal and respectful way. The curved form of the original 1815 river-fed pool is evident and the symmetry of the main pool geometry has been restored, together with its primary relationship to the Crescent building; the separate children's pool has been formed in what was a later extension of the pool. The installation of the water source heat pump now also allows for warm water swimming. The restored Cleveland Pools offer a unique experience of Bath's heritage, allowing people to immerse themselves in the rich history of the city, while enjoying the benefits of open-air swimming.

The restoration project has won three major national awards for volunteer involvement, the preparation of interpretation materials and restoration. The completed project complements Bath's internationally renowned Georgian heritage with the mini-crescent of



unique historic buildings reflected in the main pool adding to the city's architectural richness. The **Cleveland Pools Trust** continues to engage with the community through various programmes, while organisational development ensures a robust governance approach for the future.

*“Driven by public demand, the restoration of the Cleveland Pools is a community project that greatly benefits local people. The project is a strong example of the relationship between cultural heritage and well-being, using green energy and a holistic approach to reinstate the site's original function while adapting to 21st century regulations and standards”, the Awards' Jury said.*

*“The restoration of the Cleveland Pools in Bath is a good example of rescuing open-air pools for northern Europe, and is a great example for other similar sites across the continent”, the Jury concluded.*

## Cleveland Pools, Bath | United Kingdom

EUROPA  
NOSTRA  
AWARD

Driven by the local community, the restoration project of these open-air pools used green energy and a holistic approach to reinstate the site's original function while adapting it to 21st-century standards.



The Early Christian and Medieval complex of Ererouyk is an outstanding example of Armenian artistic achievements. Nevertheless, it was only recently that this enigmatic site has been researched with a scientific, multidisciplinary and environmentally progressive approach. This has created new knowledge about the Late Antique/Early Christian period in Ererouyk, through the study of the remains of its 6th-century basilica, ancient mausoleum and cemetery, ancient village and dam.

This research project was carried out between 2009 and 2021 by the **Laboratory of Medieval and Modern Archaeology in the Mediterranean of Aix-en-Provence (LA3M)**, France, the **Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the Armenian Academy of Sciences**, and the **Shirak Regional Museum in Gyumri**, Armenia, alongside several experts of different nationalities.

Annual missions lasting almost a month were carried out every autumn, complemented by a programme of analysis, elaboration and interpretation of the data collected at the associated institutions. Ererouyk was conceived as a training site for local and international students; and a full-day conference was organised each year at **Aix-Marseille University** to present the progress of the research to students and the public.

Among the concrete results achieved, the researchers succeeded in dating the basilica and conducting a detailed analysis of its carved decoration. Through comparative research, the project also highlighted the particularities of Armenian Christianity and funerary customs. Also notable is the assessment of the place and role of the site of Ererouyk in the life of the region and in particular in its relationship with the city of Ani. The publication of numerous papers gained the recognition of the international scientific community and provided concrete elements for the study of the basilica, allowing for the design of a conservation project respectful of its authenticity. The results of this comprehensive research project raised the visibility of the site at a European level, contributing to its listing among the **7 Most Endangered heritage sites in Europe in 2016 by Europa Nostra** and the **European Investment Bank Institute**.



This project serves as an outstanding example of how the collaboration between experts of different nationalities and the implementation of a rigorous historical and scientific method can provide new insights and knowledge on cultural heritage sites.

*“The extensive documentation generated from this research is crucial for the future preservation of Ererouyk. The cooperation between France and Armenia is commendable; future efforts will focus on enhancing the on-site presentation, with funding support from the French Embassy; this aspect of the project is particularly encouraging”, the Awards’ Jury commended.*

*“The challenging circumstances and context the site finds itself in also serves as a testament to the perseverance and dedication required to undertake research in such circumstances. Notably, the development of an intriguing glossary of Armenian architectural terms further showcases the project’s commitment to international cooperation and its valuable contributions to the field of research and architectural understanding”, the Jury concluded.*

## Scientific-Archaeological Studies for the Preservation of Ererouyk | Armenia/France

The Early Christian and Medieval complex of Ererouyk was researched with a scientific, multidisciplinary and environmentally progressive approach between 2009 and 2021 by experts of various nationalities.



The remarkable career of the Italian architect **Andrea Palladio** was intimately tied to the proto-industrial revolution taking place in the Veneto region between 1500 and 1650. This ground-breaking book uncovers the architectural wonders of early industries such as flour milling, textile production, mining, metalworking, paper manufacturing, ceramics, sawmilling and leather tanning. Through extensive fieldwork and historical research, the research sheds light on the inventive mechanical processes and hydraulic power that drove these industries. The project also investigates the transformative impact of technological innovation on the spatial environment and landscape.

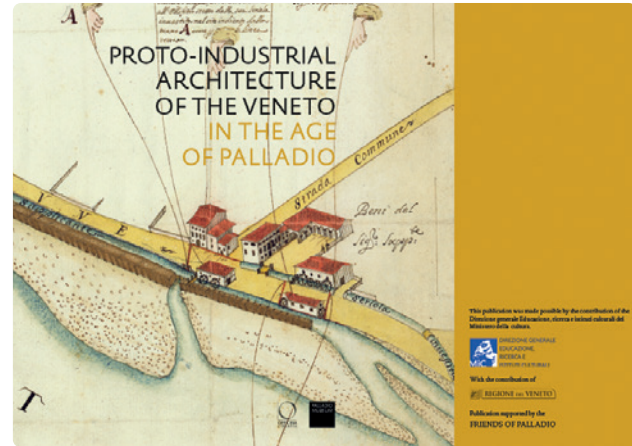
The research project led by **Deborah Howard** was made possible through funding from the **Leverhulme Trust**, in collaboration with the **Centro Internazionale di Studi di Architettura Andrea Palladio (CISAAP)**.

The three-year study (2018-2021) involved visits to 79 surviving structures. This survey of the Veneto's proto-industrial heritage is unprecedented in both Italian and European contexts and offers insights into the ecological merits of clean and renewable hydraulic power.

The principal outcome of the research is the publication of the book 'Proto-Industrial Architecture of the Veneto in the Age of Palladio'. This enlightening volume was edited by **Deborah Howard** and published by the **CISAAP** with funding from the **Italian Ministry of Culture**, the **Regione del Veneto**, the **American Friends of Palladio** and the **Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation**. It features 27 case studies written by the team in both English and Italian, photographs of the buildings, early maps, paintings, drawings, engravings of machinery and film stills.

These sites are often overlooked and lack the protection granted to villas, palaces and churches. They face significant threats and are at risk of disappearing. While some are in precarious conditions, others have been altered over the centuries, yet many are lovingly maintained by proud local inhabitants. The sites' owners, curators and artisans generously supported the fieldwork, cooperating throughout the project.

An ambitious exhibition titled 'Acqua, Terra, Fuoco' was premiered at the **Palladio Museum in Vicenza** on 12 November 2022.



The exhibition garnered significant media attention and featured a wide range of artefacts including reconstructed machinery models. Lectures and educational activities for children were organised to engage a wider audience.

*"The research project on Proto-Industrial Architecture of the Veneto in the Age of Palladio sheds light on a neglected aspect of the built environment and historic landscape. The combination of research topics on hydraulic energy and water management is both original and captivating, drawing attention to a forgotten heritage associated with Palladio's architecture", the Awards' Jury commended.*

*"Through meticulous documentation from archives and on-site visits, the project achieves a high level of documentation quality. Its impact extends beyond academic research, reaching museums, conservators and the general public alike. Moreover, it uncovers the unknown heritage of a renowned figure. This exploration also provides insight into the history of innovation and the transfer of knowledge at a European level, demonstrating how innovation arises from responding to societal needs. This innovative project also defies the notion that a digital element is necessary for innovation in research", the Jury stated.*

# Proto-Industrial Architecture of the Veneto in the Age of Palladio | Italy

This study of Veneto's proto-industrial heritage is unprecedented in both Italian and European contexts. It provides insight into the history of innovation and focuses on the merits of hydraulic power.





“Arte-Xávega” is a cherished traditional fishing technique that has been practised for centuries on Tocha Beach in Cantanhede, Portugal, and holds immense sociological and economic significance. This project aimed to celebrate, protect and promote its intangible cultural heritage through innovative cultural and educational programmes.

By studying the natural, ecological, economic and historical aspects associated with this unique fishing practice, the project sought to showcase its invaluable cultural and educational values. “Arte-Xávega” stands as one of the last examples in the European Union of artisanal and sustainable fishing carried out in accessible beach areas with abundant natural resources.

For generations, “Arte-Xávega” has been passed down orally within the fishing community, symbolising their accumulated wisdom and experience. While this fishing technique has significantly declined over time, it remains of utmost importance in the local context. Recognising the responsibility to preserve this cultural practice, the **Municipality of Cantanhede** took proactive measures to promote and protect it. In 2016, the **Interpretation Centre of “Arte-Xávega” (CIAX)** was inaugurated, with the goal of creating a home for the defence of this cultural heritage.

Through collaborative efforts with the fishing community, various initiatives have been implemented. These include the recording of social and cultural memories, the creation of educational and scientific materials in Portuguese and English, the development of a dedicated pedestrian route, the construction of a traditional “Arte-Xávega” boat, and the production of scientific illustrations showcasing the region’s marine and avian fauna. Additionally, the project includes a documentary, awareness-raising actions in schools and within the municipality, and engaging activities for diverse groups, ensuring the wider visibility and appreciation of this treasured tradition. Actions to ensure the sustainability of the activities have also been undertaken, namely explanatory visits to the **CIAX** and to the anglers’ warehouses and at least one recreation of the traditional form of “pulling the nets” every year.



*“This project showcases exemplary practices of safeguarding the artisanal fishing technique “Arte-Xávega” through the transfer of knowledge and know-how. It addresses an overlooked area of intangible heritage, shedding light on a way of life that is at risk of being lost. It surpasses the focus on the material in making the intangible aspects more accessible”, the Awards’ Jury stated.*

*“With a serious methodology aligned with international criteria, such as UNESCO’s Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, this project captures the essence of maritime heritage and its deep connection with nature. With the innovative utilisation of EU fishery funds, this project demonstrates its cost-effectiveness while delivering substantial benefits for the local communities and the tourism industry. The project’s replicability and sustainability make it a cost-effective model for other Mediterranean countries”, the Jury concluded.*

## Safeguarding of the Artisanal Fishing Technique “Arte-Xávega” | Portugal

Through the transfer of knowledge and know-how, this research project showcases exemplary practices of safeguarding “Arte-Xávega”, one of the last examples of artisanal and sustainable fishing in the European Union.



The MINIARE project, led by the **Fitzwilliam Museum (University of Cambridge)**, has revolutionised the understanding of manuscript heritage through next-generation scholarship and innovative protocols. By employing non-invasive analysis and cutting-edge technology, the project has identified artists' materials and techniques, offering insights into cultural, political and socio-economic contexts like never before. The interdisciplinary approach, spanning physical sciences, arts and humanities, has been instrumental in advancing understanding of Europe's shared heritage. The work was carried out between 2012 and 2022 with the support of core funding, research grants and philanthropic contributions.

With a focus on non-invasive methods that preserve the integrity of the originals, over 280 illuminated manuscripts from diverse cultures and historical periods were analysed. The results demonstrated that medieval artists had a highly sophisticated understanding of both the physical properties and the semiotic power of their materials; and that they were part of an international network, exchanging ideas, books and materials. The project revolutionised understanding of manuscript illumination across the European Middle Ages, revealing the sophistication and exchange of ideas among artists.

Through partnerships with institutions across the UK and Europe, the team has enhanced knowledge of collections and introduced new research methodologies. The public outputs, including the **COLOUR exhibition** and the **ILLUMINATED online resource**, have engaged both research and public audiences, presenting the scientific and art historical findings in captivating ways. Collaborating with **Team Pigment (Durham University)** on a ground-breaking study of British illuminators' pigments further demonstrates the team's commitment to advancing research in this field.

The project MINIARE – Manuscript Illumination: Non-Invasive Analysis Research Expertise aligns with the **Fitzwilliam Museum's** mission of scholarly dissemination and community involvement. Their partnerships have been instrumental in launching the University-wide **Collections-Connections-Communities initiative**, which fosters research expertise and community engagement in heritage



collections. Through extensive scholarly dissemination and public engagement programmes, the wonders of manuscript heritage have been brought to a wide audience.

*“The MINIARE project showcases a rigorous scientific approach, providing a stellar example of how to handle these objects while developing a comprehensive protocol for non-invasive analysis. This breakthrough has not only enabled new connections but has also had a significant educational impact, with an important focus on both tangible and intangible heritage. The project's achievements have brought to light crucial pieces of Europe's cultural heritage, highlighting the materiality of art and solidifying the Fitzwilliam Museum's reputation as a leader in the field”, the Awards' Jury said.*

*“From a technological standpoint, the MINIARE project is truly remarkable, with its multifaceted layers of research and exploration. Its significance as a museum-led endeavour is important, demonstrating the vital role that museums play in preserving heritage. The project's objectives have been successfully achieved, showcasing the exemplary outcomes that emerge from such a comprehensive and diligent approach”, the Jury concluded.*

## MINIARE: The Art & Science of Manuscript Heritage, Cambridge | United Kingdom

EUROPA  
NOSTRA  
AWARD

This project revolutionised understanding of manuscript illumination across Europe's Middle Ages. By employing non-invasive analysis, MINIARE identified artists' materials and techniques, offering insights into cultural, political and socio-economic contexts like never before.



**MADE IN** is a European platform that brings together designers, researchers and curators, who are all dedicated to exploring heritage through contemporary production. The platform's multifaceted approach encompasses research, mapping and the archiving of local crafts, as well as collaborative co-creation programmes and participatory knowledge exchange initiatives. MADE IN promotes the invaluable role of crafts in shaping local identities and ensuring the sustainability of communities.

Conceived in 2014 by the **OAZA Art Organisation** in response to the decline of small crafts and workshops in Zagreb, MADE IN made its debut during the BIO 50 exhibition in Ljubljana, organised by the **Museum of Architecture and Design**. This initial exploration laid the foundation for a partnership among six organisations: **OAZA**, the **Museum of Arts and Crafts** in Zagreb (Croatia), the **Museum of Architecture and Design** in Ljubljana (Slovenia), the craft and trade association **Werkraum Bregenzerald** (Austria), **Nova Iskra and Mikser** (Serbia).

Funded through the **Creative Europe Small Cooperation Programme**, MADE IN spanned from 2018 to 2021. Additional support from public and private sources in four countries, including ministries of culture, the **Dutch Embassy in Croatia**, **Centre for Creativity** in Slovenia and various other foundations contributed to its success.

By addressing critical themes such as nanotourism, sustainability, materials, resources and communities, the project generated insights that align with the priorities of the European Commission, including the European Green Deal, A Europe Fit for the Digital Age and the New European Bauhaus. The project yielded various outcomes including the creation of new products, a book, a website, and a travelling exhibition. The project's pioneering initiative, "Crafts and Design Narratives", showcased the mapping of craftspeople in the region and facilitated invaluable knowledge exchange between craftspeople and designers.

MADE IN stands as a testament to the power of collaboration and its potential to bridge traditional crafts with contemporary design, nurturing a vibrant ecosystem of creativity and heritage.



*"Through the effective utilisation of digital technology, the MADE IN project skilfully showcases the intangible heritage of evolving craft skills. The website, thoughtfully designed and easily navigable, offers a wealth of engaging information. However, the project goes beyond being just a digital tool as it fosters connections between craftspeople and contemporary designers. The emphasis is on the continuation and evolution of these time-honoured traditions, ensuring their relevance for future generations. With a long-term vision and a strong drive to expand its reach, this relatively new network is poised for growth, reflecting its progressive and innovative approach to the intersection of art, crafts and design", the Awards' Jury stated.*

*"This pan-European project highlights the common threads of our shared craft heritage while embracing a regional flavour through close collaboration with local communities. The intergenerational aspect of the project is notable, bringing together young designers and seasoned craft practitioners. This creates a vital connection between heritage and the creative industries, addressing timely social and commercial changes and offering opportunities for sustainable growth", the Jury added.*

## MADE IN: Crafts and Design Narratives Austria/Croatia/Slovenia/Serbia

This European platform brings together designers, researchers and curators to explore heritage through contemporary production. It promotes the invaluable role of crafts in shaping local identities and ensuring the sustainability of communities.



**ACTA VISTA**, founded in 2002, has emerged as a prominent force in the realm of heritage inclusion in France. The association based in Marseille focuses on developing back-to-work programmes and training projects in heritage trades, targeting individuals marginalised from the labour market. ACTA VISTA belongs to the cultural branch of the “**Groupe SOS**”: one of Europe’s leading actors in the field of social economy.

Over the years, 35 sites have been restored and revitalised to the highest craftsmanship standards, while trainees have been employed and supported to engage in restoration work while continuing traditional techniques, materials and environmental practices. As such, ACTA VISTA not only restores sites but also ensures the transmission of traditional know-how.

Currently, the association is actively involved in various restoration projects, such as the Fort d’Entrecasteaux in Marseille, sites in La Ciotat, the Château de Chambord, and the Château de la Morinière in the Centre Val-de-Loire region.

Each year, ACTA VISTA employs, trains and supports approximately 500 individuals, totalling 5,000 beneficiaries since its inception. The association welcomes people of all ages (18-65 years) and from diverse backgrounds who face challenges in accessing employment and training opportunities. Notably, 70% of participants are hired without prior qualifications. These individuals encounter various obstacles, including language, housing, mobility and health concerns.

The success of this employment scheme is made possible through the French policy of “integration through economic activity”, which subsidises trainees’ incomes. Additionally, ACTA VISTA benefits from the support of a network of public authorities and private sponsors.

ACTA VISTA operates in close collaboration with two associations integral to its innovative model. **BAO Formation**, a training organisation, enables trainees to acquire diplomas by offering courses in various heritage restoration trades. **La Citadelle de Marseille** plays a crucial role in opening the Fort d’Entrecasteaux site in Marseille to the public, transforming it into a vibrant hub of culture and open-air laboratory of ideas and perspectives. This innovative approach,



which combines social support, training for vulnerable individuals, and a cultural dimension accessible to all, is unparalleled in Europe.

*“The social and cultural impact of ACTA VISTA’s projects is undeniably impressive. There is a clear emphasis on European significance in the association’s choice of projects, further highlighted by the link established with European Heritage Days. The organisation’s successful approach offers valuable lessons for others to follow, demonstrating the positive outcomes that can be achieved through linking activities to promote employment with the regeneration of cultural heritage sites”, the Awards’ Jury stated.*

*“The restoration of monuments is a notable outcome in itself but the special value of ACTA VISTA lies in its extensive training efforts, reaching a large number of individuals, many of whom lack initial qualifications. By providing skills training, the association contributes to the reintegration of vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals by offering them a pathway to finding their place in the professional world. With a clear long-term strategy, ACTA VISTA is setting a remarkable example of impactful and sustainable action for people and heritage”, the Jury concluded.*

## ACTA VISTA, Marseille | France

Since 2002, this association has developed training projects in heritage trades, involving 5,000 individuals marginalised from the labour market. Its innovative approach, which combines training, social support and a cultural dimension, is unparalleled in Europe.





Since its establishment in 1992 in Paris, **Carpenters without Borders** (“**Carpentiers sans Frontières**”) have fostered a movement of wood carpentry professionals who volunteer their expertise on an international scale. Working with green wood using hand tools and ancestral techniques, these dedicated volunteers gather for annual or biannual one-week projects in locations across the globe. Over three decades, Carpenters without Borders have garnered a reputable standing, attracting a steady influx of dedicated members and newcomers.

The Carpenters Without Borders movement arose from research conducted by François Calame, an Anthropologist of Techniques, in 1981. At that time in France, all the techniques in carpentry were entirely related to the use of machines, including all carpentry in restoration, as this sector was also guided by industrial regulations. Through encounters with the few remaining craftspeople proficient in the art of working green wood with an axe, Calame’s investigations laid the foundation for the movement.

The first project in 1992 brought carpenters from across Europe together with Romanian artisans who practised the hand construction of houses using freshly felled trees in Moldavia-Bukovina. Subsequently, the movement expanded, organising periodic meetings that facilitated the exchange and sharing of international and intergenerational knowledge.

Over the course of 30 years, 15 meetings were convened, gathering participants from 25 different nationalities. The techniques honed and taught through these initiatives have significantly influenced restoration practices, particularly in France.

Notably, a groundbreaking project in 2020 showcased the ability to reconstruct the frame of the fire-ravaged Notre-Dame de Paris Cathedral using original materials and techniques reminiscent of the 13th century. 25 volunteers painstakingly reconstructed a truss from donated oak wood in just one week, which was publicly exhibited in front of the cathedral in September 2020 during the **European Heritage Days**. This played a crucial role in determining the authorities’ decision on how to reconstruct the cathedral’s roof. Truss No. 7, reconstructed by Carpenters Without Borders, was subsequently



designated as the contractual reference point for the current restoration of the cathedral, which commenced on 1 December 2022.

*“This grassroots movement is driven by passion but is also built upon a solid philosophy and thorough research. Originating from a community of interest, Carpenters Without Borders have achieved high-quality results due to the leadership of a dedicated researcher, which also ensures excellence in their endeavours. The movement’s focus on collecting and disseminating ancient techniques gathered from carpenters across Europe contributes to the transmission of craft skills and promotes the exchange of methodologies beyond local networks. The concept of preserving traditional skills by connecting craft practitioners with the management of natural heritage resources (woodlands) has proven to be a sound approach. Indeed, the value of Carpenters Without Borders lies in their commitment to working with locally sourced timber and adopting a holistic perspective. Their success in impacting policy change with respect to the restoration of Notre Dame through a live demonstration is particularly notable and greatly appreciated”, the Awards’ Jury said.*

## Carpenters without Borders, Paris | France

Since 1992, Carpenters without Borders have fostered a movement of wood carpentry professionals. Among their activities were their efforts to showcase how to reconstruct the roof of Notre-Dame Cathedral using materials and techniques reminiscent of the 13th century.



The **National Centres for Restoration of Historic Vessels** undertake significant work to preserve the skills related to the construction and repair of historic ships, an important element of Norway's rich maritime heritage. The **Norwegian Association for the Safeguarding of Vessels** ("**Norsk Forening for Fartøyvern**"), an NGO representing owners of traditional vessels, has collaborated closely with the **Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage** ("**Riksantikvaren**") to develop a plan to safeguard knowledge in these areas.

During the 1960s and 1970s, a growing interest in the preservation of historic vessels coincided with significant changes in fishing activities, sea transport and the use of traditional vessels. Many vessels disappeared from ports and the decommissioning of fishing boats was widespread. The skills related to repairing boats were gradually fading away, however, the desire to preserve a representative selection of vessels was growing.

Three vessel restoration centres were established: **Bredalsholmen Dokk og fartøyvernssenter** in Southern Norway practises traditional craftsmanship in the restoration-process of iron and steel vessels and steam boilers, such as riveting and other techniques; **Hardanger fartøyvernssenter** in Western Norway restores wooden vessels and has expertise in rope making, rigging, blacksmithing, and clinker-built boats and; **Nordnorsk Fartøyvernssenter** in Northern Norway restores vessels built of wooden boats and Sami vessels and has extensive knowledge of engines and older electronic devices.

The objective of the three centres was to restore a representative selection of vessels. Additionally, the centres offer advisory services to owners of historic ships and engage in documentation and research. As traditional seamanship and associated knowledge of vessels and materials were being lost, the training of craftspeople in traditional crafts and the establishment of apprenticeship schemes became crucial. The restoration projects served as valuable learning platforms to pass on traditional maritime craftsmanship to new generations.

The establishment of the three centres, supported by national and regional grants for their buildings, has yielded significant benefits for local communities and the entire country. Consequently, there



has been substantial international interest, attracting craftspeople from across Europe and the world who have been employed for varying durations over the years. The centres hold a unique position within the European context, combining government initiatives, volunteer efforts, private and corporate funding, and long-term public support for a well-defined fleet of more than 270 historic vessels. Owners of historic vessels receive grants and can choose restoration yards with professional expertise.

*"Norway's National Centres for Restoration of Historic Vessels not only safeguard cultural heritage but also generate economic value for the communities in which they are located. The professionalism of this initiative is clearly evident, as the work produced is high quality, and the organisation maintains a well-documented approach and enjoys strong national support from the Norwegian government. The long-term impact of the three centres is commendable, and is supported by convincing data that demonstrates the tangible outcomes of their work. This initiative stands out for its comprehensive approach, creating a wholesome experience that sets an impressive example for other European countries facing similar challenges in preserving their maritime heritage",* the Awards' Jury commended.

## The National Centres for Restoration of Historic Vessels | Norway

These centres undertake significant work to preserve the skills related to the construction and repair of historic ships, an important element of Norway's rich maritime heritage. It sets an impressive example for other countries in Europe and beyond.



The **Pathfinders of the Waters** project utilises an intangible heritage element specific to the Danube Delta – the traditional canoe known as the *lotca* – as a focal point for raising awareness about the relationship between humans and nature. The project encompasses a practical traditional boat construction workshop, a comprehensive methodology, open educational resources, a digital platform and dedicated events for the Pathfinders of the Waters children’s network.

The pilot project was supported through partnerships with local authorities, the **Department of Sustainable Development of the Romanian Government**, the **Active Citizens Fund – Norway Grants**, **Bosch Foundation**, and **Kaufland Romania**. At the helm of the project is the Romanian canoe legend **Ivan Patzaichin**, who won 30 titles at the Olympic Games, World and European Championships.

The project successfully highlights the fact that, throughout history, people have shaped their existence and cultural practices in harmony with their environment, while nature has adapted in response to human actions. This understanding serves as a catalyst for transforming the way individuals interact with the environment in contemporary life.

The Pathfinders of the Waters project targets children in villages with limited access to cultural activities, using the *lotca* as a means to acquire new knowledge and skills. Through workshops on wooden boat construction, the children gain a deeper understanding of the value of heritage, including its relevance to climate change and links to sustainability. They learn to reconnect with the resources of their local areas and foster an appreciation for cultural and ethnic diversity.

The pilot project, implemented between 2018 and 2022, involved four Romanian localities within the heart of the Danube Delta, namely Mila 23, Sfântu Gheorghe, Sulina, Chilia Veche, and 4 others in Romania, connected to lakes or the Danube River: Drobeta Turnu Severin, Eşelnita, Piscu, and Comana. The results have demonstrated the potential to expand the project at regional and European levels. The goal is to further solidify and extend this approach to encompass other national and international examples of intangible heritage in need of preservation and valorisation.



*“This engaging grassroots project is led by passionate local leaders and is beautifully depicted in joyful photos, illustrating the participants’ enthusiasm. Involving individuals from five ethnic minorities, the activities of the Pathfinders of the Waters project contribute to the cultural integration of children from diverse backgrounds. The canoe is both the physical focus of the project and also a potent symbol which helps foster understanding of the broader ecosystem of the Danube. The project seeks to link countries along the Danube, acknowledging the shared riverine heritage common to many communities in Europe. This also demonstrates the replicability and relevance of the project for other regions”, the Awards’ Jury commented.*

*“The Pathfinders of the Waters project aligns clearly with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and broader notions of sustainable development. It effectively bridges the relationship between sport, learning and heritage, providing an invaluable platform for children’s engagement. Furthermore, the project’s high-quality digital platform amplifies its reach and impact”, the Jury said.*

## Pathfinders of the Waters, Danube Delta | Romania

This project targets villages along the Danube with limited access to cultural activities, using the traditional canoe (*lotca*) as a means to promote the value of local heritage and the acquisition of new skills among children.



Village Square Meer is a remarkable citizens' initiative which has breathed new life into a historic convent, situated in the heart of Meer, a small village in the province of Antwerp of around 3,000 inhabitants. The 19<sup>th</sup>-century cloister and its surrounding buildings were listed as a National Monument and Landscape in 2003.

With the rising use of cars in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the village progressively lost its sole public space: a widened road that was also used for markets. The Convent Meer site therefore remained of immense importance to the villagers, serving as their educational centre, gathering place and even a park during the weekends. When the village school and parish hall closed their doors in 2005, the village's last semi-public space faced an uncertain future. The convent was put up for sale, and the threat of privatisation loomed large.

Responding to this critical situation, a group of nine villagers initiated a movement that eventually grew into a broad collective, encompassing **local entrepreneurs, regional social housing authorities, community welfare services, and the monuments and heritage sites administration**, as well as an **interdisciplinary design team comprising heritage architects (aNNo), urban planners (D+A) and architects (DAS)**. Through the combined efforts of the non-profit organisation **Convent Meer** and the social housing authorities, **Bouwmaatschappij De Noorderkempem**, the convent was successfully acquired in 2005.

aNNo collaborated closely with the local collective to explore avenues for guaranteeing public use of the convent site. Their proposal envisioned the site as the village's inaugural public square, with public amenities were thoughtfully arranged around it. At the same time, persistent advocacy at the heritage authorities resulted in the integration of new social housing unit, gracefully blended into the site's edges.

The Convent Meer site has been revitalised and has reclaimed its historical purpose as a place for collective living and community engagement. Village Square Meer has achieved a successful and enduring transformation by harmoniously combining historic and contemporary architecture and integrating public functions and social housing.



*“The diverse group of individuals and organisations involved in the Village Square Meer initiative was highly effective, with each participant playing a crucial role. It is a strong example of how a heritage site can serve as a connecting force within a community. Moreover, the initiative presents a sustainable model for a circular economy, demonstrating the successful integration of a public space and respectful repurposing of a heritage site”, the Awards’ Jury stated.*

*“Despite its local focus, Village Square Meer carries a strong European vision, particularly relevant to the New European Bauhaus. It is truly inspiring to witness how this collective surmounted numerous barriers, working hand-in-hand to persuade the relevant authorities. The initiative also emphasises the significance of a village having a central hub, a place where people can gather and interact, and sets an example for how monasteries and similar heritage sites could be revitalised and repurposed to benefit the community”, the Jury concluded.*

## Village Square Meer, Antwerp | Belgium

This remarkable citizens' initiative has breathed new life into a historic convent in a small village by creating a new central hub for cultural activities. It is a strong example of how a heritage site can serve as a strong connecting force within a community.





Budapest100 is an annual weekend festival that unveils and celebrates the built heritage of Hungary's capital city. Unlike other initiatives that showcase architecture in public buildings, Budapest100 embraces the intrinsic value of every house, irrespective of outstanding architectural merits or legal protection. Through guided visits to houses and engaging exhibitions, visitors and residents share stories, knowledge, and experiences, fostering connections and mutual understanding.

Initiated by the **Open Society Archives** and the **Hungarian Contemporary Architecture Centre** in Budapest in 2011, Budapest100 swiftly transformed into a highly successful annual urban festival, commemorating buildings that reached their centenary in each respective year. Since 2015, due to the impact of World War I, celebrating 100-year-old buildings annually has become unfeasible. Instead, each year, the festival selects different themes, such as the centenary of the **Bauhaus movement** or the 150th anniversary of the city's unification. The festival's fundamental approach remains unchanged and is captured in its motto: every building is interesting.

Financial support is provided by the **National Cultural Fund**, the **City of Budapest**, or neighbouring municipalities and sometimes private sponsors or through international collaborations and prizes, underscoring the commitment of public institutions to the success and sustainability of this significant cultural event.

Residents generously open their houses during the festival weekend and curate programmes for visitors. Through exhibitions and personal stories shared by residents, visitors gain insight into the history of these houses. These interactions stimulate conversations among participants, including with their neighbours, forging connections within the community. Visitors experience their city from a fresh perspective, while residents deepen their bonds with their homes and each other.

Alongside the impressive quantitative results, such as more than 600 opened buildings, the involvement of 2,000 dedicated volunteers, and an estimated 160,000 visitors, the festival's qualitative impact is equally noteworthy. This includes the sustainability



of community-driven initiatives, as, for example, residents continue to organise community gatherings after the festival has concluded. Volunteers, having developed increased independence and reliability, feel empowered to pursue their own initiatives in various aspects of their personal or professional lives. Furthermore, the festival's influence extends to the restoration and renovation sector, as participating houses are encouraged to apply for grants, and encourage decision-making processes at municipal and urban planning levels.

*“This impressive event has steadily grown its community over the years. It draws attention to lesser-recognised built heritage and embraces various forms of expression, especially highlighting the importance of oral history in relation to buildings and places. A notable aspect of Budapest100 is the involvement of people in researching and presenting the houses, fostering a sense of empowerment, ownership, and stewardship, which can be a challenging task”,* the Awards' Jury commented.

*“The Budapest100 festival serves as a catalyst for community-building and inspires others to adopt similar initiatives in their own villages and cities, reinforcing the significance of preserving and celebrating heritage from the ground up. Its transferability and strong methodology make it applicable to other villages and cities”,* the Jury added.

## Budapest100 | Hungary

This annual weekend festival celebrates the built heritage of Budapest, showcasing the intrinsic value of every house. Through guided visits and engaging exhibitions, visitors and residents share stories, knowledge and experiences, fostering connections and mutual understanding.



The Museum of Literature Ireland (MoLI) is a vibrant partnership between **University College Dublin** and the **National Library of Ireland** that celebrates Ireland's literary heritage and inspires future generations to engage with the art of writing and reading. Its approach aims to dismantle elitist perceptions of literature and highlight the unifying power of storytelling and the written (and spoken) word.

Launched in September 2019, the Museum of Literature Ireland serves as a home for prized artefacts of the **Irish State's literary collections**. MoLI explores the wide canon of Irish writing through its permanent and temporary exhibitions. By offering immersive multimedia presentations, maintaining an agile exhibition turnover (with approximately 3-4 new major exhibitions each year), fostering cross-disciplinary collaborations, and hosting a vibrant calendar of public events (both on-site and offline), the Museum of Literature Ireland has succeeded in quickly cultivating a diverse and devoted audience, despite facing extended closures in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

MoLI operates as a new, values-driven museum with a mission to engage everyone, particularly those who may not typically engage with the literary artform. The museum develops programmes in close collaboration with local community groups, placing a strong emphasis on presenting diverse voices to empower people across various age, gender, sexuality and socio-economic spectrums.

The Museum of Literature Ireland also strives to engage audiences on local, national and international levels. In addition to supporting programmes funded by **Horizon Europe** and the **Marie Curie Fellowships**, the museum is currently the Dublin partner for the ambitious EU-funded project Ulysses: A European Odyssey, which involves hosting artists from various European cities and working closely with a network of 17 other cities in the European Union.

The museum does not receive direct funding from their partners or operational state funding. MoLI relies on a variety of self-generated revenue streams to ensure its self-sustainability, including ticket sales, retail operations, membership fees and venue hire. The



museum also receives support from local corporate sponsors and actively pursues grant funding at national and EU levels.

*“This community museum in Dublin, a UNESCO City of Literature, has established itself as a strong advocate for engagement and inclusivity. It has reached a significant number of participants, including 80,000 listeners for their podcast and 7,500 visitors from schools. The Museum of Literature Ireland actively celebrates diversity and promotes creativity and artistic expression through, for example, their bursaries. The museum’s effort to address the declining interest in literature among young people is commendable, as it ensures that the artform remains accessible and relevant”,* the Awards’ Jury commended.

*“During the COVID-19 closures, the Museum of Literature Ireland showcased innovative ideas to reach its audiences. Through educational programmes, broadcasts and lectures, they effectively reach diverse communities, including marginalised groups, such as the LGBTQ+ community, with a solid methodology and a strong bottom-up approach. The museum has also given due recognition to the vital role of community and volunteers in sustaining and expanding the museum’s impact”,* the Jury added.

## Museum of Literature Ireland (MoLI), Dublin | Ireland

The Museum of Literature Ireland celebrates Ireland's literary heritage and inspires future generations to engage with the art of writing and reading. Its participatory approach aims to dismantle elitist perceptions of literature.



Since 2005, the project Open for You (“Aperti per Voi”) has promoted voluntary activities to open up heritage sites to the public. The strength of the initiative, developed by **Touring Club Italiano**, lies in its over 1,600 dedicated volunteers who facilitate continuous exchange with the local communities.

**Touring Club Italiano** was established in 1894 as a private non-profit organisation. The Open for You project exemplifies the organisation’s commitment to its mission to generate knowledge, promote volunteering and advocate for ethical travel practices, guided by the principles of sustainability and collaboration. The annual cost of the project is supported through individual fundraising, institutional support, corporate partnerships and sponsorships.

Through the collaboration of trained volunteers and property owners, visitors are welcomed and guided through unique heritage sites. The volunteers do not replace professional tour guides; instead, they promote their activities by making these places accessible for guided tours. One of the project’s strengths lies in its ability to engage volunteers of diverse ages and backgrounds, including students, teachers and retirees.

It offers a wide range of cultural programmes and cultural events, organised in collaboration with property owners, which generate value for the places, the local communities and different types of visitors. Through this project, fascinating cultural sites are reclaimed by citizens and tourists alike, from the **Renaissance frescoes of the Church of San Maurizio** in Milan and the **Longobard-era Church of Santa Maria de’ Lama** in Salerno to the **Royal Gardens of Turin** and the **rooms of Palazzo Betta Grillo** in Rovereto, and all the way to the monumental halls of the **Quirinale Palace** in Rome.

The success of the Open for You initiative can be illustrated by its impressive numbers. So far, it has opened 85 awe-inspiring places in 35 cities across 14 regions throughout Italy to over 21,000,000 visitors. The dedicated volunteers have donated over 150,000 hours per year to the initiative. Its communication activities across media have reached over 10 million people.



*“The initiative’s remarkable impact and engagement are evident in the impressive numbers it has achieved. As a sustainable project that has been ongoing for two decades, Open for You has fostered a strong community with a high level of interaction among its diverse volunteers, contributing to social cohesion and the creation of a robust network”, the Awards’ Jury commented.*

*“At its core, the Open for You initiative revolves around heritage accessibility, going beyond the confines of museums and encompassing a wide range of sites, year-round. This makes it a unique model. Knowledge transfer is facilitated by bridging the gap between professionals and volunteers through comprehensive training. In terms of policy, the initiative advocates for a tourism approach that prioritises heritage protection and raises awareness among visitors. Its success in overcoming challenges and engaging private entities to open up their cultural heritage sites sets a powerful precedent, demonstrating the potential for broader adoption of similar strategies in other countries”, the Jury added.*

## Open for You | Italy

This outstanding initiative has opened over 80 heritage sites in 35 cities throughout Italy that would otherwise be closed to the public. The secret of its success lies in the strong dedication of a large network of over 1,600 volunteers.



ALMADA – Unveiling the Mural Painting Art of Almada Negreiros is an academic multidisciplinary project that utilises scientific research to unveil the mural art of **Almada Negreiros**, one of Portugal’s most influential artists of the 20th century.

Between 1938 and 1956, Almada Negreiros created five iconic sets of modern mural paintings in Lisbon. These remarkable artworks, located in the city centre, are renowned for their artistic quality and monumental presence. Unfortunately, until recently, the mural paintings had received limited material and technical research, lacked recognition as artistic and cultural heritage, and remained unfamiliar to the general public, particularly the younger generations.

The ALMADA project follows an open science policy, encouraging collaboration between academia and citizens. Its primary focus is to deepen understanding and provide the information and tools to conserve this important Portuguese avant-garde and modernist element.

Initiated in March 2021, the project has adopted an innovative approach to achieve these aims. Utilising state-of-the-art imaging and analytical instrumentation, the project has uncovered new information about the mural paintings’ materials, techniques, and current condition. By examining deterioration phenomena, identification of causes and assessment of associated risks, the project is establishing guidelines for the future conservation and sustainable management of the mural paintings.

The ALMADA project employs inclusive, participatory and innovative approaches to promote public access and engagement. This includes reaching out to local communities and global audiences, enhancing cultural education through interactive tools, videos, workshops, guided visits and lectures. The strategy of Everyone Anywhere is fundamental, as community support and public awareness are crucial for the successful conservation of cultural heritage.

The ALMADA project is rooted in an interdisciplinary, collaborative, transnational, and open-minded vision. It drew on historical and technical art history research, scientific analysis and creative public outreach activities conducted by the **Laboratory HERCULES of Évora University** in partnership with the **Directorate General**



**for Cultural Heritage (DGPC), the Institute of Art History of the NOVA University of Lisbon (IHA-FCSH/UNL) and the Lisbon Port Administration (APL).**

*“The ALMADA project goes beyond a sole restoration by explaining the science behind the process, making a compelling case for the importance of conservation and fostering a deeper understanding of its necessity. By attracting and engaging large and diverse audiences, it successfully raises awareness about the significance of post-War II murals and honours the legacy of Almada Negreiros, an influential figure in Portugal’s modernist phase, adding another layer of significance to its endeavours. A notable aspect of the project is the opportunity it provides to witness wall paintings up close, offering a memorable and immersive experience”, the Awards’ Jury commented.*

*“The ALMADA project takes climate action seriously by measuring the impact of climate change on the murals and incorporating this information into future management plans for the city. Utilising digital tools, the project also offers a wide range of online didactic resources, bridging the gap between the academic world and the general public”, the Jury added.*

## ALMADA Project, Lisbon | Portugal

This multidisciplinary project utilises scientific research to present the mural art of Almada Negreiros, one of Portugal’s most influential artists of the 20th century, in a new light. Its public outreach to diverse communities is exemplary.





The Via Transilvanica is a hiking trail that spans more than 1,400 kilometres, 20 different ethnic and cultural regions of Romania, and around 400 communities, showcasing 12 **UNESCO World Heritage Sites**. The remarkable project to establish this trail was led by **Tăşuleasa Social**, an NGO which has been engaged in educational, social, environmental and cultural activities for over 23 years.

The Via Transilvanica is the first long-distance trail in Romania. It was inaugurated in 2022 after four years of dedicated work with the involvement of local communities and over 10,000 volunteers. The trail is marked by signposts and Andesite milestones, individually carved by national and international artists, which beautifully embellish the entire route.

The Via Transilvanica offers travellers a unique opportunity to meet local communities, encounter extraordinary places and the natural environment and engage with local heritage and a history that spans over 2,000 years.

The **Via Transilvanica Guide** was composed by a dedicated documentary team that walked each section of the trail, capturing essential information. The guide covers everything from trip planning, backpack essentials, encounters with wildlife, detailed maps, accommodation options and comprehensive route descriptions, including heritage landmarks. It is available in four languages (Romanian, English, German and Hungarian) on the [viatransilvanica.com](http://viatransilvanica.com) website.

In October 2022, the route was officially launched in **Alba Iulia**. The launch event took the form of a fair, with all seven regions along the route, tourist destinations and organisations represented. Engaging talks with hikers and various stakeholders shed light on different aspects of the Via Transilvanica. 12,000 participants joined the event, which generated significant national and international attention.

**Tăşuleasa Social**'s mission revolves around maintaining, promoting and identifying opportunities for the trail. The NGO has created a robust common platform that unites all the stakeholders involved, including hikers, local communities and authorities. By emphasising the environmental, social, and heritage values of the trail, it contributes to sustainable local development, while



preserving and nurturing heritage along its path, and creates a source of enduring local and international pride.

*“In one of the most stunning regions of Europe, the remarkable trail Via Transilvanica serves as a vital connection between the community and diverse facets of heritage, encompassing not only the built heritage and intangible traditions but also the region’s food heritage. The project has fostered a strong sense of place, deepening people’s connection to the trail and its surroundings. Working alongside public stakeholders, NGOs and other organisations, the project has reached out to over 7 million people. It has also highlighted accommodation that helps protect built heritage while attracting sustainable tourism, thus bringing economic benefits”, the Awards’ Jury said.*

*“Beyond its focus on heritage and culture, the project also emphasises the importance of environmental conservation, especially of forests. Another positive aspect is the commitment of the project’s initiators to artistic expression and its well-defined future goals to further develop trails related to architecture, gastronomy and other domains”, the Jury concluded.*

## Via Transilvanica | Romania

At 1,400 km, the Via Transilvanica is Romania’s longest hiking trail which connects as many as 12 UNESCO World Heritage sites. It serves as a vital connection between local communities and diverse facets of heritage, encompassing built, natural and intangible heritage.



Un-archiving Post-industry is a remarkable project that digitally preserves endangered industrial heritage collections in Ukraine's East, fostering engagement with this heritage among local communities. The project has also forged creative connections between collections and communities in Ukraine and other European regions grappling with de-industrialisation and post-industrial transitions, particularly in the United Kingdom.

Collaborating closely with local archives and heritage practitioners, the project, led by the **Centre for Urban History of East Central Europe** in Lviv, digitised collections at the **Mariupol Local History Museum**, the **Pokrovsk Local History Museum** and the **Donetsk Regional Museum of Local History**. Approximately 30,000 photo negatives and 82 films were digitised, encompassing press photo collections from the 1940s to the 1990s, company archives, family albums, home movies and amateur films.

The project involved local stakeholders at every stage in order to empower local communities. The participants have included high-school students, former and current industry workers, educators and refugees. Digital copies were returned to local museums and individual contributors, while local communities actively participated in contextualising and presenting their materials, therefore retaining control over the use of their collections by external entities.

Co-leads on the project at the **University of St Andrews** delivered a series of community workshops in former coal and oil shale mining and steelmaking communities in South Wales, Northeast England and Scotland, where the digitised collections were placed in dialogue with UK archives and museum collections. By highlighting historic connections and the shared experiences and challenges faced by these regions, the project successfully framed the narrative in European, rather than national, terms.

Un-archiving Post-industry unfolded in the years leading up to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, when the hybrid war in Donbas posed threats to local heritage and identity. In this context, the project sought to address the vulnerability of industrial heritage collections through the digitisation initiative. By capturing a unique



record of community life in Donbas, the project also counteracted the weaponisation of the past and combatted the circulation of misinformation fuelled by Russian propaganda. Although some of this heritage was destroyed in 2022 due to the war, digital copies remain accessible, preserving the essence of the collections.

*“This smart and multifaceted project has achieved remarkable success in preserving industrial heritage in Ukraine’s East. With an incredible amount of digital data, the Un-archiving Post-industry project has developed an excellent archive that stands out in terms of its structure, data quality and searchability. The availability of this archive in Open Access ensures accessibility to a wide range of users. This is of even greater significance in the current context of the war”,* the Awards Jury stated.

*“The project Un-archiving Post-industry shows the significance of industrial heritage throughout Europe, creating a network of smaller digital archives and experts. The level of cooperation among the partners was also of high quality, going beyond standard collaboration within a consortium. Its commitment to engaging local stakeholders fosters a sense of ownership and trust among the communities involved”,* the Jury concluded.

## Un-archiving Post-industry | Ukraine

This smart and multifaceted project digitally preserves endangered industrial heritage collections in the East part of Ukraine. It fosters engagement with this heritage among and between local communities in Ukraine and the United Kingdom.



In 1995, the printmaker Hambis Tsangaris established the Hambis School of Printmaking in the Cypriot countryside. Since its inception, he has taught free printmaking classes in homage to his own teacher, the renowned Greek printmaker **A. Tassos**. These classes serve as a gateway for individuals of all ages and educational backgrounds to immerse themselves in the vibrant world of Cypriot folk culture, its captivating myths and cherished traditions. In addition, Hambis Tsangaris has also created illustrated publications of **Cypriot folktales**. He has studied, recorded and illustrated the Cypriot legends and traditions about the *kalikangiar* (Cypriot goblins) in a series of books. Through the art of printmaking, Hambis Tsangaris and the community of printmakers he has created have effectively safeguarded this invaluable part of Cyprus' intangible heritage.

The impact of Hambis Tsangaris' teachings extends far beyond the classroom. Countless teachers and educators have learned from him and, in turn, imparted this knowledge within the Cypriot education system. In 2008, he further expanded the reach of this heritage by establishing the **Hambis Museum of Printmaking** in the countryside. In 2019, the **Hambis Municipal Museum of Printmaking** in Nicosia was inaugurated. These milestones represent Hambis' relentless pursuit to broaden the horizons of his students and introduce them to diverse cultures through the expressive medium of printmaking, thus fostering intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity.

At the root of his activities is the belief that culture, heritage and art should be accessible to everyone, regardless of their background. To this end, Hambis Tsangaris travelled throughout Cyprus, visiting numerous villages, in every region, to provide free printmaking lessons and share folk traditions in parallel. In this way, he demonstrates that art is a remarkable resource for highlighting and preserving Europe's shared culture.

Hambis Tsangaris has also played an important role in promoting intercommunal peace and coexistence in Cyprus. At the museum, he has organised joint exhibitions, forging connections between Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot artists. He has also facilitated exchange visits to Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot workshops, to



further build understanding and the peaceful coexistence of these two communities. An open invitation to Turkish-Cypriot artists to participate in the events of the Printmaking School and the Hambis Printmaking Museum remains extended.

*"Hambis Tsangaris is remarkable for his achievements in fostering connections and understanding among communities in Cyprus through his work with heritage. With a passionate and inclusive approach, he has dedicated himself to the transmission of knowledge both locally and internationally, integrating traditional Cypriot storytelling into his efforts. He has reached an impressive number of people, including schoolchildren. His innovative ideas and commitment to art as a medium for delivering meaningful messages is an inspiration to other European citizens", the Awards' Jury stated.*

*"Tsangaris' international travels and engagement with remote villages reflect his dedication to fostering intercultural relationships in Cyprus and further afield. Through his work, he exemplifies the power of art and education in revitalising diverse aspects of and ensuring continuity with our collective past", the Jury concluded.*

## Hambis Tsangaris | Cyprus

Hambis Tsangaris is remarkable for his achievements in fostering connections and understanding among communities in Cyprus through his work with the intangible heritage of printmaking.



Thanks to the remarkable efforts of the Italian musicologist Sergio Ragni, over the past six decades, a wealth of knowledge about the life of the celebrated Italian composer **Gioachino Rossini** has been collected, analysed and made accessible to the public, through various mediums such as books, exhibitions, films, lectures and an impressive private collection of objects related to **Rossini's** life. Ragni's tireless work illuminates the true magnitude of **Rossini's** cultural significance, firmly establishing him as one of the greatest European cultural figures of the 19th century, whose influence transcended the realm of music.

**Gioachino Rossini** played a pivotal role in shaping the identity of a changing noble and bourgeois society in the 19th century in Europe, with his influence also extending to the Americas. Recognised as one of the most important opera composers in history, **Rossini's** enduring impact is felt in the performances of his works even today.

Within Sergio Ragni's private apartment in Naples, one can discover one of the world's premier collections of artefacts from **Rossini's** era. This remarkable collection, encompassing a wide array of items and capturing the essence of the European cultural and social milieu, warmly welcomes visitors by appointment, free-of-charge. Ragni's comprehensive collection stands out not only for its size and content but also for its representation of the significant figures surrounding Rossini, including singers, conductors, theatre managers, politicians, writers and painters. It provides a multidimensional glimpse into the vibrant cultural tapestry of the time and remains accessible to all, a testament to Sergio Ragni's unwavering passion and knowledge. All of the collector's work has been self-financed over the past six decades.

Sergio Ragni's ongoing publication of Rossini's complete letters and documents, meticulously co-edited by the collector himself, serves as an invaluable resource for scholars, providing previously inaccessible insights. With seven volumes already published, containing around 700 pages each, this monumental undertaking continues to expand our understanding of Rossini's life and legacy. Ragni also shares his extensive knowledge with the general public through



frequent articles published and lectures given in Italy, Switzerland, Austria, France and Spain. Notably, his two-volume book on Rossini's wife, Isabella Colbran, a renowned opera singer from Spain, offers a unique perspective on European cultural life during that period.

*"Sergio Ragni's dedication and expertise have earned him widespread respect and renown among Europe's leading music professionals. His focus on opera, specifically the work of Gioachino Rossini, has played an important role in preserving this intangible heritage of great significance for Europe. Through his contributions, he has influenced a transformative shift in the way opera performances are approached, marking a paradigmatic change in the field",* the Awards' Jury stated.

*"With a lifelong commitment to collecting and researching Rossini's works, Sergio Ragni has invested not only his time but also personal resources into this endeavour. His extensive body of work has established him as a vital point of reference in the study and dissemination of knowledge of this period",* the Jury added.

## Sergio Ragni | Italy

Thanks to his remarkable efforts over a period of over 60 years, Sergio Ragni has collected and shared a wealth of knowledge about the life and cultural significance of one of Europe's most influential composers, Gioachino Rossini.





The archaeologist Cláudio Torres has dedicated his entire life to revealing the legacy of Islamic heritage in Portugal. As an educator in **Medieval History** at the **University of Lisbon**, Torres noted that though there was a significant Islamic presence in Portugal for a period of 500 years, this was not duly reflected in historical study of the time. This led to his research in Mértola, a small village in the southeast of Portugal, where he established the **Mértola Archaeological Site (CAM)**.

The old city of Martulah (or Mértola) had been an important city in Antiquity and the Middle Ages, but its status later declined and was largely forgotten. Excavations initiated by Cláudio Torres in 1978 uncovered a wealth of discoveries which have reshaped understanding of the site for the contemporary world and revealed important links across the Mediterranean. Among the discoveries were a necropolis dating from the Late Middle Ages, an intricate Islamic district and an impressive Paleo-Christian religious compound, along with two 6th-century baptisteries and mosaics with strong Byzantine influences.

These fascinating excavations proved to be the catalyst for a 45-year period of research. Museum exhibits were developed, dozens of books and catalogues were published, and a journal in medieval archaeology was launched, among other initiatives.

Mértola has become a regular destination for academics and researchers. It has hosted international conferences and many researchers visit the village and its archaeological site, especially from Tunisia and Morocco. Several generations of archaeologists, historians, anthropologists and curators-restorers, among others, have trained there.

The research centre and extensive library created by Cláudio Torres in Mértola includes a research unit run in collaboration with the **Universities of Coimbra and the Algarve**. The **Islamic Festival in Mértola**, held every two years and celebrating its 11<sup>th</sup> edition in 2023, has strengthened links with other countries that share Islamic history and culture. The small village in the Alentejo region, with little more than 1,000 inhabitants, has attracted thousands of visitors each year, resulting in a boost in the tourism economy. A renewed



pride and sense of stewardship has also been encouraged among the local community. Among his achievements, Cláudio Torres' was also involved in the creation of the **Guadiana Valley Natural Park**, of which he was the first Director.

*“As a bridge builder between Islamic and Christian cultures, Cláudio Torres has played a pivotal role in fostering the appreciation and conservation of Islamic heritage in Portugal, which has immense importance for Europe’s cultural heritage as a whole and which deserves to be acknowledged and cherished. He has gone beyond conventional archaeological practices and actively involved the local community in safeguarding and celebrating their shared heritage. He has thus become a source of inspiration for many”,* the Awards’ Jury stated.

*“Cláudio Torres’ remarkable achievement of having the Low Guadiana Valley listed as a national park highlights his holistic vision linking archaeology, natural and cultural heritage and local development. His support for teamwork and collaboration has been instrumental in his success, bringing together professionals and creating a cohesive team that remains rooted in Mértola,”* the Jury concluded.

## Cláudio Torres | Portugal

For over 40 years, the archaeologist Cláudio Torres and the research centre that he created in Mértola have played a pivotal role in fostering the appreciation and conservation of Islamic heritage in Portugal.



Saving Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Online (SUCHO) is an extraordinary initiative to safeguard the digital cultural heritage of Ukraine amidst the ongoing Russian invasion. **Anna Kijas (Tufts University, US)**, **Quinn Dombrowski (Stanford University, US)** and **Sebastian Majstorovic (European University Institute, Italy)** launched the initiative on 1 March 2022. SUCHO quickly garnered the support of approximately 1,000 volunteers within the first week of its launch. Unlike other rapid-response projects, SUCHO stands out due to its remarkable scale and scope.

While the preservation of physical cultural heritage in Ukraine received considerable media attention, the vulnerability of digital cultural heritage became increasingly apparent. Digitised content and born-digital materials, including photographs and other files stored on servers, faced the risk of destruction or corruption during attacks or power outages. Even websites hosted outside of Ukraine were in jeopardy, if the websites owners were unable to meet their hosting expenses. Hence, the primary objective of SUCHO from the outset was to safeguard Ukraine's digital cultural heritage, with the intention of restoring the preserved files and data to their original institutions after the war.

By June 2022, SUCHO volunteers successfully web archived over 50TB of data encompassing more than 5,000 websites. This vast collection offers a rich and diverse representation of Ukraine's tangible and intangible cultural heritage. The archived websites span a wide range of institutions, from local museums, music academies and theatres to monasteries, archives, libraries and programmes dedicated to children's and local history. In addition, SUCHO curated selected materials into a publicly accessible gallery, while also amassing a collection of war-related memes enriched with metadata for future historical research.

As a grassroots effort, SUCHO relied on the dedication of volunteers and the tools developed by the open-source community. The initiative also forged critical partnerships with organisations and institutions providing technological and financial support. SUCHO also raised considerable funds to supply cultural heritage institutions in



Ukraine with physical digitisation equipment, addressing the urgent need to digitise objects at risk of damage or looting. Furthermore, it facilitated the creation of training materials and compiled existing resources in Ukrainian or with Ukrainian subtitles, ensuring the effective use of digitisation equipment during emergency situations.

*“Saving Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Online is a remarkable initiative that goes far beyond the usual scope of the initiators’ work. It has garnered extensive support from a large number of volunteers from across the world and demonstrates that individuals can take real steps to protect cultural heritage in a crisis situation, even from a distance”,* the Awards’ Jury commented.

*“Although still a relatively young project, SUCHO already represents a significant and admirable achievement in ensuring the safety of a large amount of digital cultural heritage of Ukraine. This rapid response via collective action, achieved with limited resources, sets a commendable example for future emergencies of similar nature. Theirs is a timely and innovative response to a difficult challenge. It also demonstrates the importance and power of heritage in international relations”,* the Jury stated.

## Saving Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Online (SUCHO) | International Project/Ukraine

In the first months of the war in Ukraine, the large network of SUCHO volunteers from across the world archived over 50TB of data from Ukrainian cultural institutions. Their rapid response is an impressive example of the power of collective action in a crisis situation.



## **Selection Committees and the Heritage Awards Jury**

The winners of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards are selected by an impressive group of experts in the field of cultural heritage who evaluate each of the entries. The members of the Selection Committees and the Heritage Awards Jury undertake this important task on a voluntary basis.

The members come from across the continent and together form an extensive pool of knowledge and expertise. Among them are archaeologists, architects, conservators, documentation and scanning experts, educators, engineers, intangible heritage experts, linguists, material specialists, museum professionals, to name just a few.

The interdisciplinarity and diversity of the Committees and the Jury ensures that all of the entries are holistically evaluated. We sincerely thank all of the experts for their dedication, insight and generosity.

Following from the success of the 2022 edition, several European Heritage Youth Ambassadors have once again acted as members of the Selection Committees for the 2023 edition of the Awards.

The European Heritage Youth Ambassador Programme, run by the European Students' Association for Cultural Heritage (ESACH), Europa Nostra and the European Heritage Tribune offers a platform for young people from all over Europe and beyond to share their stories and experiences in the heritage field online (on social media, websites, or blogs etc.). Each Youth Ambassador also acts as a bridge between students and young professionals and European heritage institutions.



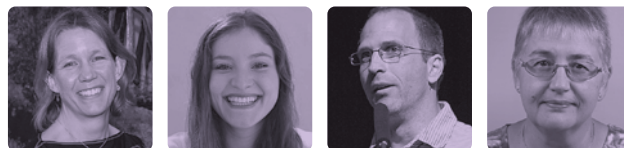
## 🌱 CONSERVATION & ADAPTIVE REUSE

Antonio Lamas PT *Chair*  
 Yonca Erkan TR *Vice-Chair*  
 Klimis Aslanidis GR  
 Ana Chiricuță RO  
 Piotr Gerber PL  
 Kujtime Mimi Kotorri AL *Youth Ambassador*  
 Jean-Sébastien Misson BE  
 Adrian Olivier UK  
 Etienne Poncelet FR  
 Michiel Purmer NL  
 Francesco Trovo' IT  
 Esther Valdés Tejera ES



## 🌱 RESEARCH

Sabine Nemeč-Piguet CH *Chair*  
 Nicki Matthews IE  
 Marita Sakhltkutsishvili GE *Youth Ambassador*  
 Velika Stojkova Serafimovska MK  
 Alex Torpiano MT  
 Georgios Toubekis DE



## 🌱 EDUCATION, TRAINING & SKILLS

Sara Crofts UK *Chair*  
 Ella Erzsébet Békési HU *Youth Ambassador*  
 Árpád Böczén HU  
 Elena Dimitrova BG  
 Ola Fjeldheim NO  
 Hanna Lamsa FI  
 Mariam Maka Dvalishvili GE  
 Charles Personnaz FR



### CITIZENS' ENGAGEMENT & AWARENESS-RAISING

Pavlos Chatzigrigoriou GR *Chair*  
Tiago Candeias PT *Youth Ambassador*  
Barbara Cordero ES  
Davida de Hond NL  
Natalia Moussienko UA



### HERITAGE CHAMPIONS

Eugen Vaida RO *Chair*  
Claus-Peter Echter DE  
Andela Jovanovic RS *Youth Ambassador*  
Sadi Petrela AL  
Marianne Ytterdal NO



### HERITAGE AWARDS JURY

Bertrand de Feydeau FR *Chair*  
Rossana Bettinelli IT  
Pavlos Chatzigrigoriou GR  
Sara Crofts UK  
Maciej Hofman PL  
Antonio Lamas PT  
Johanna Leissner DE  
Sabine Nemeč-Piguet CH  
Jermina Stanojev RS  
Eugen Vaida RO  
Koen van Balen BE  
Androulla Vassiliou CY  
Ana Isabel Velasco Rebollo ES  
Harry Verwayen NL



# Heritage Awards Assessors

Before being submitted for the consideration of the Heritage Awards Jury, each of the submissions to the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards that are shortlisted by the Selection Committees are evaluated by heritage experts from across Europe.

These independent practitioners visit sites and/or conduct interviews with the entrants, later submitting their assessment report to the Heritage Awards Jury.

Their expertise in a range of disciplines ensures the credibility and high quality of the awards scheme and is an important element of the Jury's decision-making process.

We sincerely thank all of the assessors who committed their time and expertise to the independent and diligent evaluation of each shortlisted entry.

Assessor	Country
Benoît Delaey	Belgium
Darko Babic	Croatia
Benjamin Fragner	Czechia
Jan Zikmund	Czechia
Vibeke Andersson Møller	Denmark
Bertrand Perret	France
Charles Personnaz	France
Etienne Poncelet	France
Gabor Mester de Parajd	France
Claus-Peter Echter	Germany
Nikolaos Degleris	Greece
Olga Deligianni	Greece
Stelios Zerefos	Greece
Ábel Mészáros	Hungary
Lilla Zámbo	Hungary
Geraldine Walsh	Ireland
Andrea Bondi	Italy
Andrea Cottini	Italy
Antonella Mott	Italy
Carla Toffolo	Italy
Francesca Moncada	Italy
Francesco Calzolaio	Italy
Gaianè Casnati	Italy
Giorgio Gianighian	Italy
Maurizio Boriani	Italy
Virginia Cimino	Italy
Katrina Kukaine	Latvia
Elena Kazlauskaitė	Lithuania

Lilian Grootswagers-Theuns	Netherlands
Hedda Lombrado	Norway
Tore Friis-Olsen	Norway
Katarzyna Pabijanek	Poland
Edyta Gawron	Poland
Katarzyna Jagodzińska	Poland
Marek Walczak	Poland
Maria Calado	Portugal
Ciprian Stefan	Romania
Cristian Cismaru	Romania
Vesna Marjanović	Serbia
Roko Žarnić	Slovenia
Beatriz Barrio	Spain
Igor Cacho Ugalde	Spain
Jasna Popović	Spain
José Ángel Rodríguez Fleitas	Spain
Luis Cueto Ferrándiz	Spain
Manuel Gracia Rivas	Spain
Pedro Ponce de León	Spain
Nicolas Delachaux	Switzerland
Virginie Bally	Switzerland
Hande Akarca	Turkey
Nuran Zeren Gülersoy	Turkey
Sidika Bebekoğlu	Turkey
Daryna Zhyvohliadova	Ukraine
Lesia Voroniuk	Ukraine
Roger Thomas	United Kingdom
Alexander Goodger	United Kingdom
John Sell	United Kingdom
Lara Artemis	United Kingdom

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