

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES

ICOMOS

CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES

NEWSLETTER CIAV

International Scientific
Committee of
Vernacular Architecture



EDITORIAL

I would like to use this occasion to remind you about the next ICOMOS General Assembly, which as all we know will take place in Quebec City, where I hope to see all of you. In this issue, you will find the preliminary program. We will also be convening for a short CIAV meeting there.

At the same time, I would like to give you a short review of my recent extraordinary experience in Mali, the African country which hosted the Terra 2008 10th International Conference on the Study and Conservation of Earthen Architectural Heritage. It was organized by the Getty Conservation Institute, the Mali Ministry of Culture and the ICOMOS International Scientific Committee for Earthen Architectural Heritage, last February. I have returned with so many rich experiences that I would like to share them with you.

Best regards,

Valeria Prieto
April 2008



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1 Québec ICOMOS 2008 (Preliminary Program)

Meeting of the ICOMOS Scientific Council

Sept. 27 - Saturday

*Forum of young researchers and professionals
Meeting of the ICOMOS Advisory Committee*

Sept. 28 - Sunday

*Forum of young researchers and professionals (continued)
Meeting of the ICOMOS Advisory Committee (continued)
Arrival of General Assembly participants
-Registration at the Congress Center
Guided tours of Historic District*

Sept. 29 – Monday

Meeting of the International Scientific Committees

Sept. 30 – Mardi / Tuesday

*Opening Ceremony (Palais Montcalm)
Opening of the General Assembly
Opening of Scientific Symposium (Keynote Speakers)
Official Opening Reception
Oct. 1 –Wednesday
Scientific Symposium
Evening Thematic Workshops
- World Heritage
- Archaeological Network
- Historic Urban Landscapes
- Heritage and Climate Change
- Heritage and International Cooperation*

Oct. 2 - Thursday

*Scientific Symposium
Evening: Dinner and Cruise on the St. Lawrence River*

Oct. 3 –Friday

*Thematic Tours
Evening Banquet "Hunting Season Ceremonial"*

Oct. 4 –Saturday

*General Assembly and Elections
Closing of the General Assembly
Meeting of the new Executive Committee
Poster Session
Special event*

Oct. 5 –Sunday

*Departure for Post-conference Tours
Departure of Participants*

2 TERRA 2008 10th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE STUDY AND CONSERVATION OF EARTHEN ARCHITECTURE

Valeria Prieto

The conference was organized by the Getty Conservation Institute and the Ministry of Culture of Mali under the aegis of ICOMOS International Scientific Committee of Earthen Architectural Heritage in Bamako, Mali on the first week of February.

The first 5 days were dedicated to the presentation of papers at the International Center of Conferences of Bamako, and the following week to the technical post-conference tours.

Among the most interesting presentations was the theme: "Earthen Architecture in Mali" which included several papers about the remarkable architecture of Djenné and Dogon Country and the efforts being made to conserve the sites. Exhibitions of photographs of ancient and recent earthen architecture in Mali and other African countries offered by The Culture Ministry were quite illuminating.

From the various themes discussed at the conference, I would like to mention the presentation of World Heritage Earthen Architecture Historic Cities, by Francesco Bandarin, which was included in "Conservation of Living Sites." In his presentation, he gave an overview of the great efforts of African countries during recent years to preserve cultural heritage, the conservation of which should promote economic development, under the topic: how can earthen architecture help to diminish the poverty of the people? His approach was to focus on a better understanding of this particular type of heritage. Development and divulgence of building techniques, as well as procedures for improving the durability and preservation of earthen architecture within different typologies was recommended, as well as the best methods for improving the living conditions of the people who build, inhabit and use earthen architecture.



Children in Timbuctu

On the same theme, our colleague Hossam Mahdy from Egypt presented his paper: "Raising awareness of the value of earthen architecture for living and working in the Nile River": Egypt is famous for its grand religious and funerary monuments, constructed of stone and granite. Murals and stone carvings on ancient temples show that the vernacular nature of the rural landscape in the Nile Valley is the legacy of ancient traditions and lifestyles that have continued to live up into the 20th Century. Mud houses, pigeon towers, mosques, churches and other village earthen architecture formed the Egyptian rural landscape, along with water wheels, irrigation canal networks, fields, trees and of course, the Nile. The beauty and harmony of the Nile Valley landscape has always attracted the attention of many geographers, historians, travellers and artists. Murals and carvings on ancient Egyptian monuments show that very little change occurred to the landscape and lifestyle of the Egyptian 'fellah' (or peasant) up to the 1970s. But fast-paced modernization endeavours are sweeping away all the cultural traditions. Currently, the vernacular heritage of Egypt is not protected by legislation or planning policies.

Throughout the country, unnecessary demolition and hasty changes are made to built vernacular environment on a large scale. In many cases, these changes are made to improve daily living standards.

There is an urgent need to address the issue of awareness as the pace of change accelerates. This paper is an attempt to formulate a starting point by drafting some basic concepts:

Awareness of what? Establishing significant statements for the rural vernacular heritage of the Nile Valley.

Whose awareness? Identifying stakeholders, their interest and value systems.
What is the message? Proposing a tailored message for each of the stakeholders.
How to implement this strategy? Suggesting implementation policies on local, regional and national levels.

Although most of the presentations were very interesting, it is not possible to mention all of them in this space. However, I would like to summarize one of them in closing, namely for its thematization of the city example: "The role of the local communities in the preservation of earthen architecture: The ancient city of Djenné, Mali" by Boubacar Diaby. The city of Djenné is one of the ancient cities of sub Saharan Africa, characterized by its remarkable architecture and the exceptional harmony between its urban fabric and its cultural and social context. Here architecture is closely linked to artisans, carpenters and masons. For generations, the use of local materials, such as clay and wood, has been a successful means for creating an integrated environment with both aesthetic qualities and creative spirit.

The construction of public buildings is inspired from this Sudanese Sahelian architecture, which has survived thanks to a social balance strengthened by a long line of traditional masons who have successfully handed down their skills. Unfortunately, this type of architecture is under threat. A restoration project is in progress which provides for the participation of local communities in maintaining and handing it down.

During the post tour we had the unique opportunity to visit Timbuktu and some other incredible places. At a time of increasing globalisation, the mythical Timbuktu, the city of scholars founded in the 12th century, continues to fascinate the rest of the world as an emblematic city for its dual cultural identity and its diversity. Their architectural heritages, the vestiges of its university, its historical and cultural monuments, its original crafts and its mysteries, have a magical power over visitors.

The next site was Mopti, a city on the Niger River with intense commercial activity. A great job of restoration is being made on the Mosque Komogel. After this city, we went to Dogon Country, where the Bandiagara Escarpment has served as a cultural crossroad for more than 2000 years. Initially, the Dogon settled in ancient caves where they built houses and burial chambers. Today 267 Dogon Villages are established on the Seno Plain where the majority of the houses are made from stone and mud-and-hatch, in harmony with the landscape. The granary structures are very functional and beautiful.

The historical town of Djenné lies on the Inner Niger River Delta, and is not only a world renowned treasure, but also the repository of the cultural greatness of past empires. The mosque is the world's largest mud construction. Its architecture of two-storied mud buildings with their decorated facades is universally admired.



Granary in the Dogon Country



Timbuktu Mosque



Djenne Mosque

Note: The normal block print indicates that the text was written by the authors of the papers presentations or was taken from published articles, whereby the italic print indicates that the paragraphs were written by VP.



3. CIAV New Member

We are very pleased to welcome two new members from Norway:

Anders Haslestad

Senior Adviser

Directorate for Cultural Heritage

Oslo, Norway

E-mail: ah@ra.no

Anders Haslestad is an architect and has been member of ICOMOS since 1993.

Dag Nilsen

Associate professor at the Dept. of Architectural Design; History and Technology

Trondheim, Norway

E-mail: dag.nilsen@ark.ntnu.no





4. The International Day for Monuments and Sites 2008

Religious heritage and sacred places

Dear Colleagues,

Allow me to send you as a reminder the **call for celebration of the INTERNATIONAL DAY ON MONUMENTS AND SITES 2008** which has already been published as a pre-announcement on the ICOMOS international website and whose theme was already announced to all members in the ICOMOS News 2/2006.

Below please find a short introduction to this year's theme. A special detailed section of the ICOMOS international website dedicated to the activities on 18 April 2008 will soon go online at <http://www.international.icomos.org/18thapril/2008/>. It will include, among other sections, detailed documentation about the theme, ideas for celebration, and information about the history of the International Day for Monuments and Sites, which I hope will help you in organizing activities to mark this occasion.

Please be sure to **inform the International Secretariat of the events that you are planning**, so that we can disseminate information on the initiatives your committee will be taking. Comments or feedback concerning the web pages and their content are very welcome.

Contact at the International Secretariat: Volker Zimmermann zimmermann@icomos.org

With best regards

Gaia Jungeblodt

Director

ICOMOS International Secretariat





5 Seminars on Preservation and Monitoring for the Architectural Heritage

Dear Colleagues,

May I invite you to take a look at the website of the project
"Seminars on preventive conservation and monitoring for the architectural heritage"?

www.sprecomah.eu

The website includes an invitation for the second seminar in Val de Loire (France) the week of 26th May 2008.

We are looking for smart young promising researchers, established researchers and for practitioners in the field of preventive conservation and monitoring.

We would appreciate your help in identifying valuable candidates and to inform them on the event. The number of participants is limited and the deadline for application is 15 March 2008.

On the website you will also find some information on the first seminar, organized in Leuven (Belgium) in June 2007.

So please consult the website on www.sprecomah.eu and inform possible candidates.

Thank you!
Sincerely yours,

Prof. Koenraad VAN BALEN

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Disclaimer: http://www.kuleuven.be/cwis/email_disclaimer.htm





6 Heritage Regeneration International

In the UK it has become widely recognized that historic buildings provide a foundation for regeneration; reinforcing communities, contributing to local economies and acting as catalysts for far reaching improvements.

There are many places around the world, however, where the regeneration potential of historic structures is not recognized and communities are missing out on the substantial benefits they could bring. Traditional buildings are often seen as outdated and are swept away in favor of more fashionable, global styles. This process can destroy what is unique about a place, erasing its identity, beauty and a huge repository of traditional crafts.

Heritage Regeneration International is a new initiative established to help communities obtain the skills and knowledge to benefit from the regeneration of their historic buildings. Led by a small group with extensive experience of initiating heritage regeneration projects, and connected to an international network of like-minded professionals, we can help unlock hidden value. We are convinced that historic buildings can drive regeneration and development projects in any part of the world.

As the HRI methodology was developed with heritage buildings in the UK, we are looking for a number of sites to serve as International Pilot Projects.

Do you know of a neglected historic building that could benefit local people if it were re-used? Or are you a member of an organization that is seeking help to develop this kind of heritage-led regeneration project? If so, we might be able to help.

As we are an advocacy, rather than funding, organization we would aim to help develop the regeneration program: suggesting how to develop a lasting re-use strategy and how to go about sourcing funds.

If this sounds like it might be of interest to you, please contact Richard Dollamore at:
info@heritageregenerationinternational.org.uk
info@heritageregenerationinternational.org.uk to discuss opportunities.

Kind regards,

Matthew Hardy.

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"one world, many traditions"





7. Routledge Launches Two New Publications: "Journal Of Urbanism" And "Urban Research & Practice"

The Journal of Urbanism will focus on human settlement and its relation to the idea of sustainability, social justice and cultural understanding. The content will focus on Urban Regeneration, New Urbanism, European Urbanism, Landscape Urbanism, Urban Sustainability, Smart Growth, Livable Communities, Transit-Orientated Development, Walkable Communities and more. Read the full press release [here](#).

To find out more about Journal of Urbanism go to: www.informaworld.com/RJOU

Urban Research & Practice will provide a systematic description of urban issues, urban developments and urban policy and implementation. It will seek to explain variations in urban policies or urban governance and will analyse and evaluate the effects of these policies and processes. It will also look at the European-wide factors that impact on urban areas, urban policies and urban governance. Read the full press release [here](#).

To find out more about Urban Research and Practice go to: www.informaworld.com/RURP

