

Foreword

It is my pleasure to present the *Proceedings of the Getty Seismic Adobe Project 2006 Colloquium*. The GCI's commitment to the preservation of earthen architectural heritage worldwide has generated training programs, conferences and symposia, research, and field projects that have deepened the understanding of earthen architecture and its particular vulnerabilities and have explored new strategies for its conservation. Research and laboratory testing carried out in the 1990s under the Getty Seismic Adobe Project (GSAP) have advanced the understanding of how adobe buildings perform during earthquakes and have led to the development of a set of protective measures that could be taken to minimize earthquake damage to these structures.

In recent years, destructive earthquakes in regions with significant earthen architectural heritage—particularly the earthquakes in Bam, Iran (2003), and Al-Hoceima, Morocco (2004)—focused renewed attention on the vulnerability of earthen structures during earthquakes. The GCI took particular interest in the outcome of these natural disasters as it sought to evaluate the impact of the GSAP research and to understand why seismic stabilization has not been widely adopted to protect earthen buildings located in seismic zones. In April 2006, the GCI convened a colloquium at the Getty Center in Los Angeles to address these issues.

The Getty Seismic Adobe Project 2006 Colloquium brought together an interdisciplinary group of sixty specialists from around the world to discuss traditional seismic-resistant building techniques and modern retro-

fit methods appropriate for historic and new earthen buildings. The colloquium provided a forum for the presentation of recent work and for in-depth discussion of key issues and future research needs. The meeting offered the GCI an opportunity to gauge the effects of GSAP principles on the field of seismic retrofitting of historic earthen structures and to discuss where and how the GSAP guidelines have been implemented outside the state of California. It also allowed participants to articulate factors that may have prevented wider acceptance and application of these guidelines. The ultimate goal of the colloquium was to identify gaps in our current knowledge, as well as further areas of research to address these gaps.

Much of the world's earthen architecture remains vulnerable to seismic damage. The implementation of existing traditional construction practices and modern retrofit methods, such as those developed by GSAP, can greatly improve the capacity of earthen buildings to withstand earthquakes. The challenge to the conservation community is to disseminate this vital information to those entrusted with safeguarding earthen heritage around the world and to support efforts to implement these practices before another devastating earthquake. We hope that the publication of the *Proceedings of the Getty Seismic Adobe Project 2006 Colloquium* is a step in this direction.

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