

# CONSERVATION PERSPECTIVES

THE GCI NEWSLETTER

FALL 2011

## HISTORIC CITIES



The Getty Conservation Institute

# A Note from the Director



Let me first warmly welcome the new president and chief executive officer of the J. Paul Getty Trust, Dr. James Cuno, who joined the Getty on August 1. Jim has had a truly distinguished career leading a number of notable art institutions, including the Harvard University Art Museums, the Courtauld Institute of Art, and, most recently, the Art Institute of Chicago—institutions where conservation and conservation research are prominent and highly valued. Jim brings to the Getty a profound appreciation for cultural heritage and its conservation. We look forward to his leadership and to working with him to advance conservation practice around the world.

Every reader of *Conservation Perspectives* has been moved and inspired by time spent in historic cities—remarkable places that possess a multitude of things worth preserving. They hold within them social systems, knowledge, memory, and traditions that enrich life. They answer questions about culture, history, art, and technology. But owing to complex and interconnected challenges, the fabric of many of these cities is threatened.

In recent decades the conservation and management of historic cities—the focus of this newsletter edition—has emerged as a critical concern, requiring our involvement as a community of professionals dedicated to heritage conservation. For many years, the GCI has engaged in initiatives related to historic cities, including collaborative projects in the historic center of Quito, Ecuador, in the 1990s, and research conducted from 2001 to 2008 leading to a citywide historic resource survey for the City of Los Angeles. The GCI has also partnered with the Organization of World Heritage Cities in the organization of its biennial World Congress.

This edition of *Conservation Perspectives* provides a framework for understanding threats facing historic urban places and offers ideas and solutions for sustaining their existence and vitality. Noted preservation architect Francesco Siravo, in his feature article, describes the evolution of thinking with respect to the management of historic urban areas and argues persuasively that integrating these concepts of several generations of planners and thinkers into urban planning “can make essential contributions to the general planning of cities for the benefit of those who call those cities home.”

In his article on preservation of urban heritage in Latin America, Eduardo Rojas, a former principal urban development specialist of the Inter-American Development Bank, explores different approaches to urban heritage preservation taken by two cities—Salvador de Bahia in Brazil, and Quito—and examines the results of each. Susan Macdonald, head of GCI Field Projects and an architect by training, focuses on one of the more contentious issues in the management of historic cities: the appropriateness of contemporary architectural insertions into historic urban areas. And Françoise Descamps, a senior project specialist with GCI Field Projects and an architect, surveys previous GCI activities in this area of conservation and describes some of our new work in tackling the complexities of preserving historic living places. Finally, in our dialogue section, the former mayor of Budapest, Gábor Demszky, Virginia Polytechnic Institute professor Paul Knox, and conservation architect and Deakin University professor Elizabeth Vines engage in a lively discussion about how to balance continuity and change in historic cities, which constitute such a significant part of our cultural heritage.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Whalen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Timothy P. Whalen

# Contents

---

THE GCI NEWSLETTER  
VOLUME 26 • NUMBER 2 • FALL 2011



**ON THE COVER**

Aerial view of Amsterdam. In 1975, the city hosted the Council of Europe's Congress on the European Architectural Heritage, which produced the seminal policy document the Declaration of Amsterdam. It states that architectural conservation must become an integral part of urban and regional planning and should involve both local authorities and citizens. Photo: © Narvikk.

**4 FEATURE ARTICLE**

**CONSERVATION PLANNING**

The Road Less Traveled

*By Francesco Siravo*

**10**

**SUSTAINABLE PRESERVATION OF THE URBAN HERITAGE**

Lessons from Latin America

*By Eduardo Rojas*

**13**

**CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE IN HISTORIC URBAN ENVIRONMENTS**

*By Susan Macdonald*

**16**

**THE CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC CITIES AND URBAN SETTLEMENTS INITIATIVE**

*By Françoise Descamps*

**18**

**BALANCING CONTINUITY AND CHANGE**

A Discussion about Urban Heritage Conservation

**24 KEY RESOURCES**

A list of key resources related to historic cities

**25 GCI NEWS**

Projects, events, and publications



# CONSERVATION PLANNING

## The Road Less Traveled

BY FRANCESCO SIRAVO

**T**he development of planning ideas applied to historic urban areas extends back to the nineteenth century. Yet despite a long and rich development, many of the most thoughtful concepts regarding planning in historic cities have yet to be fully embraced. A review of nearly a century and a half of ideas from a remarkable group of planners and thinkers demonstrates that conservation planning has relevance beyond its application to historic contexts, and that it can make essential contributions to the general planning of cities for the benefit of those who call those cities home.

Urban conservation was born out of disorientation and dismay. The irreversible loss of treasured monuments led Victor

Hugo (1802–1885), in his *Guerre aux démolisseurs*, to argue passionately against the destruction of France’s medieval monuments. He had no doubt that collusion between public officials and speculators was the cause of the destruction, and he lamented the transformation of the traditional, organic medieval city into something shockingly different: the sweeping avenues built a few years later by Baron Haussmann in Paris, which were then framed with rigid regularity by oversize pseudo-Baroque buildings.

Victor Hugo’s position was echoed in England, where John Ruskin (1819–1900) spoke of the momentous changes occurring in cities across Europe and anticipated the effects: “The peculiar character of the evil which is being wrought by this age is its

Above: Demolition of historic buildings at the centuries-old Parisian marketplace, Les Halles. Photo: © J. Deneux, 1974.

utter irreparableness.”<sup>1</sup> This sudden, irrevocable damage to cherished cities was decried by many who witnessed unprecedented urban transformations in the mid- to late nineteenth century—not only in Paris but also in London, Vienna, and Rome.

These losses led to a reconsideration of the city of the past, which became for the first time a separate field of inquiry. Camillo Sitte (1843–1903), an Austrian architect and planner, pioneered such studies with a reevaluation of ancient and medieval urban heritage. His arguments go from dismay at the lack of beauty in the new industrial city to a fresh appreciation of the historic city. For Sitte, traditional urban structure is not just the sum of individual monuments but, instead, a coherent ensemble where every element is part of an organic pattern with aesthetic rules that can be observed and analyzed.

Sitte’s work is the beginning of an analytical appreciation of the historic city as the repository of a method that can provide continuity in city building. He advocated a living urban environment in which architecture plays an integral role in determining the form and structure of spaces, and he highlighted the complementarity between the practical and the aesthetic found in the historic city. These characteristics are the antithesis of the functional fragmentation, bloated infrastructure, and aesthetic poverty now an inalienable part of our urban experience. Sitte was the first to identify the split in the contemporary city between function and technology, on the one hand, and aesthetics on the other—a divide that persists.

## **GREATER APPRECIATION OF THE HISTORIC CITY**

Analytical appraisal of the city was also the starting point for Scottish planner Patrick Geddes (1854–1932), whose influential book *Evolution in Cities* (1915) expands consideration of the traditional city by exploring its effect on the well-being of its inhabitants. The medieval city is perceived as a positive environment with a balanced integration of nature and man-made artifacts. In critiquing the industrial city, Geddes does not limit himself to the form of the city, as Sitte had, but also examines broader environmental and social aspects. His holistic approach is truly innovative. Restoration of a river basin, improving regional transport, and protecting green areas and open spaces are some of his ideas that were well ahead of his time.

Geddes, a biologist by training, looked at the city like a naturalist exploring a particular environment. This explains his emphasis on observation and analysis and his recommendation that any plan be preceded by a careful and detailed survey. Surveying and analyzing together constitute an ongoing process that generates the essence of a plan. In addition, Geddes called for the participation of as many actors as possible and championed the Know Your City movement as the best means for people to learn about their city and to improve it.

He was also the first to understand the danger of urban renewal and to foresee the damage it would inflict. In his plan for the city of Madurai in India, he advised against demolitions and against reconfiguring and sanitizing neighborhoods, advocating instead for “conservative surgery” to improve housing conditions with minimal interventions and expense. Good planning for Geddes is soft planning: creating fewer constraints, refraining from irreversible transformations, and allowing the soul of the city to speak for itself. This lesson was lost on his contemporaries, not to mention the czars of slum clearance still to come. The utter failure of the urban renewal projects of the mid-twentieth century, with their enormous social and economic costs, proves the validity of Geddes’s ideas. “There are finer architects than I,” he wrote, “and bolder planners too: but none so economical.”<sup>2</sup> Or, we might add, with more foresight.

A giant step toward full appreciation of the historic city and its special planning requirements may be attributed to Gustavo Giovannoni (1873–1947). In his 1913 seminal publication *Vecchie città ed edilizia nuova: Il quartiere del Rinascimento in Roma* (Historic Cities and New Construction: The Renaissance Quarter in Rome), Giovannoni enlarged the concept of “monument” to comprise an entire historic city. He introduced the notion of vernacular architecture, considered not only an integral part of the urban fabric but worthy of conservation. He was also the first to recognize clearly the historic city’s incompatibility with modern urban developments. He understood that the latter are based on decentralization, mass transportation, unlimited expansion, and a larger scale of design, all trends in opposition to the historic city. He therefore advocated city expansions away from the urban core and the removal of motorized traffic from historic areas. His theory of thinning out the built fabric sought a compromise between integral preservation and limited forms of intervention. He believed the new city must live side by side with the older one—not replace it.

Giovannoni’s ideas appear more modern today than those advocated in the 1920s by the avant-garde of the Modern Movement, which considered the historic city a cumbersome relic incompatible with modern needs. Yet his views were on the losing side, both vis-à-vis the Modernist urban theories of the period and the practices of the Fascist regime, which favored celebrative and highly disruptive public works. Giovannoni was the first to really define the problems of the contemporary city, as well as anticipate means of preserving living historic areas. His ideas waited nearly a century for the serious consideration they deserve.

## **DEVELOPMENTS AFTER WORLD WAR II**

The loss of historic urban areas gained new urgency with the destruction of World War II and the massive transformations in the postwar years. The response was not the same everywhere.



View of the historic South Battery area in Charleston, South Carolina. In 1931, Charleston passed the first preservation ordinance in the United States to safeguard architecture and neighborhoods that “serve as visible reminders of the historical and cultural heritage of the city, the state, and the nation.” Photo: Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, HABS, Reproduction Number HABS SC, 10-CHAR, 341-5.

In Warsaw, Poland, the answer was a faithful reconstruction. Old paintings and photographs were used to reproduce the historic core, although there was no attempt to reestablish its original functions and activities. In London and the big German cities, heavily bombed during the war, the response was different: the decision was to completely reconfigure the scale and layout according to the functionalist theories of the Modern Movement.

Italy, in many respects, was an exception, as war damage there had been limited. Moreover, the country is dotted with innumerable living historic towns and cities that maintain a high level of integrity. Nevertheless, a quarrel arose between innovators and conservators. The innovators claimed the right to introduce modern buildings and modify the configuration of cities. The conservators pointed to the alien nature of modern architecture and its incompatibility with the traditional context.

An exemplary urban plan for Assisi, prepared in 1955 by Giovanni Astengo (1915–1990), addressed these conflicting issues, providing a point of reference for many subsequent interventions in historic urban settings. Astengo acknowledged the need to rehabilitate Assisi, but without introducing new roads and contemporary buildings; rehabilitation was to be based on recognition of the historic area as a self-contained entity, in line with the principles established by Giovannoni. The Assisi plan included two further innovative aspects: the importance of protecting the views of the town from the surrounding areas, with controls to limit conflicting urban expansions; and the establishment of a local public entity to prepare and implement the plan.

Astengo was convinced that historic areas cannot be sustained without a permanent planning office.

The debates of the postwar years and the effects of Modernist transformations of city centers led to a pro-conservation reaction throughout Europe. André Malraux, the French minister of culture from 1959 to 1969, promoted legislation (still in place) to identify, protect, and manage city sectors on the basis of comprehensive conservation plans. Initially the *Loi Malraux* was interpreted not as an instrument for preserving historic areas in their entirety but one that allowed for a combination of conservation and modernization. The best-known example of this mixed approach is the Marais, 126 hectares in Paris where the old city fabric was “adapted” with extensive demolitions, new construction, and considerable social change. Perhaps most controversial was the demolition of Les Halles, the ancient market, which resulted in the relocation of long-established market activities away from the city center. This sparked a long-running debate regarding gentrification—the middle-class replacement of lower-income residents and businesses in central areas of many cities.

Parallel developments in the United Kingdom led to recognition of the value of historic ensembles and the introduction of Conservation Areas in the Civic Amenities Act of 1967, which continues to be the nation’s principal reference. Pilot projects for four historic cities (Bath, Chester, Chichester, and York) were launched to test planning methods and conservation measures applicable to Conservation Areas. The most successful is the Chester plan—prepared by Donald Insall and Associates in

1968—which makes a significant contribution to our understanding of townscape values and the policies needed to revitalize depressed city centers.<sup>3</sup> The analysis of townscape values in the Chester report are the result of the pioneering work of Gordon Cullen (1914–1994), who, with his studies and publications, contributed to a renewed appreciation of the historic urban landscape.<sup>4</sup>

## THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

In the United States, although designation of a historic area dates to the 1930s (the Battery, Charleston, 1931), the first federal legislation with specific provisions for historic districts was adopted in 1966 (the National Historic Preservation Act). Since then, twenty-five states have given municipalities the ability to protect urban areas through selective zoning, accompanied by a set of ad hoc building regulations. Some of the best guidelines for repairs and construction in traditional contexts are produced by U.S. municipalities.

Since the 1960s, the United States has produced a second important stream of positions and practical experience in preservation planning, a reaction to massive slum clearance and urban renewal projects implemented from the 1930s to the 1970s. Jane Jacobs's passionate criticism of slum clearance programs and expressways carved out of the dense fabric of New York City remains legendary.<sup>5</sup> Jacobs (1916–2006) went beyond denouncing Robert Moses's destructive mega projects to offer a refreshing view of cities and city planning. She noted the multidimensional character of cities and the close relationship between people and their activities. She exhorted planners to learn from

what exists, to understand what works in neighborhoods and what does not, and to make the best of the common sense, resources, and inventiveness of living communities. Her views were a far cry from the top-down approach of modern planners and their simplistic and abstract recipes to increase vehicular access, isolate uses, sanitize neighborhoods, and build lifeless public places. She understood, in the 1960s, that abolishing diversity would produce the chilling and homogenized urban landscape to which we have become accustomed all over the world.

Jacobs's views have been embraced by a new generation of urban critics and community planners promoting revitalization projects and grass roots initiatives. Roberta Brandes Gratz, in particular, advocates a flexible approach, where urban revitalization is a continuous process of incremental growth, with small-scale improvements carried out as opportunities arise. Named urban husbandry, this process mirrors more closely the long-established city cycles of adjustment and organic adaptation than the traumatic, large-scale, headline-grabbing, and ultimately short-lived developments pursued in recent years. It recognizes the cumulative value of long-term investment, and it seeks to channel existing resources and capabilities toward the care and management of what already exists. This process is also the surest way to preserve and sustain the physical and social identity of places.

## INTEGRATED CONSERVATION

In Italy, Astengo's pioneering work in Assisi was followed by new legislation and a series of significant planning experiences. In particular, Giuseppe Campos Venuti and Pierluigi Cervellati introduced the notion of integrated conservation with their 1969



Assisi, Italy. The management plan for Assisi, developed in 1955, included the innovative concepts of protection of city views and establishment of a local public entity to implement the plan. Photo: © Amos Grima.

plan for the center of Bologna. Its main tenet was that conservation of historic ensembles cannot be limited to preservation of their visual and aesthetic character but must also include consideration of the underlying physical, social, and economic structures, as well as the larger citywide systems. There are several aspects of particular interest in the Bologna Plan: the importance given to the city's typological and morphological character as a basis for future interventions, the effort to maintain the existing residents through establishment of a housing rehabilitation program funded by the municipality, and the adaptation of monuments and historic buildings to house public services.

In those same years in Italy, new national legislation was introduced to cover detailed forms of intervention in historic urban areas. These took into account the theoretical studies of Venice and Rome by Saverio Muratori (1910–1973) and Gianfranco Caniggia (1933–1987) from the late 1950s to the 1970s.<sup>6</sup> These studies were given an operational dimension in plans prepared by Leonardo Benevolo in the 1970s, which remain exemplary for their vision and clarity of method, and for their attempt to reestablish a sense of place and an awareness of the historical vicissitudes of each place as a basis for planning. This approach is illustrated in Benevolo's 2004 proposal for the restoration of the Borgo area next to the Vatican. The old Borgo was demolished in the 1930s and replaced with a single, poorly conceived monumental access to the Basilica of St. Peter designed by Marcello Piacentini. Benevolo's proposal combines different forms of intervention to repair the damage inflicted decades earlier to this historic sector. "My proposal aims at healing a wound . . . I am convinced that there exists a different way to modernize (the real one) by means of repairing the mistakes of the recent past and putting back, in part, what has been destroyed."<sup>7</sup>

### **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, AUTHENTICITY, AND INTANGIBLE HERITAGE**

An integrated, socially conscious approach to conservation inspired the Declaration of Amsterdam and the European Charter

of the Architectural Heritage issued by the Council of Europe in 1975. These international documents refer not just to historic urban areas but also to towns, villages, and surrounding regions.

The 1980s and 1990s mark a progressive extension of the notions of conservation. Greater awareness of natural landscapes spread as a result of the 1972 international conference on the environment held in Stockholm. Fifteen years later, the Brundtland Report introduced the idea of sustainable development: The use and development of environmental resources for the present necessities of humankind must not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs. An extension of this concept some years later called for development to be attuned to and compatible with the cultural traditions and values of a community, opening the way for the identification of culturally determined forms of development and for an expanded notion of cultural heritage.

The establishment of the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites, following the World Heritage Convention in 1972, brought together natural and man-made sites of worldwide significance. This list closed the gap between environmental and cultural conservation, demonstrating that similar criteria and methodologies can be applied to ensure preservation and promote sustainable development for both. This enlarged notion of environmental and cultural heritage was fleshed out with specific reference to management criteria in the 1979 Burra Charter and, with respect to the determination of significance, in the 1994 Nara Document on Authenticity.

One consideration remains: the conservation of cultural identities and their associated intangible values, together with their implications for planning. This notion is spelled out in the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage of 2003. This latest convention is a response to globalization and the concern that, in its wake, cultural identities may be lost. It is also an acknowledgment that planning and conservation cannot be separated from the cultural beliefs and know-how of each society, and that these must be protected to



Bologna, Italy. The 1969 plan for Bologna introduced the idea of integrated conservation of historic ensembles, which held that conservation cannot be limited to preservation of visual and aesthetic character but must also include consideration of underlying physical, social, and economic structures. Photo: © Dana Kaye Levin.



ensure their survival. This last frontier of conservation reminds us that places are the tangible manifestations of our humanity, including their intangible meanings and social and cultural continuity. Desecrating our habitats or obliterating our cities is akin to destroying the essence of our humanity.

## CONCLUSIONS

What lessons can be learned from the thinkers and the enlarged notions of conservation reviewed here? These ideas represent the minority position—the one often ignored by city planners convinced of the need to obliterate the past and start afresh. And yet the minority position is the one that makes the best of the millenary tradition of city building embodied in our historic towns and cities. This position appears all the more relevant in times of diminishing resources and environmental concern about the livability and sustainability of cities. Its tenets may be summed up as follows:

- Camillo Sitte reminds us that interventions in new city contexts must reestablish a closer relationship between city planning and architectural expression, between function, technology, and aesthetics. A satisfactory resolution to the aesthetic problems of the contemporary city remains to be found.
- The lesson from Patrick Geddes is that planning must be based on a thorough appreciation of the existing context and review of available data. It cannot be left to the casual dynamics of market forces or the improvisations of high-profile architects.
- Geddes also supported the involvement of residents in the fundamental choices regarding their cities and countryside. Geddes reminds us that a plan should be the expression of the aspirations, sense of place, and efforts of a community, and he warns against the dangers of top-down planning.
- Gustavo Giovannoni's work points to the need for methods of intervention in historic contexts clearly distinct from those applied to the newer parts of cities. Confusing these two spheres can only lead to disruption in the homogeneous context of historic cities and to undue constraints on present-day developments.
- Giovanni Astengo's insistence on ensuring continuity of investment, action, and management through a special public planning office draws on the lessons from historic cities: only patient, ongoing implementation of consistent policies and interventions will yield a coherent and harmonious urban environment in the long term.

- A plan, however, should not be an abstract design imposed from the top. Jane Jacobs and Roberta Brandes Gratz advocate a more realistic and socially conscious approach to planning in a world that is no longer a *tabula rasa*. The issue today is that of reordering poorly designed and hastily built city areas and improving regions in critical environmental conditions.
- The more recent appreciation of the environment and the risk to its long-term sustainability redefine the very notion of planning. The purpose of planning is to achieve better use of resources and to manage our habitats with minimal intervention and environmental disruption.
- Finally, the recent extension of conservation thinking to the realm of the intangible is a reminder that the identities of places will live as long as we are capable of sustaining their distinct human dimension. A sense of place must be cared for and regenerated every day if it is to reflect the values and traditions of our societies.

Together, these tenets offer a concept of city planning distinct from the ideological ones of partisans of unrestrained destructive growth (a powerful minority of movers and shakers) and champions of total conservation (a powerless minority of well-meaning intellectuals). Their divide can be overcome with a better understanding of what a city really is and of how its development can be channeled toward the creation of a harmonious environment in the interest of the vast majority of users.

Political will remains key. But greater awareness on the part of architects and planners is also important, so that they understand that the road more often taken until now—and still largely followed—is not the only available route. Less costly and smarter ways to improve our urban environment are available if we absorb the legacy of these past thinkers and planners. Theirs is the road less traveled, but it is worth rediscovering if we believe that beauty should still find a place in our cities.

*Francesco Siravo, a preservation architect, has consulted for national and international organizations and is currently working for the Historic Cities Program of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture.*

- 
1. John Ruskin, opening speech given at the Crystal Palace, London, in 1851.
  2. Patrick Geddes, letter to the Dewan of Patiala, 15 Sept. 1922, Geddes Papers, MS10516, National Library of Scotland. See Helen Meller, *Social Evolutionist and City Planner* (London: Routledge, 1993), 203.
  3. Donald Insall and Associates, *Chester: A Study in Conservation* (London: HMSO, 1968).
  4. Gordon Cullen, *The Concise Townscape* (London: Architectural Press, 1961).
  5. Jane Jacobs's most influential book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House), was published in 1961.
  6. Saverio Muratori, "Studi per un'operante storia urbana di Venezia," *Palladio* 3–4 (July–Dec. 1959). See also Gianfranco Caniggia, *Strutture dello spazio antropico* (Florence: Uniedit, 1976).
  7. Leonardo Benevolo, *San Pietro e la città di Roma* (Bari: Editori Laterza, 2004), 85. (Quote translated by Francesco Siravo.)

# SUSTAINABLE PRESERVATION OF THE URBAN HERITAGE

## Lessons from Latin America



**BY EDUARDO ROJAS**

MANY CITIES IN LATIN AMERICA HAVE A RICH HERITAGE OF BUILDINGS AND PUBLIC SPACES and a distinct urban structure of streets and land uses laid out at their foundation by Spanish and Portuguese conquistadores in the late sixteenth century. In these cities, pre-Columbian monuments and structures are interspersed with government buildings, churches, convents, hospitals, military installations, and defensive walls built during the colonial period. Private houses, some dating to the seventeenth century, surround the monumental structures. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, this colonial heritage was enhanced with public buildings, houses, and various types of industrial buildings, which are increasingly valued by communities.

UNESCO's World Heritage List (WHL) includes several historic centers of Latin American cities, and many others are protected by national or local legislation. This article makes

reference to two of these historic centers—Quito in Ecuador, the first heritage area to be listed on the WHL in 1978, because of its outstanding array of public spaces and buildings of artistic and historic value, and Salvador de Bahia in Brazil, listed in 1987, because of the city's unique blend of European, African, and Amerindian cultures in the architecture of its buildings and public spaces.

Notwithstanding their values, over the years most historic centers in Latin America have deteriorated, losing a significant part of their material heritage. Changes in individual preferences and in the requirements of modern economic activities led to the abandonment of historic centers by the wealthier residents and by the most dynamic activities. The centers were taken over by low-income households and by informal activities that use their structures beyond their carrying capacity. The result is that historic centers of most cities, including Quito and Salvador de Bahia, have suffered deterioration and loss of their heritage assets over the last seventy years.

Above: Historic center of Salvador de Bahia, Brazil. Over fifteen years, the State of Bahia developed, financed, and implemented the rehabilitation of private properties and public spaces in thirty-five blocks of the historic center. Photo: © g01xm.

## **PRESERVATION EFFORTS: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

After years of neglect, the second half of the twentieth century witnessed growing interest among parts of the Latin American society in the preservation of the urban heritage, mostly motivated by the loss of historic and artistically significant buildings to deterioration and the ravages of real estate development. In response, governments initially enacted preservation ordinances aimed at preventing the demolition or defacement of valuable buildings. However, most governments invested little in their preservation, leaving this task to the owners. Due to the lack of market demand for preserved buildings—and without government support—most owners did not continue to invest in their properties, contributing to their deterioration and loss. The poor results of this preservation strategy prompted governments to take a more proactive stand by investing public funds in the preservation of emblematic buildings, public and private.

Today some Latin American governments shoulder the entire cost of such efforts, driven by their desire to protect the sociocultural values of the urban heritage of their cities, with a particular focus on the historic, artistic, and educational aspects. A notable example of this approach is the preservation program for the historic center of Salvador de Bahia. In this case, the government of the State of Bahia, through its Cultural Institute (ICB), invested US\$46 million over fifteen years to rehabilitate thirty-five blocks of the historic center, containing about six hundred properties. The ICB developed the projects and financed and implemented the rehabilitation works in private properties and public spaces. The rehabilitated buildings were returned to the owners with the obligation to repay part of the costs, either in cash or by authorizing the ICB to rent out part of the properties for a given period. The results demonstrate the strengths and shortcomings of this approach. The physical deterioration affecting most buildings in the historic center was reverted; however, this approach did not allow involvement of the private sector or the municipal government in the design or financing of the program. Thus the ICB had responsibility for maintaining all public spaces and patrolling the area during the execution period and beyond.

Moreover, the rehabilitated buildings are devoted mostly to tourism and recreation activities, to the detriment of housing, economic services, and other uses that would diversify both the demand for property in the historic center and the mix of inhabitants and users. Most original residents displaced by preservation activities have not been able to return because of the increase in rent prices.

The amount invested per year varies, depending on the capacity of the ICB to secure government financing. To this day, its sustainability relies on the amounts allocated in the state

government's budget. This type of implementation scheme, overly centralized in nature, results in an unstable and unsustainable preservation process that leaves little opportunity for private investors, property owners, and the local community to contribute based on their interests and capabilities.

The Municipality of Quito has followed a more sustainable path to preserve its historic center by promoting private-sector investment attracted by the economic use value of the heritage. In 1994 the municipality set up the Quito Historic Center Corporation (QHCC), with all the capacities of a real estate developer and, additionally, capable of executing public works under contract from the municipality. During its first years of operation, the QHCC invested in a variety of preservation efforts, including improvements to public facilities, such as infrastructure and public spaces, increased access to the historic center, and the construction of new cultural facilities in emblematic buildings (e.g., a city museum in an old hospital and a public library in an old university building). In addition, the QHCC partnered with landowners and private investors to develop pioneering projects, such as the construction of new shopping areas for high- and middle-income customers; the rehabilitation of office space for private business and public institutions; the opening of boutique hotels, restaurants, art galleries, and craft shops to attract tourists and citizens; the renovation of theaters and cultural facilities; and the building of affordable housing to retain part of the local population and attract new residents.

Taking advantage of opportunities demonstrated by such projects, private investors also initiated projects of their own. However, the sustainability of these efforts remains to be seen. Changes in the structure of the QHCC led to a virtual halt of investments in 2009, while rising costs of properties are discouraging investors.

## **SUSTAINABLE PRESERVATION: PRINCIPLES AND INSTRUMENTS**

The two cases presented here offer valuable lessons for the design and implementation of sustainable preservation programs. One lesson is the need to put all values embedded in urban heritage into play, as they are the drivers that mobilize a diverse set of stakeholders. Sociocultural values—historic, artistic, educational—mobilize the cultural elite, philanthropists, and community leaders, while the economic values (mostly direct use) attract consumers and real estate investors. The wider the variety of values put into play, the more sustainable the preservation process will be, as it draws the support, financing, and skills of diverse and capable stakeholders.

The case of the historic center of Quito shows that in order to be sustainable, urban heritage preservation must be part of a larger rehabilitation process that not only tackles historic



Plaza Grande, Quito, Ecuador. The Quito Historic Center Corporation was established in 1994 to undertake development and public works projects while preserving the city's historic architecture. Photo: Gail Ostergren, GCI.

preservation of urban heritage sites and buildings but also addresses the greater issue of turning areas that contain the heritage into fully functional and developed portions of the city. As with other types of urban rehabilitation, the execution of an effective conservation strategy requires the efficient cooperation of all interested actors, both public and private—a condition that poses institutional and financial challenges. To harmonize the variety of interests, governments must enter into complex relationships with a variety of social actors. Different forms of partnership are needed in urban heritage preservation to ensure that the costs, benefits, and risks are effectively allocated among different stakeholders, based on who is best suited to take them or who has the greatest interest in maximizing their use or in the potential returns that may accrue.

Given the need for all stakeholders to cooperate—and given the fact that they are not likely to do so spontaneously—the launching of a sustainable urban heritage conservation process that is consistent with a community's objectives and involves all the stakeholders requires government intervention. Local governments, in addition to being responsible for the infrastructures and public spaces of heritage areas, are the only actors capable of solving the coordination problem confronted by the private actors operating in deteriorated urban heritage areas—the issue that prevents the process from taking off through pure market forces. Furthermore, municipalities are increasingly required by communities to take responsibility for

preserving the public-good component of urban heritage, mostly its sociocultural values: the existence of buildings and public spaces of aesthetic, spiritual, social, historic, and symbolic value to be enjoyed by future generations.

Moreover, local government is the only actor capable of mitigating the biases of private philanthropy, whose interests may not coincide with those of local communities, and of ensuring that all interventions are executed in a coordinated way, implemented in the correct sequence (the rehabilitation of infrastructure and public spaces must precede the rehabilitation of private buildings) and with significant scale (the rehabilitation of a single building or street block usually does not affect the cycle of deterioration of the rest of the neighborhood). Private actors working individually are not capable of achieving these conditions.

Finally, as shown by the case of Salvador de Bahia, although the involvement of the government is indispensable for launching, designing, financing, and sustaining an efficient preservation process in urban heritage areas, overinvolvement may crowd out and discourage the participation of other actors, ultimately affecting the sustainability of the process.

*Eduardo Rojas is a private consultant in urban development, specializing in urban heritage preservation. He is a former principal urban development specialist of the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington DC.*

# CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE IN HISTORIC URBAN ENVIRONMENTS

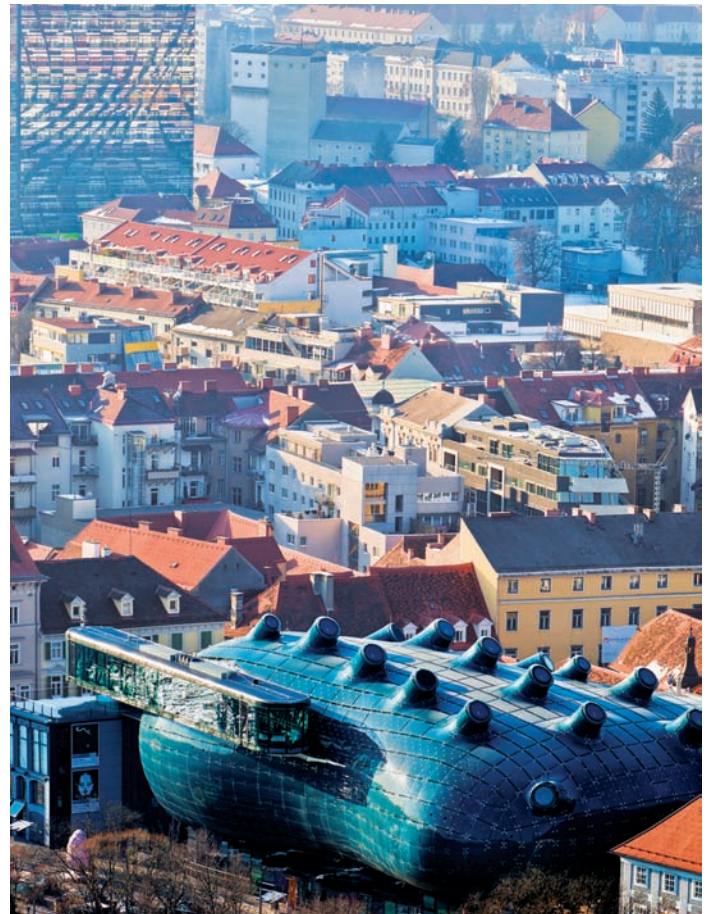
BY SUSAN MACDONALD

A CRITICAL ISSUE FACING DECISION MAKERS AND CONSERVATION PROFESSIONALS is accommodating change to heritage places and adding new layers to the historic urban environment in ways that recognize, interpret, and sustain their heritage values. Over the last decade, a vigorous debate has ensued regarding the appropriateness of contemporary architectural insertions into historic urban areas. This debate has polarized sectors of the architectural community, pitting conservationists against planners and developers. It has positioned conservationists as antidevelopment and antiprogress, responsible for stifling the creativity of a new generation of architects and their right to contemporary architectural expression.

Change, however, is inevitable. Buildings, streetscapes, and urban areas evolve and change according to the needs of their inhabitants. Therefore, it is important to determine the role of contemporary architecture in contributing to this change in ways that conserve and celebrate the special character and quality of the historic environment that communities have recognized as important and wish to conserve for future generations.

Historic areas typically exhibit a range of heritage values, such as social, historical, and architectural. Frequently, they also have aesthetic significance; therefore, the design quality of new insertions in a historic area is important. One of the challenges in this debate on the role of contemporary architecture in historic contexts is that design quality can be seen as subjective. Assessing the impact of new development in a historic context has also been accused of being subjective. However, increasing development pressure has pushed governments and the conservation community to provide more objective guidance to secure what is termed “the three Cs,” namely:

- **certainty** in the planning system about what constitutes appropriate development;
- **consistency** in government decision making; and
- communication and **consultation** between government decision makers and the development sector on creating successful outcomes.



The Kunsthaus Graz in Graz, Austria, designed by Peter Cook and Colin Fournier. Opening in 2003 and located in the center of the historic city, it is representative of high-profile buildings that aim to be iconic by contrasting with a city's existing urban fabric. Photo: Flavio Vallenari.

Design professionals differentiate between taste and design quality. Taste is subjective, while quality is measurable. Prescriptive planning tools such as height restrictions, envelope limitations, and requirements to use certain materials all attempt to provide qualitative design measures. In many places, it is only when a historic building or area is involved that issues of design quality and character are included in the planning process through development or impact assessment. Clearly there is a need to provide guidance or establish well-understood standards to assess new development occurring within treasured streetscapes, neighborhoods, or historic landscapes, in order to meet the three Cs. Given



Ait Ben Haddou in Morocco. This World Heritage Site is an example of an urban settlement in which vernacular traditional building forms and materials continue to be used for new construction, resulting in an architectural integrity and authenticity that offers a harmonious relationship between the natural and social environment. Photo: GCI.

that the debate is now occurring at a global scale, such standards need to achieve some level of consensus at an international level.

### STARCHITECTURE IN THE HISTORIC CITY

The recent phenomenon of celebrity architecture—those landmark buildings described by Charles Jencks as “enigmatic signifiers”—has elevated the new architectural monument to the status of a great artwork and signals the emergence of those who have come to be known as starchitects.<sup>1</sup> City leaders, anxious to secure global status for their city in an increasingly competitive world, have turned to these international celebrity architects to create new iconic landmarks to put their city on the map. For example, Frank Gehry’s brief for the Guggenheim Museum (1993–97) was “to do for Bilbao what the Sydney Opera House did for Sydney.”<sup>2</sup>

Jencks, in his 2005 book *The Iconic Building*, contrasts the traditional monument with the celebrity building—which is driven by commercial needs and whose role it is to stimulate interest and investment in cities through its attention-grabbing, provocative design. “In the past,” he writes, “important public buildings, such as the cathedral and the city hall, expressed shared meaning and conveyed it through well-known conventions.”<sup>3</sup> Such important public monuments may be museums, as is the case with the Guggenheim in Bilbao, but since the mid-1990s, the monumental approach has been extended to a wider range of private buildings, such as department stores, apartment buildings, and even additions to family homes. The acceptability or fashion for attention-grabbing buildings means that difference is applauded and is celebrated over contextualized design—the approach the preservation community generally advocates. Some of these buildings may be fabulous, but how many monu-

ments does the urban environment need? What will it be like in the future when the buildings are all unrelated, each vying for attention and without the traditional hierarchy of monumentality that enables a reading of the urban landscape as it relates to function? Where does the iconic building fit within the already existing iconic urban fabric of the historic city?

Herein lies the conflict. Starchitecture clamors for attention to consciously create an identity for the aspiring global city. In the case of the historic city, such as those included on the World Heritage List, the city has already been recognized more often than not for its architectural, aesthetic, and historic character. Preservationists would argue that the historic city is already iconic, so new development that seeks to stand apart from it is likely to receive criticism from communities, many of which have worked hard to protect the historic area. Sometimes it is the homogeneity or unity of the architecture that is important; sometimes it is the combination of historic layers and parts that contributes to significance. Perhaps ironically, inevitably it is its local distinctiveness that is being celebrated through the international recognition World Heritage listing brings.

In the early 2000s, a number of World Heritage sites were nominated to the List of World Heritage in Danger, due to proposed, highly contemporary development deemed inappropriate because it potentially threatened the outstanding universal values of the nominated sites. The call by the World Heritage Committee (WHC) for action to address this issue resulted in a 2005 conference in Vienna entitled “World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture—Managing the Historic Urban Landscape.” The outcome of this meeting was the Vienna Memorandum,<sup>4</sup>

which proposes an integrated approach to the contemporary development of existing cities in a way that does not compromise their heritage significance. Since that time, the WHC has worked with its advisory bodies to address a number of related issues pertaining to the conservation and management of the historic urban landscape.<sup>5</sup> Simultaneously, many local governments and heritage institutions have worked to develop guidance to gain a shared understanding of what constitutes appropriate development in the historic environment between owners, developers, and decision making bodies.<sup>6</sup>

## CREATING TOMORROW'S HERITAGE

There are varying views on what constitutes appropriate new development within a historic context. Some argue that new insertions to the fabric of the historic urban environment should be in the style of the old. Historically, traditional settlements and cities like Ait Ben Haddou in Morocco or Zanzibar's stone town have demonstrated a continuum of building traditions that exemplifies this approach. In the pre-modern era, redevelopment in commercial city centers, such as London's Regent Street, followed a Beaux Arts approach, with grand town planning and architectural gestures. With the advent of Modernism, large-scale reconstruction, which architecturally broke with traditional architectural and planning forms, changed the face of many cities in the twentieth century. In recent times, in reaction to modern interventions, some architects have chosen to continue to design buildings in a more historical style while nevertheless utilizing modern materials and technologies. Others abhor historicism and argue that each generation should represent its own time. New layers should represent the ideas, technology, materials, and architectural language of each generation. *Pastiche* is a dirty word.

The historic environment can, in fact, accommodate a rich variety of interpretations and expressions. A vernacular or traditional response may be as valid as a more contemporary response. It is the quality of the relationship between old and new that is critical, not the architectural language per se. Issues such as scale, form, siting, materials, color, and detailing are important to consider when assessing the impact of a new development within a cherished historic town, city, or site. These criteria are examples of those typically considered when assessing the impact of new development in a historic context.<sup>7</sup>

Most successful new buildings designed in a valued historic context inevitably rely on an understanding of, and then response to, the special character and qualities of the context. As with any conservation work, understanding significance of the place is crucial. Also in common with most conservation work is that it is case specific. A city center with an architecturally unified city core may need a different approach than one that

has a variety of architectural forms, scales, and expressions. In an urban settlement that continues to sustain traditional craft and building techniques and materials, it may be extremely important to promote the continuation of these practices.

An important starting point is the premise that the place has been identified by present and past generations to be important enough to warrant protection and be subject to the prevailing laws, regulations, and policies to secure its conservation and to manage change in such a way that its significance is conserved. The responsibility of designers is to ensure that their work contributes to and enriches rather than diminishes the built environment. Conservation principles can often lead to heightened levels of creativity. Many architects, initially frustrated by the seeming interference of the conservation practitioner, in the end will agree that the outcome has been enhanced through a rigorous, well-articulated process.

Conservation is a balance between preserving the special character, quality, and significance of the historic place and facilitating change in a way that sustains it into the future. Inevitably every decision and subsequent action is of its own time. The role of the conservation practitioner is to ensure that today's decisions do not do irreparable damage. Successful designers recognize that working within the historic context is not a constraint but an opportunity—where the whole can be greater than the sum of the parts, and where a contemporary building can add a rich new layer and play a role in creating the heritage of the future.

*Susan Macdonald is the head of Field Projects at the Getty Conservation Institute.*

1. Charles Jencks, *The Iconic Building* (New York: Rizzoli, 2005).
2. Jencks, *Iconic Building*, 12.
3. Jencks, *Iconic Building*, 7.
4. UNESCO World Heritage Centre, *Vienna Memorandum on World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture—Managing the Historic Landscape* (Vienna: UNESCO World Heritage Centre, 2005).
5. The World Heritage Center's Historic Cities Program is engaged in developing a recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, including investigating the impact of contemporary architectural additions on historic urban environments. See [www.whc.unesco.org/en/cities](http://www.whc.unesco.org/en/cities).
6. Examples include the United Kingdom's Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and English Heritage, *Building in Context: New Development in Historic Areas* (2001), available online at <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110118095356/http://www.cabe.org.uk/publications/building-in-context>. See also NSW Heritage Office and Royal Australian Institute of Architects (NSW Chapter), *Design in Context: Guidelines for Infill Development in the Historic Environment* (Sydney: NSW Heritage Office and RAI NSW, 2005), available online at [www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/docs/DesignInContext.pdf](http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/docs/DesignInContext.pdf).
7. See, for example, NSW Heritage Office and Royal Australian Institute of Architects, *Design in Context*, which includes these as criteria.

The GCI will host an event on contemporary architecture in the historic environment in 2012. The Institute will also be working on the development of case studies and guidance documents for a variety of situations to address this challenge, as part of the Historic Cities and Urban Settlements Initiative in 2013.

# THE CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC CITIES AND URBAN SETTLEMENTS INITIATIVE

**BY FRANÇOISE DESCAMPS**

DURING THE LAST CENTURY, unprecedented development of the urban environment has strongly influenced urban transformation. Rapid urban expansion, densification (or, conversely, decline and abandonment), inappropriate modern interventions, gentrification, and changes in uses are occurring worldwide, directly affecting the preservation of historic urban environments. In response, the Getty Conservation Institute established its Historic Cities and Urban Settlements Initiative to enhance practices in the conservation and management of historic urban environments by identifying and addressing needs through a targeted program of research and dissemination, training, and education, as well as model field projects.

## **PROVIDING HERITAGE INVENTORY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

Informed by its past work in this area, including a collaborative project in the 1990s with the Municipality of Quito, which sought to build a model for conservation of privately owned properties, the initiative began by addressing the need for and the development of comprehensive surveys and data systems to identify and manage historic resources. The initiative commenced with the Los Angeles Historic Resource Survey project, a collaborative undertaking between the City of Los Angeles and the GCI; the document that resulted from this project provides a comprehensive approach to undertaking a large-scale, citywide historic resources survey.<sup>1</sup> A second project in this area, in partnership with the World Monuments Fund, is the Middle Eastern Geodatabase for Antiquities, which provides a web-based open source geodatabase system for managing archaeological sites. This system is being expanded to include the full range of heritage resources typically managed by government authorities and addresses the need for accessible, comprehensive information on the heritage resources in a country or city—the first step in the conservation process.<sup>2</sup>

## **WORKING WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

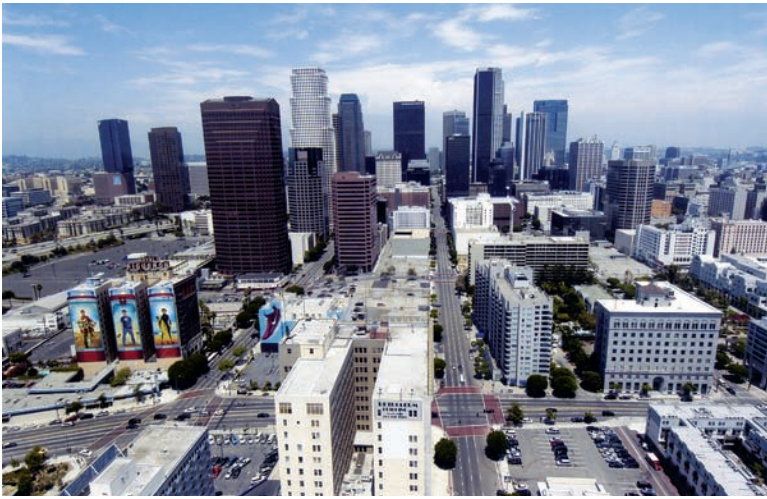
Between 2004 and 2009, the GCI contributed to the design and development of the scientific programs of the biannual world congresses of the Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC). These congresses brought together local government representatives, practitioners, and decision makers involved in the conservation and management of historic cities to engage with renowned specialists on topics related to the conservation of historic urban environments.<sup>3</sup> They also provided an opportunity to identify concerns and needs and to hear the day-to-day experiences of local decision makers.

In order to enhance the knowledge and skills of local governments, the GCI also initiated and delivered a mayors' workshop at these congresses. In November 2011, at the Eleventh OWHC World Congress in Sintra, Portugal, the GCI, in partnership with the UNESCO World Heritage Center, will deliver a revised version of the mayors' workshop, one appropriate for any city or region. The workshop will introduce elected decision makers to their roles and responsibilities in managing a World Heritage city and will cover concepts and principles driving the decision process for interventions in and around a historic urban area. It considers the revolving cycle of understanding, retaining, and promoting the significance of the place and strongly emphasizes the shared responsibility of decision makers, residents, and users.

The GCI is also contributing to the OWHC initiative led by the City of Lyon to compile case studies showcasing how different World Heritage cities have conserved, rehabilitated, and developed their historic resources in ways that recognize and retain their significance. The publication will illustrate critical issues and demonstrate approaches to the management of urban development and cultural heritage preservation.

The GCI is also collaborating with the Heritage of Malaysia Trust and ThinkCity (a division of Malaysia's Ministry of Finance) to deliver an urban conservation workshop in the World Heritage city of Penang in May 2012. This workshop will bring together twenty-five Malaysian urban planners to provide them with tools and methodologies to address the challenges of conserving historic resources in Malaysia's historic cities.





Downtown Los Angeles. The GCI's Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey project provided the City of Los Angeles with a comprehensive approach to undertaking a large, citywide historic resources survey. Photo: Gary Leonard Collection/Los Angeles Public Library.

## IDENTIFYING ISSUES AND SYNERGIES

Groundwork for the next phase of the GCI work began with research on current practices, including a survey of practitioners, and a review of case studies and reports related to urban conservation. This work was followed by a 2009 experts meeting to identify key challenges in improving practice in conserving historic urban environments, as well as to examine the role of heritage professionals in that effort. Professionals from various disciplines shared their knowledge of urban heritage conservation worldwide. The meeting report outlined the group's consensus on the most important needs and delineated potential actions.<sup>4</sup> The group identified the following areas of action: enhancement of the skills of local government; better integration of urban planning and conservation; additional planning tools that include conservation needs and improve decision making; pilot projects that embed economic development; successful models of tourism management; and good examples of engagement of inhabitants, users, and visitors. A 2009 meeting of ICOMOS International, the World Heritage Center, OWHC, and the GCI discussed the various ways these organizations could work together to address these issues.

## A MAP FOR FUTURE WORK

Following this meeting, the GCI initiated several activities, including a compilation of bibliographic references, a literature review on public-private partnerships for urban conservation, and a project for the conservation of an urban settlement in Morocco.

Designed to serve as a practical reference for heritage professionals and government officials involved in the conservation of historic cities, the bibliography addresses principles of urban heritage conservation, as well as such current issues as climate change, economics of urban conservation, new buildings in historic contexts, participation of inhabitants, regeneration of the historic urban environment, and tourism.

While local government has increasing responsibility for urban heritage, it often lacks resources—a situation that creates a greater need for community commitment and private-sector engagement. Public-private partnerships (PPP)—agreements between public and private sectors—have been successfully employed in urban planning to develop infrastructure, including water, transportation, roads, railways, and new housing. The conservation field has yet to explore the full potential of this tool. To advance this area, the GCI has undertaken a literature review that gathers information on ways PPPs have been used to deliver conservation outcomes and attempts to identify criteria for their application to conserving cultural heritage.<sup>5</sup>

In mid-2011, the GCI began assisting local authorities in addressing the challenges involved in conserving the historic settlement of Taourirt, Ouarzazate, in Morocco. The project's aim is to develop a model for the integrated conservation and rehabilitation of a traditional urban settlement embedded in the modern city. The site includes the Kasbah, an impressive ensemble of buildings and an outstanding example of the regional architecture, as well as a ksar, a traditional Berber village. Taourirt's representative nature and strategic location make it an ideal site to promote conservation of traditional urban settlements in the region and to demonstrate how it can be maintained as a living place while being successfully integrated in a modern city.

While the conservation of historic cities in the context of urban planning is an issue that has been explored for over half a century, such conservation efforts have yet to be well integrated into urban planning. At the same time, the complexity of this particular field is increasing. Nevertheless, success in the preservation of historic cities will depend upon a holistic approach to the urban environment that integrates efforts to sustain heritage significance with the various measures that serve to make cities engaging, enriching, and livable.

*Françoise Descamps is a senior project specialist with GCI Field Projects.*

1. Kathryn Welch Howe, preparer, *The Los Angeles Historic Resource Survey Report: A Framework for a Citywide Historic Resource Survey* (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 2008).
2. MEGA-Jordan has been developed to inventory and manage archaeological sites in Jordan. The GCI is currently working to expand its capacity to include the other heritage types typically protected by government heritage authorities, including buildings, structures, conservation areas, landscapes, and other features.
3. Françoise Descamps, ed., *Proceedings, 10th World Congress of the Organization of World Heritage Cities, Quito, 8–11 September 2009* (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 2010); Juan Manuel Martinez, Françoise Descamps, and Kathleen Louw, eds., *Proceedings, 9th World Congress of the Organization of World Heritage Cities, Kazan, 19–23 June 2007* (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 2008).
4. Getty Conservation Institute, *Historic Urban Environment Conservation Challenges and Priorities for Action. Experts Meeting, March 12–14, 2009*. [www.getty.edu/conservation/pdf\\_publications](http://www.getty.edu/conservation/pdf_publications).
5. "The Role of Public Private Partnerships in Conserving Heritage Buildings, Sites, and Historic Urban Areas: A Literature Review" will be available on the GCI website in early 2012.

# BALANCING CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

## A Discussion about Urban Heritage Conservation

**GÁBOR DEMSZKY** was elected five times as lord mayor of Budapest (1990–2010). During his tenure, he worked to integrate built heritage conservation into the management of one of Europe's largest cities, which was in the midst of significant political change.

**PAUL KNOX** is a university distinguished professor and a senior fellow for international advancement at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University School of Public and International Affairs. He is a coauthor of *Small Town Sustainability: Economic, Social, and Environmental Innovation*.

**ELIZABETH VINES** is a conservation architect and an adjunct professor at the Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific at Deakin University in Melbourne. She is the author of *Streetwise Asia: A Practical Guide for the Conservation and Revitalisation of Heritage Cities and Towns in Asia*.

They spoke with **SUSAN MACDONALD**, head of GCI Field Projects, and with **JEFFREY LEVIN**, editor of *Conservation Perspectives*, *The GCI Newsletter*.

**SUSAN MACDONALD** Let's start with the question of the role of heritage conservation in twenty-first-century cities, in the context of managing urban growth and change. Is it important? And if so, why?

**PAUL KNOX** It's going to be important, because of cultural shifts that are spreading across the world, because of the increased pace of life, and because of the disembedding of social interactions through social networks. People are going to want to hold on to real places and identities—and heritage is part of that. Heritage is also going to be increasingly caught up in this so-called experience economy. Increasingly, heritage will be a component of that, as the private sector seeks to exploit the attractions of heritage. The audience for heritage is going to broaden.

**ELIZABETH VINES** It's interesting that in the developed Western world, as we've become more prosperous, we've become more depressed. I think the incidence of depression is related both to a feeling of not being able to make a meaningful contribution and to alienation from where we live. People want to hang onto a

sense of place, and they're losing that. They're losing their stories and their connection to place. You see this in China. A huge issue that China is hiding from the rest of the world is how unhappy people are when traditional urban landscapes are swept aside and people are housed in high-rise towers. A sense of place is about handing on to the next generation your story, the one that you've inherited. It's about belonging. We have many social problems that are a result of not having a sense of community.

**JEFFREY LEVIN** Gábor, you were the mayor of a large historic city during a time of tremendous political transformation. During that period, how concerned were you about the city's built heritage?

**GÁBOR DEMSZKY** In 1990 there was a peaceful Velvet Revolution. Before that, our heritage was neglected. This was true not only for Budapest but for all the cities in the Soviet bloc. Budapest and the other East European cities suffered from the same challenges—lack of infrastructure and the need to build a twenty-first-century city with costly projects that you have to negotiate with the World Bank and the European Investment Bank. As mayor, that was my main obligation. It was my smaller obligation to do something with the city's history—but I loved it.

**LEVIN** What were the major obstacles you faced in conserving the heritage of Budapest?

**DEMSZKY** The main problem was decentralization. Budapest is divided into twenty-three districts that are totally autonomous from the city and have their own budgets and mayors. At the very beginning, between 1990 and 1994, I fought against this decentralization. For me, it was unbelievable that Budapest was not one city but practically twenty-three cities with which I had to work. After 1994 I accepted the fact that the districts were independent and could do what they wanted. I tried to find partners—enlightened district mayors—with whom I could work, and I did so for the next sixteen years. The different city districts had differing approaches. There were several districts that cooperated with the city, and we achieved a lot. Others totally neglected their historic buildings, and we couldn't do any work with them.



People are going to want to hold on to real places and identities—and heritage is part of that.

PAUL KNOX

---

**LEVIN** What was your process?

**DEMSZKY** From the very beginning we worked to protect our historic buildings. We created models on how to do this, which we taught to other cities. But you have to accept one principle—you have to provide money for buildings that are privately owned, because otherwise they won't be renewed. When the Soviet bloc collapsed, we had housing in the city that was not in good shape, so we had to do something quickly. In 1993 we established a fund that the new owners, the ex-tenants of these buildings, could apply to for restoration. With this fund, we enabled the reconstruction of two thousand of these mostly privately owned buildings. The point here is that we gave private individuals taxpayer money.

**VINES** In Australia, we support owners of both commercial and residential heritage buildings with some incentives—although these are generally very limited. One thing we've found useful in Broken Hill, where I work, is to measure the multiplier effect that incentive money generates. For example, one dollar put in by the state agency is matched by one dollar from the local agency, which is then matched dollar for dollar by the owner. The owner, having gotten that seed money, says, "Well, I might as well get a bit of money from the bank." In the end, we were able to say that one dollar from the state agency generated fourteen dollars in the local economy. We have to do better at playing the economists' game of measuring numerically what we're achieving. We use this fuzzy language about the community having a sense of pride, but decision makers want to hear about the economic benefits.

**DEMSZKY** Our model is absolutely similar to yours. The applicant has to apply for the money, documenting what he wants to do and who will manage costs. A city committee decides about providing funding. That's one part. Another funding part comes from the local district. A third part generally is a bank or the building's owners. Usually there are a number of owners, and they put together the rest of the money or get a favorable loan. These buildings are old and reconstruction is expensive, but hundreds of privately owned buildings have been restored that

way. The problem is that while individual buildings are renewed, the ones next to them might be falling apart. On Main Street, one of the most elegant areas in Hungary, they did it differently. Here the community collectively created a good master restoration plan together with the city. I like this form of action much better. When the district organizes the renewal of their part of the city, it looks better and it provides a higher quality of life.

**MACDONALD** Do you find that incremental renewal can work? Does the idea of conserving one building as a catalyst for broader action work?

**DEMSZKY** It depends on whether the owners are smart enough to take part in a long process like that, and whether they have money to start with.

**KNOX** Surely renewal depends on the nature of the district and the buildings that are in it. Government seed money or not, it's often your pioneer gentrifiers that spot the opportunities for acquiring authenticity through sweat equity—which raises the property values. The negative side of that is the displacement of the population that can no longer afford to live there. Gentrification is often seen as positive by city governments in terms of public policy, which in many cities is geared toward identifying districts and providing incentives, in order to elevate the tax base and to bring people back. But there are others who see that as a bad thing because of the displacement of low-income families.

**DEMSZKY** Can I tell you something about the political consequences that gentrification can cause? One of the best district mayors in Budapest—the ninth district mayor—created a fantastic program. He renewed the district and gentrification resulted, which meant he lost the population with whom he was working for twenty years. After twenty years, he lost the election, because the new rich who moved in were conservative, and they did not appreciate his talent and efforts.

**KNOX** Gentrification is difficult, but it's not totally intractable. If you haven't got a fragmented political map, policies can be put in place to mitigate the effects.

**VINES** You need to accept that incremental change is where you start. As your first model, take a building for which people think the only course is demolition, and show what's possible.

**MACDONALD** Is that what you did in Broken Hill, a relatively small town with a fairly compact community? In this sized city, you could have small victories that gradually influenced people. But how effective is that model in the bigger cities of Southeast Asia, where you're working?

**VINES** A recommendation of one of my monitoring missions to Malacca in Malaysia was to choose a typical modest shop-house as a model conservation project. The fact that this recommendation appeared in a UNESCO report gave it credibility, and the locals were able to get funding from the Ford Foundation and the U.S. Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation. Within twelve months, conservation was completed, and the project modeled the use of traditional materials. It's fabulous if you can get the money to do whole city blocks, but that's so rare. Generally, it's the modest model project used as an example to educate and inspire the community.

**KNOX** Do you see more interest in modest structures, as opposed to the gems?

**VINES** The gems tend to look after themselves because they're so well recognized. It's the little modest shophouses that are at risk. On their own, they're nothing special, but put it in the context of a townscape—they are. They're a collective cultural landscape.

Gábor, I heard you say that you wish that public housing in Budapest had not been so quickly sold to poor people, because they can't invest in and maintain their property. You wished housing had been kept in state ownership. One of the problems with urban heritage conservation is gentrification, and people who always lived in an area can no longer afford to stay. What you've described is a situation where the original residents are still there, which surely is a good thing?

**DEMSZKY** The percentage ratio we reached—10 percent of the apartments district-owned and 90 percent of them privately owned—is wrong. It doesn't make possible any kind of social housing policy, because you've lost the most important instrument. The other effect is that the apartment houses owned by low-income people are extremely old and falling apart. The owners don't have the money to fix them. The only way to fix them is to sell them, but these families never do that. So what we face is a bad ratio of public/private ownership in the city. The historical pendulum swinging from state property to total privatization is wrong. The optimal percentage in Budapest would be something like 50/50 or 60/40.

**MACDONALD** So the issue wasn't necessarily the move to some form of privatization. It just happened too quickly and was too extensive?

**DEMSZKY** Very quickly—and the reason was political. Political parties wanted to get support from citizens, and they practically sold all at 10 percent of the real price of the apartments. The result is awful. We do not have apartments in the process of rehabilitation, because poor pensioners live in these extremely expensive apartments and houses.

**MACDONALD** Liz, have you seen cities in Asia that are confronting similar issues?

**VINES** The old quarter in Hanoi is an example of a living, vibrant city, which has a protected zone. It hasn't been super-gentrified. Penang is under tremendous threat and is trying to avert the displacement of traditional families and traditional uses—which is not just because of gentrification but because many traditional trades are, in fact, being displaced in our modern world.

**MACDONALD** Are there ways that heritage conservation can be a catalyst for economic development in the city, or is it too reliant on government subsidies to achieve that economic role?

**KNOX** It depends on the context. One successful example is South Beach, part of Miami Beach. This art deco district had fallen into disrepair and was drug and crime ridden until Barbara Capitman and Leonard Horowitz campaigned for its heritage listing. I think Horowitz decided it would be a great idea if they used pastel colors instead of the traditional white stucco exteriors. The combination of heritage listing and revivication through color transformed the area without significant government intervention. South Beach went from an urban problem area to an exclusive area and international destination district—all based on the economic value provided by heritage conservation. Having said that, there're not many South Beach type of environments, where you've got a nice sandy beach and a climate that attracts investment. However, it can work in other ways too. A lot of people now value industrial heritage in Europe, and so you can get property regeneration around that. Examples are Castleton and Ancoats in Manchester. The question is the degree to which it can work.

**VINES** Precinct designation and protection is an important role for government—then followed by incentives. There was this huge shift in Australia in the early 1980s, when you had governments—and generally they were left-wing governments—that in their early days of power said, "We will designate these heritage areas, we will provide certainty, and we will lower the development potential." In addition, there were new planning policies about public transport and the need for transport nodes



Because of the combination of private and public efforts, we successfully renewed parts of the city.

GÁBOR DEMSZKY

---

around stations, where more intense development is allowed. I'm very thankful these planning decisions were made.

**KNOX** There's a breaking point somewhere on the spectrum of city size. Smaller towns haven't got competing jurisdictions, so they can address these issues in a holistic way. You can have continuity with diversity much more easily than you can in a complex medium- or large-sized city. In those contexts, the district designation is key, because it gives the private sector stability in terms of the parameters for development, which hopefully work in terms of heritage conservation. Investors know that their investment will take place in a broadly stable setting and that there's not going to be something to come along and undermine the value of their investment. But that is a difficult sell to voters and politicians, whose values put freedom of action and the primacy of the individual and property over those broader issues. While it might be in their best interest in many circumstances, they don't support it.

**MACDONALD** Gábor, were the incentives provided by your city government seen to be economically successful?

**DEMSZKY** It was a relatively cheap program because it was only a little part of our city budget. But it functioned extremely well, providing part of the reconstruction costs. The other parts were paid, as I said, by the local district and individual owners with favorable bank loans. And while it was a relatively small amount of money, there was a lot of effort on the part of my office to make it successful. Because of the combination of private and public efforts, we successfully renewed parts of the city. However, even if we demonstrated—say, in the ninth and the thirteenth districts—that reconstruction was going well, it didn't necessarily happen in other districts. They had other mayors and other political parties and had their own methods that they thought were better. This work is very difficult. You have to negotiate with the ex-tenants—the new owners—and you have to negotiate with the city and with the banks. It can be very complicated.

**MACDONALD** What are the factors for being able to successfully maintain, rejuvenate, and interpret the heritage of cities or towns?

**VINES** Process is key. You have to spend time understanding a

place—its stories and its history. What did these streets look like? What is it that we want to keep? And there's engagement with the community, too. You develop your policies; you enact new planning instruments and then implement them. A problem can be that newly elected politicians want to make their mark in order to get reelected. It's important that municipal management keeps policies consistent and states, "No, we don't need this building pulled down for the new shopping center this developer wants. It goes against a process and policies that we've all agreed upon."

**KNOX** Within that process, you've got to have key actors who are able to work together and who see the mutuality of their individual roles. When you get that mutuality of perspective and interest and when, as individuals, they enjoy one another's company and they feel part of an enterprise, you get success.

**MACDONALD** What is the most important level of government and what is its responsibility? In the twenty-first-century world, where the rights of private citizens and privatization are increasingly important, what role should government play?

**VINES** Government plays a very important role. For example, the Heritage Branch in New South Wales in Australia is a leader in providing support for a whole range of players in this field, from local government to practitioners. They have, for instance, regular e-news for heritage practitioners in the state, where people can ask technical and historical questions of each other. Unfortunately, because of the global financial crisis, we're now in a financially starved economic climate in which many agencies have contracted. Still, it's incredibly important that federal, state, and local agencies don't lose their sense of responsibility for their role in appropriate heritage management.

**KNOX** It's multidimensional. The implementation level has to be the local government. But in this neoliberal environment, in which governments at every scale are being hollowed out and personnel numbers are diminished, the national and supra-national government level is important in enabling cities and towns to do their work. But they can only set the framework. It's local government that's key.



## You have to spend time understanding a place—its stories and its history.

ELIZABETH VINES

---

**LEVIN** Gábor, how important were the upper levels of government for you? Did they play any role in dealing with heritage issues in Budapest?

**DEMSZKY** Politically, we were alone. The state was too far away, didn't care, and didn't understand local urban issues. So we developed our own strategy. This was acceptable because it gave us much more freedom. The problem for us was always whether we could get cooperation from the twenty-three local districts.

**VINES** In Asia, in most cases, there is no level of government that has interest in or effective control of local historic town preservation. That's why there's this clamor for World Heritage recognition, because it gives these towns some protection. The question is often asked of me, "How do we get some financial assistance, because in our town that would make a huge difference." Asia now is positioned like the West was about thirty years ago—grappling with how to define heritage areas, what heritage places should be retained, and what incentives would assist with this retention. But Asia also has a massive population explosion that creates enormous pressure for clearing urban areas.

**MACDONALD** If you make the assumption that the majority of what happens in urban areas is principally through local governance, how important is political will to the outcomes for success?

**KNOX** In a small town where they don't have the staff, political leadership is crucial. It requires the vision, energy, and charisma of a mayoral figure. In larger cities, it can come from different quarters. Two examples historically that stand out were not people interested in historic conservation. Far from it. Baron Haussmann in Paris, basically a public employee, and Robert Moses in New York really changed their cities. They were political figures in some ways, but they weren't elected political figures. Perhaps less celebrated or less notorious are electoral representatives who can drive change. But the democratic process is so delicate. The more successful you are, the more vulnerable you are, whereas people like Moses had a strong grip on the whole apparatus of bureaucracy, not always in completely transparent or honest ways. It's vision and leadership—aligned to the energy that the individual can put behind these ideas—that drives change.

**VINES** In Broken Hill, it's been the committed long-term staff who have had the partnership with state government. It's not been the local elected people, who've actually been a problem. In fact, they were sacked, and we had two years with no mayor or council. We did a lot during that period. But in the Asian context, you don't have mayors with vision, and you don't have any rules. The deals are all done. You're a mayor because you do deals, and you make money out of those. Hence the clamor for the international recognition to help support what you know in your heart is important. A lot of different cities in Asia felt completely alone in their struggle, and a lot of them became World Heritage listed through facilitation provided by the international community, which recognized the significance of these places. Often these communities are quite downtrodden, with a framework of being told what to do by centralist governments. So there's a huge role for international opinion.

**LEVIN** Who drove the process in Budapest, Gábor—you as the mayor, or the professional planning staff? Or was it a team?

**DEMSZKY** We created a special division, which worked only on this. The best city planners were working for us. This was like an enlightened kingdom, which included highly educated professionals and also bankers and financial advisers. I had a very strong and well-paid professional team. That was important.

**VINES** It's important to find good technical staff in local authorities with heritage expertise. This is difficult! Architects can make more money designing new high-rise developments. In the World Heritage office in Penang, the position of conservation architect was not filled for two years because the salary was not attractive enough.

**MACDONALD** Some politicians didn't want anybody to give them advice. They just want public servants to do what they're told. "Say yes to that developer. Jobs depend on it." As pressure from the development dollar increases, it puts professionals in a difficult position, constantly having to defend planning policies.

**KNOX** The question of continuity implies some kind of future-oriented professional environment. The 2008 global financial

crisis has shaken our societal faith in the future. There's more focus on the present and more pressure to respond to the immediate demands of developers and the voters, rather than taking a long-term view. A lot of us are interested in that long view, but we're not structurally or institutionally set up for that.

**MACDONALD** What about the sustainability agenda? Isn't that having some influence on the long-term view?

**KNOX** It's not insignificant, but it's a long way from being dominant. There's a lot of popular support for—and money to be made in—sustainability and in green design. But I still see it as a fraction of the picture.

**MACDONALD** One thing that typically happens to cities recognized for their heritage values is tourism. Development that comes from tourism can destroy the very values of the place that made it important. How can we balance the need for urban conservation and retain these heritage values in the face of pressures for tourism?

**VINES** Fundamentally, it gets down to whether a planning authority can control land use. What is it going to take to maintain this city as a living city as opposed to a tourist city? One model—which is something that we in Australia, and you in the United States, shy away from—is basically telling private owners what they can and can't do with their property. That's what people in Penang are grappling with. What Penang is doing is looking at land uses—such as the loss of traditional residences as people from the outside come in and buy these places as second homes. It gets down to land use, which is difficult to control.

**KNOX** Everywhere you see resistance, not only to taxation but to any kind of control over anything, let alone for something as seemingly arcane as heritage conservation. If you put that against the growing appetite for a sense of place and identity—as I noted at the start—it's going to fall to the private sector to exploit that appetite. And then you can run into all kinds of mutations, with heritage merging into movements like New Urbanism, with entirely ersatz environments of one kind or another. Unless people are educated through popular media or formal education, it's hard for them to understand what they're experiencing.

**VINES** Places with patina, which are authentic, are considered by some as not good enough. There is pressure to scrub them up because that's what visitors expect! You need interpretation of a site—that what the visitor is seeing is a *real* place, not a fake place. Would people be as interested in seeing the pyramids if they were exact reproductions? No, of course not. There wouldn't be this majesty and mystique in seeing fakery. But unfortunately, what you have today is a commodification of the tourism experience.

**KNOX** In this country, we talk about Disneyfication as a generic application of those principles. You have that kind of a development in Las Vegas, with “Paris” and “Venice” and “New York” all within a couple of blocks of one another. What people have come to expect is an experience that's comfortable, policed, and predictable. Part of that predictability is in the opportunity to consume.

**VINES** Fakery isn't just in tourist sites. It's also in managing our urban environments. Some people think that when you build a new building in a historic district, you should make it look like the historic building next door. Often developers come to you with a reproduction building, and they're completely bewildered when you say, “That's not what we want” or “Take off this ornamentation and detail.” Otherwise, you're deceiving people with regard to what's old and what's new. Also, you're not giving credibility to contemporary architects, some of whom know how to competently insert a new building because they understand the context. Of course, many don't! And hence, we need guidelines.

**KNOX** It's tricky because it's often a question of degree. In Europe, what many value as heritage is actually nineteenth-century fakery and re-creation. Even in places like Prague, a huge amount has been re-created and is taken at face value as good stuff because it's not outrageous. Where do we draw the line between what's ersatz and what we accept as more or less okay? Where's our threshold? At what point do we get indignant about the quality?

**VINES** That's why we have these charters that we've labored over, such as the Venice Charter, the Burra Charter, and the China Principles. These documents are there to help us with these debates, and they have language that helps describe what it is that we're trying to do.

**MACDONALD** Ideas about this are shifting. With the advent of mass tourism, and with visitors having unpleasant experiences, a more discerning market is emerging of people who want an authentic experience. But for those in mass tourism, there's a perception that it has to be clean and it has to look new. So part of this is educating tourism providers to educate their public about what constitutes a more authentic experience. If you bring in mass tourism—and cities want it because they see the money that comes from it—there's pressure to provide certain services. We need to balance those short-term interests with the long-term resource, which has to be preserved, or in twenty years' time it won't be there, and then you won't be bringing people there. That's one of the tensions that we're confronting.

Join the discussion online at  
[www.getty.edu/conservation/26\\_2/dialogue.html](http://www.getty.edu/conservation/26_2/dialogue.html)

# Key Resources

## Historic Cities

### ORGANIZATIONS AND POLICY DOCUMENTS

**Council of Europe** [www.coe.int/lportal/web/coe-portal](http://www.coe.int/lportal/web/coe-portal)  
**European Charter of the Architectural Heritage** (1975), Amsterdam.  
[www.icomos.org/docs/euroch\\_e.html](http://www.icomos.org/docs/euroch_e.html)

**HELM (Historic Environment–Local Management)**, a program of English Heritage. [www.helm.org.uk/](http://www.helm.org.uk/)  
*Regeneration and the Historic Environment: Heritage as a Catalyst for Better Social and Economic Regeneration* (2005), London: English Heritage. [www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/Regeneration\\_and\\_the\\_Historic\\_Environment\\_2005.pdf](http://www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/Regeneration_and_the_Historic_Environment_2005.pdf)

**ICOMOS** [www.international.icomos.org](http://www.international.icomos.org)  
Charters and other doctrinal text, including:  
*Historic Cities Charter on the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas*, Washington DC (1987); *The Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance* (the Burra Charter), Canberra (1999); and *Xi'an Declaration on the Conservation of the Setting of Heritage Structures, Sites, and Areas*, Xi'an, China (2005). [www.international.icomos.org/charters.htm](http://www.international.icomos.org/charters.htm)

**Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC)** [www.ovpm.org/](http://www.ovpm.org/)  
Conference proceedings of the OWHC World Congresses in Cusco (2005), Kazan (2007), and Quito (2009) are available from the Getty Conservation Institute website ([www.getty.edu](http://www.getty.edu))

**UNESCO World Heritage Centre, World Heritage Cities Program**  
[whc.unesco.org/en/cities](http://whc.unesco.org/en/cities)  
*Recommendation Concerning the Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Areas*, Nairobi, Kenya (1976).  
[www.icomos.org/unesco/areas76.html](http://www.icomos.org/unesco/areas76.html)  
*Vienna Memorandum on World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture: Managing the Historic Urban Landscape*, Paris (2005).  
[whc.unesco.org/uploads/activities/documents/activity-47-2.pdf](http://whc.unesco.org/uploads/activities/documents/activity-47-2.pdf)  
World Heritage Series Number 27, *Managing Historic Cities* (2010).  
[whc.unesco.org/en/series/27](http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/27)

### BOOKS, JOURNALS & CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

*L'arte di curare la città* by Pier Luigi Cervellati (2000), Bologna: Il Mulino.

*Conservation and Sustainability in Historic Cities* by Dennis Rodwell (2007), Oxford: Blackwell.

*The Disappearing "Asian" City: Protecting Asia's Urban Heritage in a Globalizing World*, edited by William Stewart Logan (2002), Oxford: Oxford University Press.

*Élaboration des zones de protection du patrimoine architectural, urbain et paysager (ZPPAUP): Guide pratique* (2008), Paris: Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Direction de l'architecture et du patrimoine, Sous-direction des monuments

historiques et des espaces protégés.  
[www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/organisation/dapa/guidezzaup08bat.pdf](http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/organisation/dapa/guidezzaup08bat.pdf)

*GTZ Toolkit for Urban Conservation and Development* by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Agency for Technical Cooperation), Eschborn, Germany: GTZ.  
[www.udp-aleppo.org/toolkit/index.html](http://www.udp-aleppo.org/toolkit/index.html)

*Il nuovo manuale dell'urbanistica*, edited by Leonardo Benevolo (2006), Rome: Mancosu Editore.

*El paisaje histórico urbano en las ciudades históricas patrimonio mundial: Indicadores para su conservación y gestión* by the Instituto Andaluz del Patrimonio Histórico (2009), Seville: Junta de Andalucía, Consejería de Cultura, Editorial Comares.

*PH cuadernos 22* (2008), issue on theme "Espacio público, ciudad y conjuntos históricos." Journal published by the Instituto Andaluz del Patrimonio Histórico, Seville: Junta de Andalucía, Consejería de Cultura, Editorial Comares.

*Preserving the World's Great Cities: The Destruction and Renewal of the Historic Metropolis* by Anthony M. Tung (2001), New York: Clarkson Potter Publishers.

*RehabiMed Method: Traditional Mediterranean Architecture, part 1, Rehabilitation, Town and Territory* by RehabiMed (2007).  
[www.rehabimed.net/Publicacions/Metode\\_Rehabimed/I.Rehabilitacio\\_Ciutat\\_i\\_Territori/EN/1st%20Part.pdf](http://www.rehabimed.net/Publicacions/Metode_Rehabimed/I.Rehabilitacio_Ciutat_i_Territori/EN/1st%20Part.pdf)

*Safeguarding Historic Urban Ensembles in a Time of Change: A Management Guide* by H. Stovel (1991), Quebec: International Symposium on World Heritage Towns.

*Les secteurs sauvegardés* (2000), Paris: Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Direction de l'architecture et du patrimoine, Ministère de l'équipement, du transport et du logement.

*Small Town Sustainability* by Paul Knox and Heike Mayer (2009), Basel: Birkhäuser.

*Streetwise Asia: A Practical Guide for the Conservation and Revitalization of Heritage Cities and Towns in Asia* by Elizabeth Vines (2005), Bangkok: UNESCO Bangkok.

*L'urbanisme face aux villes anciennes* by Gustavo Giovannoni (1998), Paris: Editions du Seuil.

"Valuing Cultural Heritage Benefits to Urban and Regional Development," in *44th European Congress of the European Regional Science Association: Regions and Fiscal Federalism* by Patrizia Riganti and Peter Nijkamp (2004), Porto, Portugal: University of Porto.

For more information on issues related to historic cities, search **AATA Online** at [aata.getty.edu/nps/](http://aata.getty.edu/nps/)



# GCI News

## Project Updates

### CHINA PRINCIPLES REVISION WORKSHOP

The China Principles project—a multiyear collaboration of China’s State Administration of Cultural Heritage (SACH) in the Ministry of Culture, the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI), and the Australian Heritage Commission—developed Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China, national guidelines for cultural heritage conservation and management that comply with China’s heritage law and reflect its traditions and approaches to conservation. The Principles were issued by China ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) in 2000 with the authorization of SACH. Bilingual publication in Chinese and English and online availability helped to achieve wide dissemination outside of China.

In 2010, after ten years of applying the principles, SACH requested that China ICOMOS revise and expand the thematic content with the participation of the GCI. The aim of the revision is twofold: to update and clarify the principles in light of recent thinking and practice in China, and to better reflect the broad understanding that now prevails as to what constitutes cultural heritage.

In June 2011 the GCI organized a workshop in the United States for six core members of the committee charged with revising the principles. Led by Guan Qiang—head of the department in SACH responsible for sites, monuments, and archaeology and deputy director of China ICOMOS—the group included academics from universities in Beijing and Xi’an and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. The workshop explored the concepts of historic cultural landscapes, living heritage sites, memorial sites, cultural routes, and industrial and scientific heritage through a series of site visits, meetings, and discussions in Hawaii and the Los Angeles and San Francisco areas.



Members of the China Principles revision committee visiting Angel Island State Park in San Francisco Bay, California. Photo: Neville Agnew, GCI.

Among the heritage places selected were examples of twentieth-century industrial heritage adaptively reused (Ford Motor Company assembly plant) and sites of technological and scientific importance (Mount Wilson Observatory and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, both of which serve a scientific and public role while being recognized as historic landmarks). The USS *Arizona* in Pearl Harbor was visited as an example of a memorial that both commemorates and interprets a highly significant site in the nation’s history and memorializes those who died there. Alcatraz Island illustrated aspects of social and cultural history and—like Rancho Camulos, a rancho-era cultural landscape north of Los Angeles—is a place where history and legend merge in the narratives of Hollywood and popular culture. The role of cultural routes in linking the history of large geographical areas was represented by California’s El Camino Real and the twenty-one Spanish-era missions along its route, including Mission San Juan Capistrano, visited by the group. Native Hawaiian heritage sites, historic Chinese American districts, and places of memory, such as the immigration station on Angel Island, are examples of heritage that challenge our distinctions between living and lived heritage.

These and other places visited during the course of the two-week workshop illustrated a range of heritage sites within the context of the history of Hawaii and the West Coast of the United States. They provided examples of varied and complex management structures and methods of protection, interpretation, and visitor management that together served as a stimulus for considering revisions to the Principles, due for completion by the end of 2012.

*For more information on the China Principles project, visit the “Our Projects,” “Current Projects” section of the GCI website.*

### MOSAICON: BULLA REGIA

In spring 2011 the first major campaign of a new mosaics conservation project at the archaeological site of Bulla Regia, Tunisia, was conducted. A major goal of this project is to carry out, for one or more houses that feature mosaics, an in situ conservation program that could serve as a model for conserving and presenting an entire archaeological structure and its architectural decoration. The Bulla Regia project stems from ten years of technician training and mentoring activities undertaken by the GCI and the Institut National

du Patrimoine and is a component of the MOSAIKON project, a collaboration of the GCI, ICCROM (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property), ICCM (International Committee for the Conservation of Mosaics), and the Getty Foundation.

Bulla Regia is one of the major Roman- and Byzantine-period cities of North Africa, located near the Mejerda River in a fertile valley just over the coastal mountains south of the modern port of Tabarka. The site presents impressive remains of public buildings, such as baths and temples, as well as large private houses, famous for their underground rooms built around courtyards containing well-preserved and elegant figurative and geometric mosaics. One of these houses, the Maison de la Chasse, is the focus of the project's mosaic conservation activities. The majority of the conservation work in the Maison de la Chasse will be carried out over the next three years by GCI-trained mosaic maintenance technicians, highlighting their skills and the importance of

the work of local technicians for the successful and sustainable conservation and maintenance of mosaics at major sites like Bulla Regia. The technicians' work will be planned, supervised, and supported by conservator-instructors from the GCI and from consultants.

Another major goal of the project is to develop a conservation plan for the three hundred excavated mosaics at the site. Many of these, after decades of exposure and being walked on, are in very poor condition, with some already beyond repair. The limited human and financial resources of the site necessitate developing and carrying out a prioritized plan to stabilize and protect, through reburial, the majority of mosaics at the site, while conserving and presenting to the public only a selected few. To this end, during the April campaign, field trials of a rapid survey form were carried out in preparation for surveying all mosaics during future campaigns. The condition and significance data collected for each mosaic throughout the survey will provide the basis for decisions to conserve

the mosaics at the site through a combination of reburial, protective sheltering, and maintenance programs. The survey will provide a much-needed planning tool for Bulla Regia and serve as a planning model for other sites in Tunisia and the Mediterranean region with significant collections of in situ mosaics.

*For more information on MOSAIKON, visit the "Our Projects," "Current Projects" section of the GCI website.*

## FROM START TO FINISH: DE WAIN VALENTINE'S GRAY COLUMN

From September 13, 2011, through March 11, 2012, the Getty Conservation Institute is presenting *From Start to Finish: De Wain Valentine's "Gray Column,"* an exhibition focused on the materials and fabrication processes developed by Valentine that made the creation of his large-scale works possible. The exhibition, part of the Los Angeles-wide Pacific Standard Time



Collecting photographic data for the rapid survey at the site of Bulla Regia, Tunisia. Photo: Scott Warren, for the GCI.



An installation view of De Wain Valentine's *Gray Column*. Artwork: © De Wain Valentine.  
Photo: Rebecca Vera-Martinez.

initiative, centers around the 1975–76 sculpture *Gray Column*, which, at twelve feet high, eight feet wide, and about thirty-five hundred pounds, is one of the largest artworks Valentine made with polyester resin, a material he worked with for over a decade.

Valentine was one of a number of artists during the postwar era in Los Angeles who adopted new materials and highly innovative fabrication processes for their work, most of which were being developed for use in the aerospace, boat, automobile, and even surfboard industries. Valentine turned to polyester

resin, a material that could be cast and polished to create sculpture with a stunning, pristine surface. However, the commercially available polyester resins could only be used to create relatively small objects—anything more than a thin layer of resin would crack badly during the casting process because of the high levels of heat released on curing. Unwilling to accept this limitation, Valentine partnered with a local representative from PPG Industries' resins division to modify the company's existing products. With much trial and error, the pair was able to develop a polyester resin

that would enable Valentine's vision: to create, with a single pour of resin, luminous artworks of much larger proportions.

*From Start to Finish* brings to the public's attention the importance of the materials and manufacturing processes utilized in Valentine's innovative work, illustrating the story of how this extraordinary piece of art, *Gray Column*, was made—from the casting of the resin to the extensive polishing required to achieve the final, perfectly smooth finish. The exhibition also explores some of the practical and ethical issues related to the conservation of this contemporary artwork—in particular, the conflict between Valentine's intent and the natural aging phenomena exhibited by the resin.

Available in conjunction with the exhibition is the publication *From Start to Finish: De Wain Valentine's Gray Column* (see p. 31). For more information on the exhibition, see the "Exhibitions and Events" tab on the Getty's *Pacific Standard Time* website, [getty.edu/pacificstandardtime](http://getty.edu/pacificstandardtime).

## MODERN PAINTS: CAPS WORKSHOP

In May 2011 the GCI organized a second workshop entitled "Cleaning of Acrylic Painted Surfaces: Research into Practice." The workshop, held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, was part of the GCI's Modern Paints project and the Science Workshops Series being developed by GCI Education, and it was a follow-up to the first event held at the Getty Center in July 2009.

The aims of this workshop were: to continue the exploration of the specific features of acrylic artists' paints which make this type of material especially difficult to clean in many instances; to update the invited group of participants on the most recent advances in understanding the behavior of acrylic paints and on potentially useful new cleaning products and systems that have arisen out of scientific testing; and to map out a continued dialogue among the participants to open up the possibility of collective assessments of future case studies.

The workshop included several lectures to present an overview of the current knowledge of cleaning acrylic paints, with a focus on the range of recent advances in this area,

with a variety of new cleaning systems being tested. However, the majority of the schedule was spent in the studio with hands-on work to explore the theory and practice of cleaning approaches and to evaluate their applicability and efficacy. Practical work with custom-prepared samples and paint films was supplemented with case studies based on actual paintings. Frequent group discussions provided a forum to explore a diverse range of subjects, including personal treatment experiences, outstanding issues and problems for individuals and the field, and useful priorities for future research.

The event was led by the same six instructors as before: Dr. Bronwyn Ormsby (Tate, London), Richard Wolbers (University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation), Chris Stavroudis (independent conservator, Los Angeles), and Tiarna Doherty (J. Paul Getty Museum), with Tom Learner and Alan Phenix from the GCI. The workshop schedule is available online and provides an overview of subjects covered during the workshop. For more information on the Science Workshop Series, see “Our Projects,” “Current Projects” on the GCI website.



GCI scientist and workshop instructor Alan Phenix at the May 2011 CAPS workshop. Photo: Tram Vo, GCI.



2010–11 GCI Conservation Guest Scholar Thalia Kennedy. Photo: Anna Zagorski, GCI.

## Upcoming Events

### SCHOLAR APPLICATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED

Since 2000 the GCI's Conservation Guest Scholar program has provided an opportunity for leaders in the field of conservation to pursue research that will advance the practice of conservation and contribute new ideas to the field. Successful candidates are in residence at the Getty Center for periods of three, six, or nine months, and they are chosen by a professional committee through a competitive process. For more information on the Conservation Guest Scholars program and information on the application process, click on the Guest Scholars link on the GCI home page ([getty.edu/conservation](http://getty.edu/conservation)). The deadline to apply for the 2012–13 Conservation Guest Scholar program is November 1, 2011.

#### 2011–12 Conservation Guest Scholars

The Getty Conservation Institute is pleased to welcome the 2011–12 Conservation Guest Scholars who will be in residence at the GCI beginning September 2011.

**James Ashby**, independent scholar, Ottawa, Canada. “Meddling with megastructures; developing a heritage conservation approach for building complexes of the late Modern era.” *April–June 2012*

**Tharron Bloomfield**, independent scholar, Melbourne, Australia. “Engaging indigenous participation: toward a more diverse profession.” *September–December 2011*

**Stephen Hackney**, independent scholar; formerly Tate, London. “The interaction between a painting and its immediate environment.” *January–March 2012*

**Yvonne Shashoua**, Senior Researcher, National Museum of Denmark, Kongens Lyngby, Denmark. “Investigation of the effectiveness of adsorbents to inhibit degradation of cellulose nitrate and acetate.” *January–June 2012*

**Heather Viles**, Professor, Oxford University. “Green ruins? Linking biodiversity and cultural heritage conservation.” *September–December 2011*

### GRADUATE INTERN PROGRAM

Applications are now being accepted for the 2012–13 Getty Graduate Internship Program. Graduate internships at the Getty support full-time positions for students who intend to pursue careers in fields related to the visual arts. Programs and departments throughout the Getty provide training and work experience in areas such as curatorial, education, conservation, research, information management, public programs, and grant making.

The GCI pursues a broad range of activities dedicated to advancing conservation practice and education, in order to enhance and encourage the preservation, understanding, and interpretation of the visual arts. Twelve-month internships are available in the Education, Field Projects, and Science departments of the GCI.

Detailed instructions, application forms, and additional information are available online in the “Funding Priorities, Leadership” section of the Getty Foundation website. For further information, contact the Getty Foundation at [gradinterns@getty.edu](mailto:gradinterns@getty.edu). The deadline for applications is December 1, 2011.

## 2011–12 GCI Graduate Interns

### Joyce Farid Azzam

Università degli Studi di Roma La Sapienza,  
Italy  
Middle Eastern Geodatabase for Antiquities  
(MEGA) Project

### Poornima Balakrishnan

University of Bath, UK  
Earthen Architecture Initiative

### Juana Segura Escobar

Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London  
MOSAIKON: Training in Conservation and  
Management of In-Situ Mosaics

### Ana Paula Goncalves

University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia  
Conserving Modern Architecture Initiative

### Barbara Nemeckova

Academy of Fine Arts and Design,  
Bratislava, Slovakia  
Conservation of Photographs Research  
and Training

### Anjo Weichbrodt

University of Applied Sciences and Arts  
of Southern Switzerland, Canobbio  
MOSAIKON: Alternative Backing Methods  
and Materials Project

## UPCOMING STONE CONFERENCE

Columbia University's Historic Preservation Program will host the Twelfth International Conference on the Deterioration and Conservation of Stone—the fortieth anniversary of the conference first hosted by Professor V. Romanovsky in La Rochelle, France. Last held in the United States in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1982, the conference is scheduled for June 4–8, 2012, on the university's campus in New York City. The conference will offer the traditional themes related to stone deterioration and conservation, as well as the following provisional themes: conservation of cast stone; selection of adhesives and pinning materials for the structural repair of stone; laser cleaning in the United States; “greening” stone conservation; approaches to stone conservation in the East and in the West; engineering issues in stone conservation; stone conservation issues in modern and postmodern architecture;

and field evaluation techniques employed by conservators.

Because of its long-term interest in advancing stone conservation, the Getty Conservation Institute will be assisting in the publication of the conference proceedings.

*For further information, please contact George Wheeler at: gw2130@columbia.edu.*

## Recent Events

### GCI WEBSITE REDESIGNED

The Getty Conservation Institute has completed the first phase of a major redesign of its website ([getty.edu/conservation](http://getty.edu/conservation)), which simplifies navigation of the site and adds an improved search capability. These changes, now live, are intended to greatly expand the user's ability to access the site's several thousand web pages.

The resources available on the GCI website include descriptions and videos of Institute projects; over one hundred free publications in PDF, as well as links to purchase GCI books; teaching and learning resources developed as part of GCI courses; full text of GCI newsletter editions dating back to 1991; lectures and conferences, including selected videos of presentations; information on the GCI Conservation Guest Scholar program and graduate internships; and access to other resources, including AATA Online and project bibliographies.

The changes to the website increase the accessibility to this variety of materials through a new navigation structure that better reflects the GCI's work in the areas of built heritage, collections, and conservation education. The new search interface added to the site now enables the website visitor to search the entire GCI site according to thirteen specific core areas of work, which range from archaeological site conservation and management, to artists' materials and collections research, to conservation pedagogy.

We invite you to visit the redesigned website and let us know what you think by writing us at [gciweb@getty.edu](mailto:gciweb@getty.edu).

## POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS ARRIVE

**Marvin Cummings** joined the GCI's Collection Research Laboratory in June 2011 as a three-year postdoctoral fellow studying ceramic slips on Athenian pottery using high-resolution analytical techniques. He received his PhD in materials science from Rice University. This fellowship is funded by a National Science Foundation grant awarded to the GCI to study the chemical and physical makeup of Attic pottery using state-of-the-art high-resolution analytical technologies. The project is a collaboration of the GCI, the Stanford Synchrotron Radiation Lightsource, and the Aerospace Corporation.

**Andrew Lerwill** joined the GCI's Museum Lighting Group in late September as a two-year postdoctoral fellow studying the activation spectra and reciprocity of selected colorants. He received his PhD in conservation science from Nottingham Trent University. While at the GCI he will also assist with research being carried out on LED lighting, microfading research, and other topics focused on preventive conservation.

## 2011 STONE COURSE COMPLETED

In July 2011 participants, instructors, and supporters gathered to celebrate the completion of the Seventeenth International Course on Stone Conservation. Eighteen conservators, architects, geologists, and conservation scientists from



Stone course participants conducting fieldwork in the Non-Catholic Cemetery in Rome. Photo: Scott Warren, for the GCI.

Australia, Belgium, Brazil, People's Republic of China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Georgia, India, Korea, the Netherlands, Palestine, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, and United Kingdom had come to Italy for twelve weeks to study the history, theory, and practice of stone conservation. The course—conducted in Rome at ICCROM—was coorganized by the Getty Conservation Institute and ICCROM.

This was the first time since its inception in 1976 that the stone course was held at ICCROM, which allowed participants to take full advantage of the organization's numerous resources. Participants had direct access to ICCROM's conservation library, and the scientific component of the course was significantly enhanced through regular use of the ICCROM laboratories. The extraordinary architectural heritage of Rome provided a backdrop to discuss a variety of stone conservation problems, and local professionals presented their work on many of the monuments through a series of topical site visits. The Non-Catholic Cemetery of Rome served as the fieldwork site where participants worked to document, assess, and conserve six historic tombs. Fieldwork in the cemetery offered a unique opportunity for many to practice the handiwork of conservation and appreciate the technique and skill required of a field conservator. In the end, the stone course resulted in six conserved tombs and an expanded community of conservation professionals.

## GCI STAFF HONORED

In September, senior scientist Dusan Stulik and research lab associate Art Kaplan were awarded



Dusan Stulik and Art Kaplan of GCI Science with their awards from the Royal Photographic Society. Photo: Jannifer Kaplan.

the Royal Photographic Society's 2011 Colin Ford Award in a ceremony held in London. The award is given annually to honor individuals who have made a significant contribution to photographic curatorship. Stulik is the project leader and Kaplan a team member of the GCI's Research on the Conservation of Photographs project, which has undertaken groundbreaking work to advance techniques for identifying important variations in photographic processes.

Instituted in 2003, this award is named for Colin Ford, the first director of the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television in Bradford, UK (now the National Media Museum).

## US/ICOMOS AWARD FOR GCI

This past June, the GCI was named recipient of the 2011 US/ICOMOS Ann Webster Smith Award for International Heritage Achievement. The award honors "extraordinary and sustained achievement in perpetuating Ann Webster Smith's quest to make the United States a respected partner and trustworthy pillar to support the conservation of cultural heritage in all corners of the world."

The nomination cited the GCI's outstanding leadership record in advancing conservation principles and practices and supporting projects to preserve heritage sites throughout the world and the GCI's mission, which embodies Smith's vision of world citizenship.

The GCI will accept the award in a ceremony to be held in November 2011 in Washington DC.

## VISITING SCIENTIST

**Patrick Degryse**, professor of archaeometry and director of the Centre for Archaeological Sciences at the University of Leuven in Belgium, arrived at the GCI in July 2011 for a five-week visit to analyze Roman vessel glass in the Getty Museum collection and to develop collaborative projects with the GCI's Collections Research Laboratory on the isotopic analysis of museum objects.

# New Publications



## *Facing the Challenges of Panel Paintings Conservation: Trends, Treatments, and Training*

Proceedings of a Symposium at the Getty Center, May 17–18, 2009

Edited by Alan Phenix and Sue Ann Chui

Panel paintings face serious conservation challenges; they are prone to structural issues (warping, cracking, etc.), and the expertise to deal with these problems is limited. In 2009 the Getty Conservation Institute, the Getty Foundation, and the J. Paul Getty Museum organized the symposium "Facing the Challenges of Panel Paintings Conservation" to bring together an international audience of conservators, curators, and scientists to discuss these challenges.

These proceedings present the seventeen papers and fourteen posters from the symposium, which describe new research, perspectives, and approaches to preventive conservation issues and the conservation treatment of panel paintings. These contributions also suggest avenues for future research—treatment and education efforts that may serve to advance the field of panel paintings conservation.

Alan Phenix is a scientist at the Getty Conservation Institute. Sue Ann Chui is an associate conservator in the Paintings Conservation department of the J. Paul Getty Museum.

*This publication is available for download free of charge from the GCI website, on the "Related Materials" page of the Panel Paintings Initiative. A print-on-demand edition may be purchased through [www.lulu.com/product/paperback/facing-the-challenges-of-panel-paintings-conservation-trends-treatments-and-training/16258153](http://www.lulu.com/product/paperback/facing-the-challenges-of-panel-paintings-conservation-trends-treatments-and-training/16258153).*

**The J. Paul Getty Trust**

James Cuno, *President and Chief Executive Officer*

**The Getty Conservation Institute**

Timothy P. Whalen, *Director*

Jeanne Marie Teutonico, *Associate Director, Programs*

Kathleen Gaines, *Associate Director, Administration*

Giacomo Chiari, *Chief Scientist*

Kathleen Dardes, *Head of Education*

Susan Macdonald, *Head of Field Projects*

**Conservation Perspectives, The GCI Newsletter**

Jeffrey Levin, *Editor*

Angela Escobar, *Assistant Editor*

Picnic Design, *Design*

Color West Lithography Inc., *Lithography*

*Conservation Perspectives, The GCI Newsletter* is distributed free of charge twice a year to professionals in conservation and related fields and to members of the public concerned about conservation. Back issues of the newsletter, as well as additional information regarding the activities of the GCI, can be found in the Conservation section of the Getty's website, [www.getty.edu/conservation/](http://www.getty.edu/conservation/).

The Getty Conservation Institute works internationally to advance conservation practice in the visual arts—broadly interpreted to include objects, collections, architecture, and sites. The Institute serves the conservation community through scientific research, education and training, model field projects, and the dissemination of the results of both its own work and the work of others in the field. In all its endeavors, the GCI focuses on the creation and delivery of knowledge that will benefit the professionals and organizations responsible for the conservation of the world's cultural heritage.

The GCI is a program of the J. Paul Getty Trust, an international cultural and philanthropic institution that focuses on the visual arts in all their dimensions.



This publication was printed on Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)–certified recycled paper with vegetable-based inks at a facility using wind power. A donation to the American Forests' ReLeaf program has been made by the Green Print Alliance on behalf of the GCI, for its use of FSC-certified paper.



**The Getty Conservation Institute**

1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 700  
Los Angeles, CA 90049-1684  
Tel 310 440 7325  
Fax 310 440 7702  
[gciweb@getty.edu](mailto:gciweb@getty.edu)  
[www.getty.edu](http://www.getty.edu)

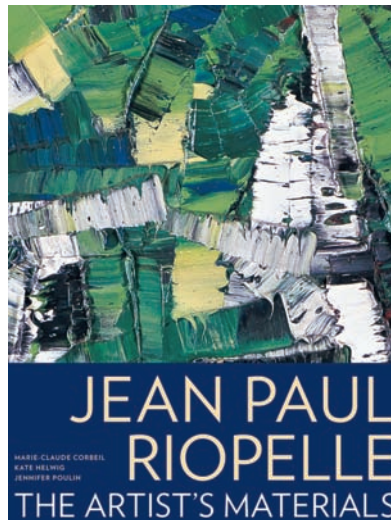


***From Start to Finish: De Wain Valentine's Gray Column***

By Tom Learner, Rachel Rivenc,  
and Emma Richardson

This volume explores the story behind the making of *Gray Column*, from its original concept to its display at the Getty, which marks the first time the piece will be installed as Valentine intended—standing vertically. The book includes a short essay, a conversation with the artist, and a wealth of archival images taken during *Gray Column's* creation. Together they illustrate the extraordinary lengths Valentine went to in developing a material that would enable him to cast colossal pieces, and the efforts needed to achieve their extremely delicate and pristine surfaces. The book includes a thirty-minute DVD that recounts the project through interviews and documentary footage.

*This publication can be ordered online through the Getty Museum Store ([shop.getty.edu](http://shop.getty.edu)).*



***Jean Paul Riopelle***

By Marie-Claude Corbeil, Kate Helwig,  
and Jennifer Poulin

Jean Paul Riopelle (1923–2002) was one of the most important Canadian artists of the twentieth century, yet he is relatively unknown in the United States. He began his career in Montreal in the 1940s, where he played a role in the influential Automatist movement, and he established his reputation in the burgeoning art scene of postwar Paris.

This volume, the second in the Artist's Materials series, grew out of a research project of the Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI). Initial chapters present an overview of Riopelle's life and situate his work within the context of twentieth-century art. Subsequent chapters address Riopelle's materials and techniques, focusing on his oil paintings and mixed-media works and on conservation issues. The preface is by Yseult Riopelle, the artist's eldest daughter and editor of his catalogue raisonné. This first book-length study of the artist in English will interest curators, conservators, conservation scientists, and general readers.

Marie-Claude Corbeil is manager of the Conservation Science Division at the Canadian Conservation Institute in Ottawa. Kate Helwig and Jennifer Poulin are conservation scientists at the CCI.

*This publication can be ordered online through the Getty Museum Store ([shop.getty.edu](http://shop.getty.edu)).*

# CONSERVATION PERSPECTIVES

## THE GCI NEWSLETTER



A 1705 map of Paris by French cartographer Nicolas de Fer. In the second half of the 1800s, Paris was transformed by urban development, and much of its traditional and medieval character was lost with the construction of sweeping avenues and new buildings in its historic center. Photo: Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, Digital ID g5834p ct000646.