

## Editorial

*The whole notion of museums has changed dramatically in the last two decades, particularly as a result of the introduction and continuing acceleration of information technology, which has transposed museums from their traditional ponderous models to digitised images and 'virtual museums'.*

*Whether a communal space of interaction or an archival space, museums face a huge challenge in Mediterranean Partner countries and the awareness of their value for identity building and promoting a nation's history has only recently come to the notice of authorities and various actors in cultural heritage. Moreover, their value as spaces for education and social integration has captured the attention of the very few, and the notion that they have a public duty to make provision to all parts of society – all ages, social, cultural and educational backgrounds – is yet to be integrated to the cultural agenda of partner countries.*

*Euromed Heritage is not specialised in the development of museums per se. From the perspective of our programme, museums are but one form of 'representing' the past and 'presenting' it to the public. Within the limited scope of our newsletter, we are presenting a few examples that should throw light on the complexity and challenges of keeping museums afloat, and the transformations they undergo in the wake of new technologies.*

*Christiane Dabdoub Nasser  
Team Leader, Regional Monitoring  
and Support Unit (RMSU)*



Aga Khan Museum collection, Sabanci Museum exhibition with MANUMED, Istanbul, Turkey

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

### City Museums of the Future

BY CHRISTIANE DABDOUB NASSER, TEAM LEADER, REGIONAL MONITORING AND SUPPORT UNIT (RMSU)

Who would have ever thought that a museum about a city can make its development? And yet, it is the latest buzzword among museologists, anthropologists, planners and professionals interested in the well-being of cities and the future of museums.

Museums have been presenting urban development and growth but have never been part of the process of determining the nature of this development. Based on the fact that museums are assuming new roles and developing new ways of working with new opportunities, duties and responsibilities, it is assumed that they can have an impact on the planning of cities by acting as a source of knowledge to influence development and by participating in development urban planning processes. To that effect, a conference sponsored by the Committee for the Collections and Activities of Museums of Cities (CAMOC) was held in Vienna in 2007 under the title *City museums and city development*; the core of the debate was articulated by the conference keynote speaker, Professor Georges Prévélakis (Université Pantheon-Sorbonne and an associate of the Museum of the City of Athens) who stated that «the role of city museums is closely related to the dynamics of the partitioning of geographical space, which occurs on various levels and which is both physical and mental.»

Several writers have stressed the role of museums in city planning ever since, but as yet there are no examples of a museum having influenced the shaping of a city ■

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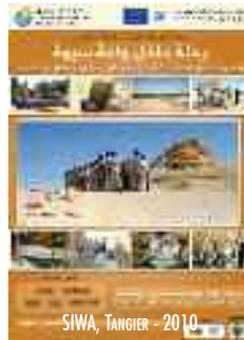


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## EUROMED HERITAGE 4 NEWS



### RMSU'S ACTIVITIES

**Young photographers strongly committed to the revitalisation of Mediterranean cultural heritage: heritage competition photos on show at Barcelona exhibition (from 15 to 28 February 2011)**

Nour El Refai, a 27-years-old Egyptian photographer and architect, is the winner of the 2010 edition of «Crossing viewpoints: living heritage in the Mediterranean» International Photography Award organised by the Euromed Heritage programme and Rehabimed Association. This competition revealed the value of cultural heritage for the youth, especially in the Mediterranean countries: the Jury received 516 pictures in total and 57% of the 327 participants are originally from the Mediterranean partner's countries and 13 out of 30 finalist's pictures of participant's were from countries of the South of the Mediterranean. The Jury gave a special mention to Eyad Jadallah, a 26 years old Palestinian free lancer photo-journalist, Gianluca Capri (Italy), Augustin Le Gall (France), and Frédéric Seguran (France). «*These photos marvellously highlight the place that cultural heritage holds in Mediterranean contemporary societies, as well as the existing connections between tradition and modernity, and the achieved integration between local and outside creative influences*» said Architect C. Graz, member of the Jury Committee. The official inauguration of the exhibition «Crossing viewpoints: living heritage in the Mediterranean», will be held in Barcelona, on 15 February 2011, at «Hospital de Sant Pau i la Santa Creu», a masterpiece of Art Nouveau architecture inscribed to UNESCO Cultural Heritage List. The exhibition will be open until 28 February 2011 ■

An overview of the exhibition, as well as the practical information, is available at this link:  
<http://www.euromedheritage.net/intern.cfm?menuID=16&submenuID=238&subsubmenuID=16>

### EH 4 projects activities

**The training of children and women to traditional skills and handicrafts, an action for the economic development of Siwa and Tangiers (December 2010-Mai 2011)**

The «Siwa & Tangier: cultural heritage for a better life» project develops several activities aiming at safeguarding and promoting the traditional skills and handicrafts in Tangiers (Morocco) and Siwa (Egypt). In these two towns, the activities related to handicraft could represent an important drive of economic and touristic development having positive impacts on local populations. To this aim, the project is organizing various awareness and training activities related to handicraft techniques addressed, more in particular, to groups of children and women.

**Tangiers: training workshop on « zellige » (December 2010-Mai 2011)**

The «zellige» is the traditional clay studded tile used since the 10th century to embellish the houses and buildings in the Maghreb region. It also represents one of the typical elements of the region's architecture. Between December 2010 and Mai 2011, approximately 12 pupils between the ages of 14 and 18 will be introduced to the production techniques of panels, to the styles and composition, and the classification of working tools. The training workshop will be organized under the supervision of Mr. Abdel Aziz El Idrissi, Director of the Museum of the Kasbah of Tangiers, and held by Mr. Salimi Brahim, Deputy Director of the Museum of the Kasbah of Tangiers – theory courses – and Mr. Maalem Lahcen Akil Frij – practical courses. The 250 hours of the workshop will be organised 3 times at week at the Kasbah Museum.

**Siwa: training workshops on embroidered clothes, pottery and silver jewellery (Dec. 2010 – Mai 2011)**

Some trainings focusing on embroidered clothes, pottery and silver jewellery will be organised between December 2010 and Mai 2011 in order to enhance the skills of female handicrafts producers in the Siwa Oasis - Siwa town and the neighbouring villages. For the production of clothes, the training will focus on the general design using traditional motifs; the pottery training will cover all stages of production of objects that are usable in daily life. The training on the production of silver jewellery

will provide the girls with the necessary skills of handling the silver according to traditional motifs and spirit. Approximately 34 ladies will participate in the workshop related on the production of embroidered clothes, approximately 15 ladies in the training on the production of pottery, and 2 ladies in the training on the production of silver jewellery. The trainers will be a resident foreign private producer and a local professional tailor, and a local artist/professor of the Faculty of Fine Arts ■

For more information about «Siwa & Tangier, a cultural heritage for a better life»:

<http://www.euromedheritage.net/intern.cfm?menuID=12&submenuID=13&project=47>

**Citizen participation in the revitalization of traditional architecture in Morocco: participatory forum in Marrakech (February 4, 2011)**

Since 2009 the Montada project focuses on the formation of advisory forums called «The City. Living Heritage» in the six cities in Maghreb covered by the project: Dellys and Ghardaia, in Algeria, Salé and Marrakech, in Morocco, Kairouan and Sousse, in Tunisia. These forums, made by members and associations of civil society, including local and national policy makers, heritage professionals, teachers in urban planning and tourism management and those coming from the education sector, trainers for the profession in craft and restoration etc., meet regularly in order to stimulate the public debate, ensuring the relevance and sustainability of actions undertaken under the project for the revitalization of the traditional architecture of the six cities as well as the follow-up of the actions. The meeting in Marrakech, designed in a workshop format in order to enrich and develop the processes of analysis, reflection and collective decisions about the heritage and the architecture of the city, brought together all local players to enable the sharing of realities and issues, set priority needs and bring out constructive proposals in the context of the opportunities offered by the Montada project. «*The specific objective of this meeting was to set the two main themes that will underpin the development of the action program to develop in Marrakech. The goal is to foster a space for discussion and exchange, which allows all participants to express their ideas and opinions*», says Montserrat Casado, project coordinator. On the same occasion, the teaching tool developed



under the project Montada was presented to the teachers of the centres involved in the project in Marrakech and Salé ■

For more information about MONTADA project:

<http://www.montada-forum.net/fr/montada/montada.htm>

Discover the charm of traditional architecture in the Maghreb:

[http://www.montada-forum.net/fr/videos\\_fr](http://www.montada-forum.net/fr/videos_fr)

### Educating high school students in cultural heritage protection: ELAICH project cultural heritage pilot course

From October to December 2010, the Elaich project organised a pilot course in collaboration with the Hebrew Reali School of Haifa in order to test the Educational Approach in cultural heritage developed by the project. 15 students experienced fascinating lectures given by experts in the field of cultural heritage from five highly-rated universities who used interactive methods of teaching. The lectures focused on important aspects of cultural heritage such as preventive conservation; air pollution and its consequences - with a particular attention given to the case of Haifa; properties and deterioration of historic building materials; conservation processes; earthquake protection of monuments; history and archaeology. Students also ran lab experiments and went through a few site exercises, focusing on the study of selected built heritage sites, including documentation and those investigations required to ensure the preservation of historical sites. Site visits were made possible with the assistance of the Israel Antiquity Authority and the Society for Preservation of Israel Heritage Sites. A closing event was held on January 25, 2011 at the Technion - Israel Institute of Technology campus in Haifa, in order to present the results of the Pilot Course, the ELAICH methodology, and the projects developed by students during the course. Conservation experts from the Technion, National Technical University of Athens, University of Antwerp, Ca'Foscari University of Venice, and the University of Malta participated in this event ■

More information about ELAICH:

<http://www.euromedheritage.net/intern.cfm?lng=en&menuID=12&submenuID=13&idproject=37>

ELAICH website: [www.elaich.technion.ac.il](http://www.elaich.technion.ac.il)

### A new online game for children aged between 6 and 11 to explore the traditional architecture of the Maghreb

The project MONTADA is currently developing online games that allow children from 6 to 11 years old to discover the basic principles of a traditional architecture while developing their creativity. A first game, created in November 2010, consists of placing furniture, architectural elements and characters in a traditional courtyard in the town of Ghardaia. The new game that has been designed allows children to explore geometric elements and ornaments in the homes of Salé and Marrakech, in Morocco. In addition, a series of postcards, associated with the games, are available online and the workshops, where children learn the basic principles of traditional architecture through crafts and games, can be printed and sent. «*The goal of all these activities is to arouse children's interest in traditional architecture, developing their knowledge in a fun and interactive way*», says Montserrat Villaverde from the Montada project ■

To play online:

<http://www.montada-forum.net/fr/ville-du-patrimoine-vivant/ville-du-patrimoine-vivant.htm>

To download the postcards:

<http://www.montada-forum.net/fr/activites/activites.htm>

### A three-day festival of traditional music, dance, food, clothing, handicraft to raise awareness of cultural heritage in Lebanon

The Foundations for a strong future project organised a cultural heritage festival in Beirut from 17 to 19 December 2010, at the Tournesol Theatre, Tayyouneh, close to the Beirut National Museum, one of the project's partners. The festival aimed at increasing local population awareness of their national heritage and facilitating the cultural exchange between the Lebanese, Jordanian and Palestinian. The event paid particular attention to the involvement of children, young peoples, and students from schools and universities, which constitute the project's main target group. In addition, the underlying aim of the festival is to build bridges of communication between communities divided by conflict, and allow access across the division lines, increasing knowledge of the "other" by focusing on the very things that are common such as traditions, language, music and cultural

background. The festival, implemented by a wide variety of organisations having long experience in working with the youth and cultural heritage - Beirut National Museum, «Association pour la Protection des Sites et Anciennes Demeures au Liban» (APSAD), Najdeh Association, Amel Association, Union of Arab ICT Associations - Ijma3 -, was the opportunity to show cultural heritage expressions including traditional dance, food, clothes, music, handy crafts, etc. and organise a drawing competition and visits to the National Museum addressed to approximately 600-800 youth ■

Foundations for a strong future at a glance:

<http://www.euromedheritage.net/intern.cfm?menuID=12&submenuID=13&idproject=45>

Foundations for a strong future website:

<http://www.osasosot.com>

### Traditional architecture and young people: workshops in Salé and Marrakesh

The MONTADA project aims at the conservation and revitalisation of the traditional architecture in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia through the active involvement of the local communities. An important part of the project's activities are particularly conceived and addressed to children, young people, schools and actors of the education sector – teachers, trainers, etc. A workshop focusing on the colours and decoration techniques adopted in the traditional houses in Morocco was organised on December, 4, in Salé, and another workshop on the same subject on December, 6, in Marrakesh. These workshops, addressed to young people between 7 and 13, aimed to contribute integrate the theme of traditional architecture into the pedagogical tools adopted in the schools during the normal and extracurricular activities. During the workshops, the young people worked on finishing touches techniques – zellige, plaster, cabinet-making, etc. – and discovered the main principles of the traditional architecture while developing their creativity ■

### «Building and implementing a protection plan for Audiovisual Archives»: a training part of the project Med-Mem for the preservation and enhancement of the Mediterranean's audiovisual heritage

In the Med-Mem project the safeguarding of audiovisual archives constitute a major issue. To



MONTADA, ATELIER SALE, MOROCCO - 2010



MED-MEM FORMATION ALEXANDRIE - M. SANSON 2010



MEDLIHER, CAIRO, EGYPT - Nov 2010

this end, the project focuses on training professionals - librarians, heads of archives, etc. – issued from the broadcaster sector on safeguarding, management and development techniques of audiovisual documents in the archives of Mediterranean televisions, partners of the project. This training, held from 30 November to 2 December 2010 in Alexandria, is the third after those on digitization and indexing organized in 2009. Beyond sharing of experiences between broadcasters in the Mediterranean, the training focused on defining a methodology approach and on proposing a number of organizational and technical guidelines - inventories and definition of the volume of audiovisual funds; mapping content and physical state of the audiovisual funds; assessment of the means and strengths available, technical solutions... - for the implementation of safeguarding strategies for the digitization of archives. The results of this training will contribute to feeding part of the content of a manual on the safeguarding of audiovisual archives, which will be available at the beginning of the 2012 and will constitute a reference in the field. This manual will be available online on the Med-Mem website, a platform of more than 4000 videos about countries surrounding the Mediterranean basin, which provides evidence of exceptional historical heritage of the region. This will be made available to the public in late 2011 ■

#### Med-Mem promotion clip:

<http://www.ina.fr/playlist/art-et-culture/bandes-annonces-medmem.297775.ft.html>

#### More information about Mem-Mem:

<http://www.euromedheritage.net/intern.cfm?menuID=12&submenuID=13&idproject=42>

#### Inventoring the intangible cultural heritage in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria

The «Mediterranean Living Heritage» project (MEDLIHER) aims at safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage in the Mediterranean region through facilitating the effective participation of four countries - Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria - in the mechanisms established by the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003. Specifically addressed to the partner countries' governmental communities and institutions, MEDLIHER also contributes to the reinforcement of governmental institutions' capacities. An evaluation meeting bringing together high representatives of all project

partners - UNESCO, «Maison des cultures du Monde» Association and the concerned ministries in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria - was held from 28 to 30 November in Cairo, in order to debate the situation of intangible cultural heritage in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Egypt, and discuss the conclusions of the respective national assessments of existing programmes, experiences and structures in the field of safeguarding intangible cultural heritage carried out during the project's first phase. The event served as a basis to select targeted national and multinational projects to be implemented during the third phase of the project, in 2011. The five projects are:

- . Egypt: «Inventory of the Nile River Intangible cultural heritage».
- . Jordan: «Launching inventory of ICH at the national level».
- . Lebanon: «Launching inventory of ICH, with focus on Oral tradition (Zajal tradition)».
- . Syria: «Launching inventory of ICH at the national level, with a focus on performing arts».
- . Regional project (including all partners): «Documentary film of the regional ICH».

In addition, all partners have also agreed to start the elaboration of nomination files to the Lists of the Convention ■

#### More information about MEDLIHER:

<http://www.euromedheritage.net/intern.cfm?menuID=12&submenuID=13&idproject=50>

#### MEDLIHER website:

<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/medliher/>

#### Latest publications

##### Workshops' proceedings and recommendations now available

Heritage economics and financing mechanisms (Damascus, 6-8 June 2010)

<http://www.euromedheritage.net/intern.cfm?menuID=8&submenuID=26&subsubmenuID=19>

Management of heritage sites and artefacts (Petra, 17-19 Mai 2010)

<http://www.euromedheritage.net/intern.cfm?menuID=16&submenuID=20&subsubmenuID=20>

Preventive conservation and maintenance (Ghardaïa, 23-25 November 2009)

<http://www.euromedheritage.net/intern.cfm?menuID=16&submenuID=20&subsubmenuID=13>

##### Euromed Heritage time-sheets on tourism, museums, handicrafts and traditional skills

Tourism development: a cultural heritage perspective

Museums: real and virtual spaces

The mirror of cultural identity: handicrafts and traditional skills

<http://www.euromedheritage.net/intern.cfm?menuID=9&submenuID=32>

#### Latest features, publications and videos

Heritage Awareness - 1st volume issued from Mutual Heritage project training courses

<http://www.mutualheritage.net/fichiers/Fascicule1-texte-integral.pdf>

A voyage through the traditional architecture in Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia – videos by MONTADA project

[http://www.montada-forum.net/fr/videos\\_fr](http://www.montada-forum.net/fr/videos_fr)

Radio reportages on line of «Manumed 2-of manuscripts and men» project

<http://data.manumed.org/fr/notices/88508-Emissions-de-radio-du-projet-Manumed.html>

MONTADA promotes heritage value of Kairouan - by Moncef Mahroug (a ENPI Info Centre feature)

[http://www.enpi-info.eu/files/features/a107047%20ENPI%20Montada%20Info%20%28en%29\\_v.4.pdf](http://www.enpi-info.eu/files/features/a107047%20ENPI%20Montada%20Info%20%28en%29_v.4.pdf)

## OUR FEATURE OF CHOICE

# Horta Museum, a jewel of the Art Nouveau architecture

BY FRANÇOISE AUBRY, CURATOR OF THE HORTA MUSEUM

The Horta Museum was opened in 1969. It consists of two adjacent buildings that used to be the house and the studio of architect Victor Horta (1861-1947), and that were bought separately (the house in 1961 and the studio ten years later). It was on the insistence of a former student of Victor Horta, the architect Jean Delhay, that the municipality of Saint-Gilles acquired the house at a time when Art Nouveau architecture was still largely discredited. In 1950, Jean Delhay had helplessly witnessed the destruction of one of the most beautiful *hôtels de maître* («period houses») of Horta, the Aubecq Hotel (avenue Louise 520), which was replaced by an apartment building. He also fought in vain to prevent the destruction of the *Maison du Peuple* in 1965, a major accomplishment of European Art Nouveau and which was of particular importance in the political history of Belgium because it symbolised the accession of the *Parti Ouvrier belge* (Belgian Workers' Party) to the parliament, in 1894. The house and studio of Victor Horta will be the first Art Nouveau building protected by Royal Decree in 1963.

It was Jean Delhay who «thought out» the adaptation from residence to its new role as museum: installation of a reception and a lift in the back stairs, transformation of the first floor into offices rented to the Order of Architects, construction of a library and a reading room in the old bathroom and guest bedroom on the second floor, and a permanent exhibition of photographs of architecture in the bedroom and in the boudoir of Horta's daughter. He adds a «modern» lighting system in many places (neon spots), replaces the worn and jagged wall covering with very resistant vinyl paper, and installs new steel radiators. Remarkably, Jean Delhay is careful to preserve the reception rooms and the main staircase, but shows no respect for private and service areas. To make room for an exhibition of Horta photographs, he takes away all the original built-in furniture in pitch-pine. Elements that had survived the passage of two private owners (Horta house and studio were sold separately in 1919) also disappear. As Horta had taken his furniture, Jean Delhay tries to buy some furniture that had belonged to the architect. These, still relatively cheap, are rare because the architect could only conceive furniture based on a particular house. So the museum is equipped with furniture that is authentic but not always suitable, like the huge bedroom that comes from a country-side house. John and Renee Delhay constitute a foundation with their own collection of furniture and archives concerning Horta, collected from his widow and given to the Horta Museum. Thanks to them, the museum is not only an historical house open to the public but a place of study that assembles archives, a photographic library and a library. In 1971, the studio,

heavily modified by its transformation into a middle-class house, is purchased. As the years go by, the museum receives more and more visitors: about 65,000 to date. A visit to the Horta museum has become an almost obligatory stop for tourists coming to Brussels.

In the late eighties, a new and more scientific restoration seemed necessary. The museum budget is tight, but the President of the Board of Directors, Martine Wille, decides in 1989 to fund a «master plan» designed by architect Barbara Van der Wee. The meeting with the patrons who found that the museum had a plan ready to run sparked the restoration process that ends in 2010. The idea was to go back as far as possible to the original state of the house while taking into account the high number of visitors. It has been necessary for example to strengthen the main staircase, which was weakening under the weight of visitors, with a wooden structure that had to be inconspicuous. The number of visitors had to be limited, and they were asked not to linger in groups in the stairwell. The murals suffer a lot of friction: fortunately the fine gilded motifs run at a height and are not affected by the passage of visitors. On the other hand, the glaze of metal rods highlighted in gold leaf disappear at hand level. The delicate volute of the banister of the mahogany staircase is damaged by the repeated passage of hands, often with ringed fingers. It is possible to ask visitors to leave bags and coats behind but it is difficult to prohibit touching the banister. When it comes to people leaving their effects in the locker room, frustrated negotiations in many languages between the people working in the locker rooms and the visitors occur. It is striking how the visitor is unaware of the fragility of a monument. They find hard to understand that they can't sit on the seats or manipulate the sliding doors and drawers. But it is the proliferation of these anodyne gestures that are devastating. We also face the contradictory desire of the visitor to imagine being Horta's host and wanting clear and legible instructions in their mother tongue on all objects. There is constant tension between a house that we would like to be welcoming and open and the need to protect the monument, especially since the income of the museum is largely generated by the admission fees and profits from the shop maintained by volunteers in turn. The organization *Les amis du musée Horta* is in charge of organising the volunteer work. The existence of such an organisation also allows the museum (that does not have an acquisition budget) to buy items that belonged to Horta.

As a museum-house of an architect, the building itself is a work of art, which means that all maintenance and restoration work must be executed by skilled artisans: a plumber, a heating specialist or a carpenter must be careful and work with great dexterity. The address book for the maintenance of such a building is valuable but may be incompatible with the procurement requirements imposed by the government. When an electrician, for instance, knows all the twists and quirks of an old installation and masters them, he will be more effective than one who has only practiced modern installations but

offers, partly by ignorance, a competitive price. For example, it was by pure chance that we encountered a master of French origin who was able to repair the column radiator designed by Horta, one of his most notable inventions. For over fifty years, all heating specialists had declared that it was impossible to make it work again.

It's sometimes disarming or ridiculous to have to engage in battles to preserve the mailbox designed by Horta (which does not meet the standards set by the Post Office), or the original blue stone pavement (since the administration replaces them with cement tiles), or to prevent the attachment of cables on the facades...

Restoring to a house-museum its original distribution raises the question of the necessity of creating premises for the staff. These are now located on the 2nd floor of the studio and in small service rooms of the house; there is a lack of storage space for paperwork and archiving from the start. Fortunately, the museum will soon expand into a nearby house and will host the offices, a library, the archives, an exhibition hall, a cloakroom and a cafeteria. All functions relative to the historical monument then will find a proper place. The acquisition of a third building has proved absolutely necessary to relieve the pressure of its management on the monument. The installation of a locker room and cafeteria will allow visitors to wait more comfortably. In winter, when cold weather comes, sometimes they are forced to form a long queue outside.

The registration of four Horta buildings including the Museum on the World Heritage list in 2000 is a wonderful token of appreciation, but an old private house can hardly become the Mecca of world cultural tourism. As mentioned earlier, the number of visitors cannot grow indefinitely and must find alternative ways to discover the architecture of Horta. That will be easier after 2017, when the rights of the architect will fall into the public domain. In 1996, when the first major Horta retrospective took place at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, the heirs of the architect have suddenly ceded the management of their rights to SOFAM. Any use of the images of his works is subject to royalty payments, which limits the production of films, DVDs, websites... We are often confronted by the press and publishers, who cannot understand that we cannot provide images of the museum free of rights. For example, during campaigns for the promotion of the Art Nouveau in Brussels, Horta's works are underrepresented and do not occupy their rightful place.

It seems unnecessary to describe the occupations of a curator of a museum like the Horta Museum. They are those of all small museums where the manager must be versatile. The most unusual part is perhaps in building maintenance and tracking very closely the restoration, which brought another dimension to my early training as a historian of art. I learned a lot about architecture, following the restoration work of Barbara Van der Wee and my vision of the work of Horta is all the more enriched ■

Museum website: [www.hortamuseum.be](http://www.hortamuseum.be)



RÉSEAU ART NOUVEAU NETWORK - ©SERGE BRISON

## A TALK WITH...

### Dr. Ziad Al-Saad, Director General of Antiquities and Project Manager of Athena



BOSRA, SYRIA - C. GRAZ 2010



PETRA, JORDAN - C. GRAZ 2010

Athena project aims to support the revitalisation of ancient theatres as a part of a wider archaeological site or urban context, and to establish an overall strategy for dealing with their tangible and intangible heritage aspects. This revitalisation addresses theatres in terms of physical, cultural and socio-economic aspects by endorsing proper management plans.

**Jordan has a rich archaeological heritage: what made you decide on choosing ancient theatres for your project Athena?**

Jordan contains a considerable number of the ancient theatres of the Greek, Nabatean and Roman worlds. These theatres are key elements of ancient cities of Jordan like Amman, Petra, Gerasa (Jerash) and Gadara (Umm Qaies) from an architectural and functional viewpoints. These theatres are possibly the most fascinating man-made structures that were once used for theatrical performances, music shows, as well for more sinister purposes such as violent wild animal shows and gladiatorial contests. These awesome theatres have a historical stigma attached to them, and in some cases, history is still being made because some are still being used today.

It's hard to believe that some of these theatres are close to 3,000 years old, and it's amazing that they're even still standing. The amount of engineering knowledge that our ancient ancestors had developed is just as mesmerizing especially when some of these auditoria rival present-day outdoor theatres in terms of acoustic properties.

Through the arts, the conservation and protection of these structures, as well as their continued use as places of performance, facilitates the meeting of multiple cultures and the

recovery of memories and knowledge of a shared history.

**What is the physical state of ancient theatres and where do they stand in terms of conservation?**

Although ancient theatres of Jordan in general are still in a good conservation condition, these irreplaceable cultural assets have sustained a great deal of damage and destruction due to the action of nature and human. Natural disasters, pollution, and improper use have all continuously enhanced the damage to this invaluable cultural heritage and point all the more urgently to the need for an effective policy of planning for conservation based on prevention and mitigation of the vulnerabilities and danger factors.

**In your view, how does Jordan compare with other countries around the Mediterranean basin in terms of up-keeping its archaeological sites and archaeological artefacts?**

The conservation of the vast cultural heritage of Jordan is an enormous challenge. The field of archaeology in Jordan is well institutionalized. In contrast, the field of conservation has only been recently introduced to the country, and it is still not fully

recognized or appreciated. The professional occupation of «conservator/restorer» in Jordan (as in many other countries) is not clearly defined and/ or protected by law. This means that whoever claims to be a «conservator/ restorer» (e.g. craftsman, artist, archaeologist etc.) regardless of the extent and depth of his training can and in fact is carrying out conservation and restoration work.

The primary challenges, therefore, are related to the following issues:

- . The pressure of tourism is mounting;
- . The sheer large volume of cultural sites that overloads the currently available capacity;
- . The cost of mitigating the threats to cultural sites is rising;
- . The training of professional conservations/restorers is just beginning;
- . The concept of cultural resources management is still not widely accepted or appreciated;
- . The absence of a well defined set of policies of cultural resources management.

The Department of Antiquities of Jordan is currently undergoing major structural reforms and conservation of cultural heritage is given the highest priority. Efforts to build capacity in conservation and management of cultural heritage are underway at a high pace. A process of integrated heritage management is being implemented. This process aims at combining and balancing:

- . Protection;
- . Conservation;
- . Presentation and promotion;
- . Various dimensions of heritage as they relate to the same site or artefact (tangible and intangible);
- . The management of adapted tourism;
- . The relation of the site with its surrounding economy and communities;
- . Improved socioeconomic conditions of communities; and
- . Respect for the values of diversity and cultural identities.

**Would you say that the Jordanian public is aware of its rich heritage? How are you addressing this issue through the Athena project?**

Although appreciation of the value and significance of cultural heritage among certain categories of Jordanian citizens has significantly improved in the past few years, we still face a great deal of lack of public awareness of the significance of cultural heritage. This results in widespread illegal digging activities and illicit trafficking of artefacts on a large scale. The Department of Antiquities is organizing a collaborative effort of organizations and government agencies, utilizing all forms of media to present a clear and simple message to the public about the importance of protecting cultural heritage. By encouraging educational programs within schools, as well as in the tourism industry and businesses, awareness will breed more observant behavior and treatment of reef ecosystems. Athena project includes a well-planned dissemination and public awareness activities. These activities will be utilized to spread an effective message to various target groups on the project concept, methods and results and how this project will lead to protection and compatible utilization of ancient theaters of Jordan.

**In your opinion, are festivals – for example the Jerash Festival-organised in a satisfactory manner and in respect for the ancient sites in which they occur?**

Jerash Festival of Culture and Arts, since it's one of oldest festivals in the region and so well known worldwide, and it helped a lot in showing the reality of Jordan and Jordanians as civilized, educated and life loving people. Sadly the Jerash Festival has to be cancelled due to the pressure of various groups who strongly argued against the festival due to its negative impact on the site. I believe that the irresponsible set up of the festival and the insensitivity toward the fragility of the ancient theatres has a huge negative impact on the ruins of Jerash. This led to the mandatory cancellation of this important cultural event.

**Are you addressing this specific issue –adaptive re-use– in the Athena Project?**

**What will be the benefits of this project to ancient theatres?**

Compatible utilization of ancient theatres is a major research component of the Athena. The project articulates a clear methodology to formulate clear guidelines for compatible utilization of ancient that is based on maintaining the delicate balance between protection and utilization. This will be achieved by the development of a management plan for ancient theatres taking into consideration the socio-economic reality of its location and a manual of guidelines for the proper use of ancient theatres, including tourism. In a addition a handbook on standards and procedures in the management of ancient theatres ■



## A TALK WITH...

# Anne-Marie Afeiche, Curator of Beirut National Museum



PIANO DEVANT LE MUSÉE NATIONAL LE 20 MAI 2010 - JOURNÉE DU PATRIMOINE



ANNE MARIE AFEICHE DEVANT UNE MOSAÏQUE EN COURS DE RESTAURATION

### The National Museum of Beirut takes on board the challenge of social integration...

#### Briefly, how and when was founded the National Museum of Beirut? What relations does it have with the authorities?

The National Museum of Beirut comes under the Directorate General of Antiquities, itself within the Ministry of Culture. It was built between 1930 and 1937 and contains the antiquities collected in Lebanon since the 20's. Since then, and until 1975, the national collection has increased, especially after the archaeological excavations throughout the country. Sites inhabited since the earliest times (Byblos, Beirut, Sidon, Tyre, Baalbek, to name only a few) have yielded pieces of great importance, now exhibited at the National Museum.

#### Where do the funds for its upkeep come from?

The budget of the National Museum comes from the ministry to which it is affiliated.

However, since 1996, aids from organisations have supported the museum, especially the ones from the *Lebanese British Friends of the National Museum*, which has enabled the renovation of the laboratory of the Directorate General of Antiquities, and the one from the *Fondation Nationale du Patrimoine*, which has supported the rehabilitation of the National Museum with a new museography. This latter was heavily damaged during the Lebanese civil war, and it was reopened to the public in 1999.

#### What are the major difficulties you face in managing the museum?

Financial ones, but this is pretty common for most other museums around the world.

#### What is its position at international level? Do you maintain relationships with other major museums (in the region? in the world?)

I believe that the National Museum of Beirut has nothing to envy other museums... because of the importance of its archaeological collections, the value of the exhibited works, the majesty of the building, the presentation of its artifacts and its exceptional museography. Partnerships with other museums are forged at the time of common temporary exhibitions.

#### Beyond the permanent collection, do you organise temporary exhibitions? How are they funded?

The National Museum is not completely open, except for the ground floor and first floor, the basement is still closed to the public. A study is underway to design the museography dedicated to the funerary art. Eventually, temporary exhibitions could be organised in the future, even if the main

problem remains the lack of available spaces.

#### Do you organise educational programmes? What's your position and your connections at the local level?

For several years, a programme related to school visits has been established in order to enable a growing number of school children to visit the museum and discover the historical and archaeological heritage of the country. We have regular contacts with government and private schools, from all regions of Lebanon: the museum is now part of the curricula of many institutions, year after year.

#### What is your role in the project «Foundations for a strong Future»? Have there been other experiments with Euromed Heritage?

The Directorate General of Antiquities between 2003 and 2005 participated in a project called «Corpus Levant» (Euromed Heritage I) on rehabilitation techniques of traditional architecture in Lebanon. Between 2004 and 2007, the National Museum was partner of the Qantara project «Traversées d'Orient et d'Occident» (Euromed Heritage III).

The project «Foundations for a Strong Future» (Mercy Corps) began in 2008 and has enabled young Lebanese and Jordanians (project partners) to discover their cultural and archaeological heritage. The project is important for the National Museum because the final product is a genuine working tool for visitors, especially the youth, and allows them to explore the collections on display. In addition to the multi-media installation that includes a virtual tour of the museum, several activities should bring forward a new approach that is more fun and should enable visitors to watch and discover the museum.

#### What are your plans for the development of the museum in the future?

We have many projects in mind...

First, to work on the full opening of the permanent exhibition space so that the three floors of the National Museum are available to the public, with permanent exceptional and representative collections of the Archaeological Heritage of Lebanon.

Also, to develop activities to attract a growing number of visitors, including young ones for educational purposes, as well as making the National Museum a place of discovery and dialogue.

And to work in order to spread awareness of our rich culture, at regional and international levels, especially through exhibitions ■

ListenRead phonetically

Dictionary - View detailed dictionary

## A PERSPECTIVE ON CULTURAL HERITAGE

### Euromed Heritage: museums, real and virtual spaces

BY CHRISTIANE DABDOUB NASSER, TEAM LEADER,  
REGIONAL MONITORING AND SUPPORT UNIT (RMSU)

It is generally established that new technologies have transformed the way museums operate and democratised further the 'consumption' of museums, and we are light years away from the nineteenth century when museums, ponderous and monumental spaces, started proliferating for the benefit of the select few. Technology supports many museum administration functions including facilities management, event planning, and ticketing; marketing, donor relations and fundraising; publishing; and information technology. They have also influenced the way collections are managed and many museums have built databases to facilitate access to their collections amongst researchers, the public, and other museums.

In a very modest sort of way, Euromed Heritage has been part of this trend from the very beginning.

Since its inception in 1998, Euromed Heritage has contributed to museum development within the larger context of cultural heritage development and within a non-elitist educational and social perspective, thereby inscribing itself within a burgeoning trend where museums were re-thought as spaces of interaction and social integration. The handling of the museal theme within the programme reflects the new role museums were assuming within communities. Some of the approaches adopted through the programme were exploratory and experiential, paving the way for further development, but one of its achievements was its focus on the use of information technology which, at the time, was in its nascent stages. Museums,

exhibitions, both physical and virtual, databases/websites and inventories were developed and behind their development lay multifarious issues that had to be addressed through the respective projects including research, training, design, and curating.

In Phase I of the programme, a whole project -Museomed - ICOM Athens- was dedicated to training in modern museum technology and management, with special emphasis on how museums could be turned into a focus and catalyst for cultural experiences, and what kind of technical knowhow curators must command if they are to exploit the potential of new approaches to display and interpretation. But the bulk of the training and accomplishments in the various projects and the subsequent phases were IT related: the creation of inventories, of virtual archives and exhibitions, and of online transversal data bases using a whole range of multimedia supports (pictures, videos, texts, etc.).

Two successive projects *Islamic Art in the Mediterranean* [www.museumwnf.org](http://www.museumwnf.org) (EH phase 1) and *Discover Islamic Art* [www.discoverislamicart.org](http://www.discoverislamicart.org) (EH phase 3) are perfect examples of the infinite possibilities information technology and creativity furnish. Adopting a new exhibition format developed by Museums With No Frontiers (MWNF), whereby works of art remain in situ within their natural environment, has enabled these projects to present the Mediterranean as a unique open air museum on Islamic art and to display – within nine thematic exhibitions – more than 1,000 monuments and archaeological sites from the Umayyad period up to the beginning of the Ottoman Empire in Egypt, Italy, Jordan, Morocco, Palestine, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey. To date, thematic itineraries under the title *Discover Islamic Art in the Mediterranean* are being sold online.



The Euromed Heritage programme has straddled the turn of the millennium when communication technologies were not what they are today, and it opened up new possibilities to present objects, monuments and sites on the Internet and to attract interest in Mediterranean culture for new target groups. Moreover, and as the preceding examples demonstrate, much of what was digitised served the development of real exhibitions, itineraries for cultural tourism, publications, films, and so on, moving virtuality into reality ■



## BEST PICTURES



GIACOMO E LA PARAMOBILE, ITALIA - J. CLAIR



FABRICATION ARTISANALE DE SAVON À L'HUILE D'OLIVE, LEBANON - G. HADDAD



PROCESSION DU PANIER, MARSEILLE, FRANCE - F. SEGURAN (MENTION SPÉCIALE DU JURY)



DOWNTOWN, EGYPT - NOUR EL-REFAI (LAURÉAT)



BELONGING TO THE PAST, TERRITOIRES PALESTINIENS - EYAD JADALLAH (MENTION SPÉCIALE DU JURY)



LA TRANSE DU ARRIF, TUNISIA - A. LE GALL (MENTION SPÉCIALE DU JURY)

These pictures are an array of the best images collected within the Euromed Heritage programme to show the richness of the Mediterranean cultural heritage. The RMSU and RehabiMed Association have launched on 3 May 2010 a Photography Award contributing to awareness-raising of cultural heritage in the region. The awarded photos are published on this section as well as on the EH 4 website Photo Gallery: <http://www.euromedheritage.net/intern.cfm?menuID=88>

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Our selected quotation

«For me, museums are places where the works of the past have turned into myths; they sleep there until the artists call them back to real existence.» André Malraux

### What's on

**International Heritage Show 2010: the celebration of the Mediterranean heritage (Paris, France, 4-7 November 2010)**

The International heritage show in Paris has henceforth become an event in the agenda of European heritage that should not be missed. It is both a showcase for business excellence, places and heritage sites, as well as a preferred meeting place of both businesses and the public who are interested in heritage. In 15 years, the fair has attracted about 280,000 visitors and more than 3,600 exhibitors. It has also hosted 368 conferences on important issues related to heritage. This intense activity, which combines culture with economy, contributes to the economic development of companies working in the field as well as to the dissemination of the latest scientific assets among professionals. Last but not least, it aims to raise awareness among the general public in terms of heritage. The theme of the 2010 show is «the Mediterranean heritage»; the show goes straight to the heart of the current political, economic and cultural dynamic around the Mediterranean. «*The Mediterranean basin is a cultural resource of exceptional variety and an inexhaustible reservoir of talent and know-how. This show intends to celebrate this thousand-year-old heritage, thanks to the presence of*



*exhibitors that work for its protection and conservation, a series of conferences led by specialists and the presentation of exhibitions. All this will also help to address the many issues and present the achievements related to Mediterranean heritage»* says Mr. Serge Nicole, president of the show.

For more information: <http://www.patrimoineculturel.com/>

### Reader's corner

**Discover Islamic Art in the Mediterranean. MWNF Virtual Museum Books, 2009**

The great Islamic Dynasties of the Mediterranean are the protagonists of this book, together with their fascinating artistic and cultural legacy. Thirty-nine scholars, museum curators and experts in cultural heritage, from 14 countries in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East, are the authors of the 22 chapters that take the reader through 13 centuries of Islamic history from the period of the Prophet Muhammad up until the end of the Ottoman Empire (1922). *Discover Islamic Art in the Mediterranean* is a collaborative work that was written for all those who share our idea that there is not only one history, but that at least as many histories as peoples exist. This Book is published



to complement the [www.discoverislamicart.org](http://www.discoverislamicart.org) Virtual Museum and its cycle of 18 Virtual Exhibitions *Discover Islamic Art in the Mediterranean*.

MWNF – Musée Sans Frontières / Museum With No Frontiers: [http://www.mwnfbooks.net/books\\_detail.php?bookid=33;en&](http://www.mwnfbooks.net/books_detail.php?bookid=33;en&)

### Our Agenda

#### RMSU events

- 15-28 February 2011 - Barcelona, Spain  
Crossing viewpoints: Living Heritage in the Mediterranean – Photographs Exhibition  
<http://www.euromedheritage.net/intern.cfm?menuID=16&submenulD=238&subsubmenulD=16>

#### International events

- 21-25 February 2011 - Rabat, Morocco  
Policies for cultural heritage: 6th training module of Mutual Heritage project  
[www.mutualheritage.net](http://www.mutualheritage.net)
- 14-16 March 2011 - Amman, Jordan  
Conservation of Architecture, Urban Areas, Nature, and Landscape: Towards a Sustainable Survival of Cultural Landscape  
<http://www.csaar-center.org/conference/2011/>
- 19-26 March 2011 - Fez, Morocco  
Hammam Days and Exhibition – Hammamed project  
<http://www.hammamed.net/index.html>
- 30 March-02 April 2011 - Ferrara, Italy  
XVIII Salone dell'Arte del Restauro e della Conservazione dei Beni Culturali e Ambientali  
<http://www.salonedelrestauro.com/en/>
- 06-08 April 2011 - Dubrovnik, Croatia  
Energy Management in Cultural Heritage  
[http://www.ee.undp.hr/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=441&Itemid=348](http://www.ee.undp.hr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=441&Itemid=348)
- 11-14 April 2011 - Malta  
Transnational Meeting – Mare Nostrum project  
<http://www.hammamed.net/index.html>
- 13-15 April 2011 - Florence, Italy  
10th International Conference on non-destructive investigations and microanalysis for the diagnostics and conservation of cultural and environmental heritage  
<http://www.oipnd.it/art2011/>

Euromed Heritage 4 **Connecting** - a quarterly publication of the RMSU for the Euromed Heritage 4 programme

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