

ICOM international
council
of museums
South East Europe
ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Museums, Sustainability & Wellbeing

Celebrating **20 Years** of
the Convention for the Safeguarding
of the Intangible Cultural Heritage
(17 October 2003–17 October 2023)*

16 & 17 OCT 2023
BUCHAREST, ROMANIA

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE ROMANIAN PEASANT
Șoseaua Pavel D. Kiseleff 3, Sector 1, 011341 București



unesco
Intangible Cultural Heritage

Museums, Sustainability & Wellbeing

Celebrating 20 Years of the Convention for the
Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage
(17 October 2003–17 October 2023)*

ICOM South East Europe (ICOM SEE) is pleased to announce its annual conference, which will be held in Bucharest, Romania, on 16 and 17 October 2023. The conference theme is aligned with the International Museum Day 2023 theme 'Museums, Sustainability and Wellbeing'. The aim of the conference is to explore the relationship between museums, sustainability and wellbeing, and to discuss how museums can contribute to a more sustainable and content society, thus including the topics of food heritage, tangible and intangible heritage.

Museums have a unique role to play in promoting sustainability and wellbeing. As cultural institutions, museums have the ability to raise awareness about the importance of sustainable development and to encourage visitors to adopt more sustainable lifestyles – taking it step by step. Museums can also contribute to the wellbeing of individuals and communities by providing opportunities for learning, social interaction, and personal growth.

The conference will provide a platform for sharing best practices, research findings, and innovative ideas related to museums, sustainability, and wellbeing.

* On 17 October 2003, UNESCO adopted the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, which is a great step towards safeguarding and understanding the world heritage. ICOM is an important partner in this initiative and many projects and programmes are dedicated to promoting the understanding of all aspects of ICH, building capacities and developing the idea of ICH (General Conference 2004, IMD, supporting the International Journal of ICH etc.).

ICOM SEE presented a proposal for an official International Intangible Cultural Heritage Day at the 2nd China-Central and Eastern European Countries Expert-Level Forum on Safeguarding of the ICH in Hangzhou, China, in 2018. The forum welcomed this initiative with great support. This topic was further developed at the 2019 ICOM SEE conference in Zagreb titled 'ICH as a Challenge for the Management and Collection Policy'. In 2021, the proposal was sent to the ICOM secretariat for adoption of this international day.

IMPRESSUM

Edited by Urška Purg

Designed by Matija Dronjič

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August – October 2023

Foreword

Dear all,



I am honoured and pleased to be able to welcome you at our first larger ICOM SEE conference after the turbulent pandemic times. As an RA, we were active at the Prague General Conference in August 2022, we met in Brežice, Slovenia, and have been in touch online and through our projects, the meeting in Bucharest, however, gives us a new opportunity for making new connections and also for some of us to meet in person for the first time. I am confident that this will give our museum community new strength and energy. The aim of this annual conference is to get new knowledge and a wealth of great ideas, and most of all to also widen our network, meet colleagues and make friends.

The power of our RA ICOM SEE lies in our network – in all the members that have been supporting this initiative since 2005, and shaping the programmes and projects ever since.

I am grateful to Urška Purg and Matija Dronjić, who have done a lot of hidden and not particularly glamorous work behind the scenes for this conference.

I am also very thankful to the Vice Chair, our host Dr Virgil Stefan Nitulescu, who has welcomed us at the National Museum of the Romanian Peasant. He is one of the pillars of our RA and I am glad to have the opportunity and honour to be in his professional circle and to learn from him as a fellow museum professional and director.

Alenka Černelič Krošelj, ICOM SEE Chair

Conference Programme

Monday, 16 October 2023

10:00–10:30 Welcome

10:30 Welcome speeches by **Alenka Černelič Krošelj** (ICOM SEE Chair), **Virgil Ștefan Nițulescu** (Manager at the National Museum of the Romanian Peasant)



10:45 **Keynote speech:** Sustainable Role of Museums in Society: Dr **Kaja Širok**, ICOM Executive Board member

11:15 Q&A

11:30–12:00 Coffee break



12:00–13:30 **1st Panel: Museums, Sustainability and Wellbeing** (Museums and Sustainable Development Goals), moderator: **Alenka Černelič Krošelj**

12:00 Sustainable Relationships. Building Connections Through Art: **Adela Železnik**

12:15 Exploring the Connection between Museums, Financial Literacy and Sustainability: **Urška Purg**

12:30 Re-exploring the opportunities offered by ecomuseology for wellbeing and sustainability. Ecomuseum and the Association House of Batana: Dr **Tamara Nikolić Đerić**

12:45 A Museum at the Intersection of Public Service and Economy for Sustainable Community Development: **Andreja Matijevc**

13:05 Q&A

13:30–15:00 Lunch break



15:00–16:30 **2nd Panel: Museums and Future Challenges**, moderator: **Urška Purg**

15:00 A Project for the Transformation of the 'Etar' Museum into a Place for Creative Tourism: Dr **Svetla Dimitrova**

15:20 Inclusive, Interactive and Smart Heritage Management: Dr **Goranka Horjan**

15:40 The Chisinau City History Museum and SDG: **Valeria Suruceanu**

16:00 Q&A

17:00–18:30 Museum tour (exhibitions)

19:00 Evening reception

Tuesday, 17 October 2023

Celebrating 20 Years of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (17 October 2003–17 October 2023)

9:00–10:30 ICOM SEE Board meeting (board members & delegates)



10:30 **Workshop:** Leader / Mentor Project – Recommendations:
Dr **Goranka Horjan**



11:00 **Keynote speech:** ICOM SEE RA – Looking Ahead: **Alenka Černelič Krošelj**



11:30 **Keynote speech:** Intangibility – Community – Museumization: A Critical Perspective on Republic of Croatia's Intangible Cultural Heritage on UNESCO's Lists: **Matija Dronjić**

12:00 Q&A

12:15–12:45 Coffee Break



12:45–13:30 **3rd Panel: Make Intangible Tangible for All**, moderator:
Matija Dronjić

12:45 Revitalizing Heritage: Harnessing the 'Digital Brain' for Immersive Representation of Oral History and Disappearing Traditions: **Zhi Ye**

13:05 MUSEUM – an Active Player in the Fields Beyond the 'Museum Land': Dr **Tanja Roženberger**

13:25 The Legend of Veronika of Desinić: An Excellent Example of Intangible Cultural Heritage from the Veliki Tabor Castle: **Jurica Sabol**

13:45 Q&A

14:00–14:30 Overall discussion and conclusion

14:30–16:00 Lunch

16:00 Museum tour (museum storage & archive)

Sustainable Role of Museums in Society

by Dr **KAJA ŠIROK**,
State Secretary,
Office of the
Prime Minister of
the Republic of
Slovenia

Democratic values, which must be fought for and publicly defended on a regular basis, are one of the key missions of museums, as is also stated in the new ICOM definition of museums. In terms of their function and work, museums are not neutral, on the contrary, as they must also publicly answer for their actions and methods of operation. Museums are guardians of cultural heritage in all its forms, including tangible and intangible cultural heritage such as objects and memories. They have the power to decide which historical events will be highlighted or omitted, how they will be presented and how they will thereby contribute to the public debate. This power must be managed very carefully and thoughtfully, responsibly towards all groups, and above all with an emphasis on the interpretations of those who in the past were often overheard or erased from the public eye.

The practices of evaluating, preserving and managing cultural heritage have changed in recent decades, mainly in view of the demands and initiatives for the democratization of museums and awareness of environmental and social responsibility. The concept of 'sustainable heritage', which points to the principles of preservation for future generations, emphasizes the importance of protecting and valuing cultural heritage in ensuring the recognition and respect of the traditions and narratives of different communities, of democracy and new standards.

Are museums ready for change and how can we successfully manage between the needs of our visitors, economic profit and concern for heritage? Can museums be actors of social change?

Keynotes



Looking Ahead

by Dr **ALENKA ČERNELIČ KROŠELJ**, Director of Posavje Museum Brežice, ICOM SEE Chair

RA ICOM SEE was established in 2005 – initially, as an ICOM Europe working group and since 2008, it has been an ICOM Regional Alliance.

This initiative was endorsed by a long-term regional project on the topic of Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage in South East Europe. This project represented a platform for the foundation of an ICOM SEE alliance and was of essential importance for its development and for all further actions (training, education) and events (conferences, meetings, workshops) that took place in the subsequent years and are realized in collaboration with various partners.

In 2020, we celebrated fifteen years of a successful, yet ever-challenging collaboration that follows the adopted mission: – led by ICOM's core values and strategic guidance, ICOM SEE, from its very beginning, has been exploring new strategies for the revitalization of heritage in the region of South-East Europe with the aim of improving conditions in museums and society. As we are all well aware, the 2020–2022 period was challenging, giving us the opportunity to reshape both our work and our values.

The new definition of the museum – one of the most widely used words around the globe – also gives us new guidelines and pace for the future, where strong networks and society work is emphasised.

ICOM SEE shows the dedication to shaping the future of museums in the SEE region by collaborating on several projects in the service of museums with the aim of being empowered to successfully deal with the challenges faced in this day and age. In addition to knowing that our towns are better, richer and more appealing places if our employees, hand in hand with our audiences, are representatives of the communities we serve, it is important to set standards for our work through knowledge, example and skills. An important step towards this is active participation in the following INTERCOM-led projects:

SPECIAL PROJECT 'MUSEUM WATCH GOVERNANCE MANAGEMENT PROJECT', 2021–2022

ICOM SEE collaborated with INTERCOM and CIMAM in implementing the project together with a supporting partner – ICOM Poland – in order to reveal the aspects of museum governance. The project was supported by ICOM as a Special Project and was completed in April 2022.

SOLIDARITY PROJECT 'INTERCOM GLOBAL MUSEUM LEADERSHIP STUDY AND KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM', 2021–2022

The project was supported by ICOM as a Solidarity Project and implemented in cooperation with the following partners: INTERCOM, ICOM Czech Republic, ICOM India, ICOM Zambia, ICOM SEE and ICOFOM.

The project was implemented over a period of 18 months and ended in April 2022.

SOLIDARITY PROJECT 'LEADERSHIP ALERT – CAPACITY BUILDING FOR FUTURE MUSEUM SCENARIOS', 2022

The project was implemented with the following partners: INTERCOM, ICOM Czech Republic, ICOM BiH, ICOM Zambia, ICOM SEE and the Kolkata Centre for Creativity. In addition, a strategic implementation partnership has been established with Fundación Typa from Argentina.

We are honoured that the partners have entrusted ICOM SEE with leading a new successful project – 'EFFECTIVE MUSEUM LEADERSHIP IN MITIGATING RISKS IN CONFLICT AND CRISIS', which started in June 2023 and will be implemented in cooperation with INTERCOM, ICOM Zambia, ICOM Tanzania, ICOM Arab and Fundacion Typa until August 2024.

The project centred around training and capacity building, leadership support, and resource development is an important part of reshaping museum leadership in different regions that can exchange the knowledge and skills and also make a new step towards empowering different parts of the museum sector and the world at large.

It is very important to make sure that geographically smaller regions are strong and incorporated too. As pointed out by many museums – including the museum I come from, Posavje Museum Brežice in a small town on the border between Slovenia and Croatia – “We learn from the past how to be more skilful and brave in the future”. And we can add that the past captured in our heritage is the power for the future and strong networks are a solid foundation for a better world.

Intangibility – Community – Museumization

A Critical Turn on Republic of Croatia's Intangible Cultural Heritage on UNESCO's Lists

by **MATIJA DRONJIĆ**,
Senior Curator,
Ethnographic
Museum in Zagreb

Twenty years after the promulgation of UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, the Republic of Croatia is among the leading countries not only in Europe but the world in terms of the number of successful nominations to UNESCO's registers of intangible cultural heritage. The Republic of Croatia rightfully boasts about a total of eighteen items on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, one on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding and two more on the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices. Also, it should be noted that the Republic of Croatia has been involved in six relevant multinational nominations in the past ten years, joining efforts to safeguard heritage in the narrower (for example, Lipizzan horse breeding traditions) and broader regional (for example, Mediterranean diet or the art of dry stone walling, knowledge and techniques), as well as global contexts (falconry, a living human heritage).

Although these processes focus on identifying community needs – in accordance with UNESCO's formative documents and action plans – one of the key interests is precisely their affirmative presentation in the museum context in the broadest sense (from reinventing existing institutions' contents to establishing new specialized institutions for a certain type of intangible cultural heritage, such as interpretation centres). Building upon the problematization of the discourse that revolves around the 'need of the community' notion, the presentation critically observes the role of the tradition bearers and practitioners in the processes of museumization of the intangible cultural heritage in the Republic of Croatia within a decade, with special reference to specific phenomena on UNESCO's registers. In addition, it proposes a safeguarding evaluation model that aims to reconcile the relationship between prestige that emerges from international recognition and the need for one, i.e. one that balances between community members who are identified as tradition bearers and practitioners and the communities' superstructures such as their representative bodies and institutions.

Sustainable Relationships. Building Connections Through Art

by **ADELA
ŽELEZNIK**, MA,
Senior Curator,
Moderna galerija
(MG+MSUM)

(Art) museum is no longer a rigid keeper of (art) objects but rather a vivid institution building on meaningful relationships through these objects. Galleries and museums should be socially aware institutions, acting primarily in their local environments, with a mission to provide knowledge and wellbeing to everyone.

Moderna galerija is a Slovenian national institution for modern and contemporary art. It was founded in 1947 and from 2011 it operates on two locations, museum of modern art, MG+ in the centre of Ljubljana, and Museum of Contemporary Art Metelkova (+MSUM), a bit out of the city centre, included in the museum plaza, established in the 1990s. Both venues keep a collection, a national one at the MG+ and the international collection Arteast 2000+ at the +MSUM. Educational and public programmes are the link between the two buildings and conceived around artworks in these collections as well as temporary exhibitions. We believe that art is a powerful tool to discuss complex questions about life and that we cannot do this alone but through dialogue, play, taking care of each other and our environment.

In my talk I am going to present two case studies of Moderna galerija's long term educational practices, carried out in collaboration with our neighbours: PovezujeM/ Tivolski ustvarjalni krog (Connected through Tivoli Creative Circle) is a vacation programme for children, conceived by the Moderna galerija and four other museums in the neighbourhood of MG+; the other is a "Metelkova walk", a programme on art in a public space, conceived by us and other art institutions in the neighbouring Metelkova area, stimulated by Dan Perjovschi's drawing on the façade of +MSUM.

1st Panel

Museums, Sustainability and Wellbeing
(Museums and Sustainable Development Goals)



Exploring the Connection between Museums, Financial Literacy and Sustainability

by **URŠKA PURG**,
Museum Councillor,
Bankarium,
Slovenian Banking
Museum

Bankarium, the Slovenian Banking Museum, strives to bring the significance of cultural heritage related to money, banks, and banking practices closer to the public. By presenting the impact these elements have had on our lives throughout their more than 200-year history, including the present, Bankarium aligns with its mission to contextualize the historical value of national heritage and actively contribute to societal improvement through improvement of financial literacy by forming partnerships with relevant institutions in this field. Banking museums have a unique opportunity to foster a connection between financial literacy and sustainability. These museums serve as educational platforms where visitors can learn about the history, functions, and importance of the banking sector. By integrating financial literacy and sustainability into their exhibits and programmes, banking museums can raise awareness about the interplay between financial decisions, personal well-being, and sustainability.

Financial literacy is a fundamental aspect of financial capability, playing a pivotal role in influencing various dimensions of human life and functioning. In line with the theme of the International Museum Day (IMD) 2023, Bankarium is actively working to embody the IMD's message and is utilizing cultural heritage as a medium to foster personal financial education. By doing so, the museum connects its dedication to national heritage preservation with visitor well-being and aligns with the objectives of the United Nations, and the European Union's Recovery and Resilience Plan through its participation in the Financial Literacy for Adults 2022–2024 project group. Additionally, Bankarium actively engages in partnerships to enable the enhancement of individuals' and society's quality of life.

This paper will showcase the Museum's areas of focus and explain why museums, especially Bankarium, are ideal places to conduct financial literacy education, fostering a connection between cultural heritage, financial literacy, and overall societal well-being and sustainability.

Re-exploring the opportunities offered by ecomuseology for wellbeing and sustainability

Ecomuseum and the Association House of Batana

by Dr **TAMARA
NIKOLIĆ ĐERIĆ**,
Senior Curator,
Independent
Curator and
Heritage
Consultant

The Batana Ecomuseum is a community-based heritage practice inscribed in the UNESCO Register of Good Safeguarding Practices as a project that not only strongly supports the transmission and safeguarding of local intangible cultural heritage but has a beneficial socio-economic impact on a wider community of stakeholders.

By presenting the main ideas, values and concrete projects led by the Ecomuseum over the last 19 years, the paper discusses the social role of (eco)museums as well as the role of ecomuseums within the broad concept of sustainability.

The starting point is the exploration of benefits evidenced in bottom-up heritage approaches as a means of strengthening democratisation and active citizenship and contributing to wellbeing that goes beyond participation in museum programmes and puts communities in the position of decision-makers.

Furthermore, the paper explores the contribution of ecomuseology to a sustainable future, arguing that sustainability can be best achieved through intersectoral collaboration.

A Museum at the Intersection of Public Service and Economy for Sustainable Community Development

by **ANDREJA
MATIJEVC,**
Posavje Museum
Brežice

At a regional, micro level, museums are inextricably linked with the environment and cultural landscape. The museums' success depends on their engagement and commitment to follow contemporary social movements and use heritage to look for and offer solutions for sustainable regional development. The paper uses the Posavje Museum Brežice as an example to present the role a regional museum occupies within the economy.

In Slovenia, the Brežice Water Tower is a one-of-a-kind piece of architecture, attracting both domestic and foreign visitors. The content presented in the tower's interior offers insights into the water supply-related heritage and highlights the importance of responsible and sustainable water consumption in modern times, with an emphasis on the youth's active learning and creativity. The water tower features a visitor centre, a shop offering souvenirs and local products, and a cafe in the adjacent building, thus contributing to greater visibility, more successful marketing and sales of local artisans, growers and tourism providers. It is a popular meeting place for locals and tourists alike.

As part of such collaborations, the ever-changing society, which is largely globalised, shows the strength of each individual 'cell' and proves how invaluable all things local are. And when it comes to value estimation, museums play a very important role.

A Project for the Transformation of the 'Etar' Museum into a Place for Creative Tourism

by Dr **SVETLA DIMITROVA**,
Professor and
Director of
the Regional
Ethnographic
Open-Air
Museum 'Etar'

The project led by the Municipality of Gabrovo for the 'Etar' museum, to the value of EUR 5 million, will be completed in 2023. Its purpose is to create a material base and a new exhibition venue for the realization of creative practices, connected mainly with crafts and home occupational works.

As part of the project, a big building is being converted from an administrative office into a museum centre for exhibitions and work with various audiences. A new children's centre for activities aimed at children between 4 and 12 is being built. Reconstruction and conservation of all water-related technical equipment is being carried out to provide the possibility of demonstrating occupational activities. A residential centre for the work of students and various artists is being created. Temporary exhibition spots that will provide the possibilities for creative workshops and studios are being set up. The hotel at the museum is being overhauled and reorganized. A new greenhouse, a new stage and artistic lighting for immovable cultural property are being constructed. A navigation system for improving the way visitors are directed around the museum (a miniature model, totems, sign boards, maps) is being developed and applied.

The aim is to heighten the interest in the museum, to improve its competitive power, to make it possible to apply the new principles of museum studies and to guarantee its sustainable development in the next decade.

2nd Panel
Museums and Future Challenges



Inclusive, Interactive and Smart Heritage Management

by Dr **GORANKA HORJAN**, Director of the Trakošćan Castle

The development of new intangible cultural heritage concepts for visitors' rests on an elaborate methodology and an engaged-visitor principle. Heritage phenomena mapping and adaptation for museum project needs are important for museums. Additionally, it is necessary to work on the visibility of the activities and the target group of visitors and users. The promotion of heritage should be accompanied by a new communication strategy as part of which online advertising opportunities are enhanced by the synergistic effect of marketing through selected associations and other collaborators. It is planned to present the campaign of the museum project, which is built on the prefix RE-, which suggests a change in behaviour. Each project activity can be summarized under one RE+VERB phrase (RETHINK, REINVENT, REBREND, REFUEL, RECYCLE etc.).

The project triangle of improving the quality of life through a green and inclusive approach is presented, and the main components are the art of living, mobile, healthy, and mentally active users who contribute to the well-being in their environment through education and participation in heritage activities. Museums will thus use intangible heritage to strengthen the destination, introduce new offerings and work on the activation of a partnership that seeks to overcome the consequences of the crisis and insufficient resources. A common strategy of smart destination management is being designed to influence stakeholders who are seen as key partners for future sustainable development. The goal is to create a range of museum services that includes intangible heritage and brands the museum as an actor that is green, smart and sustainable.

The Chisinau City History Museum and SDG

by **VALERIA SURUCEANU**,
Director of the
Chisinau City
History Museum

The Chisinau City History Museum is one of the most important cultural resources for the development of the Chisinau municipality. The Chisinau City History Museum is located in a historical building, in 'the Water Castle', which was inscribed in the list of monuments protected by the state. The building was constructed in 1892 as part of the city water supply system. In 1977, the tower was damaged by an earthquake, reconstructed between 1980 and 1983, and converted into the Chisinau City History Museum. Today, the 'water castle' building host a permanent exhibition dedicated to the history of the Chisinau city from the 16th century to the late 1980s.

The UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society (2015) highlighted the strong connections between museums and sustainable development: "Museums as spaces for cultural transmission, intercultural dialogue, learning, discussion and training, also play an important role in education (formal, informal, and lifelong learning), social cohesion and sustainable development."

In 2022, at the ICOM General Conference, a new definition of museums was adopted, which also emphasizes the role of museums for sustainable development. In connection with the new museum definition, it is very important for the Chisinau City History Museum to declare itself, first of all, as a cultural, scientific and educational centre with wide access to collections and scientific research. The museum should be not only a collection of unique artefacts and original objects of the past, but also a modern place for communication and personal development. It is important to start the process of selecting and evaluating a new museum brand and identity. At this stage it is necessary also to strengthen the technical base. The second priority is to attract new segments of the audience and expand the range of museum services. The next important goal is to develop human resources by involving employees in project activities that can provide them with an additional source of income and improvement of their skills. To successfully carry out the main tasks of the museum, a close collaboration and a sustainable partnership of the museum with educational and research institutions, cultural institutions, ministries, non-governmental organizations and local authorities is necessary.

Revitalizing Heritage: Harnessing the ‘Digital Brain’ for Immersive Representation of Oral History and Disappearing Traditions

by **ZHIYE**, a PhD researcher at King’s College London

This study seeks to explore how ‘digital brain’ technology can be harnessed to render intangible heritage—such as oral history and vanishing practices—more tangible and accessible in museum settings. While audio-visual and interactive exhibits have been commonly used for this purpose, they may not fully encapsulate the depth and richness of intangible heritage. ‘Digital brain’ technology, with its potential for multi-sensory engagement and immersive experiences, presents an innovative solution to this challenge.

The study centres around how ‘digital brain’ technology can help create interactive, immersive exhibitions that effectively and respectfully represent intangible heritage. It also investigates how museums can co-create these experiences with community members and cultural practitioners to ensure authenticity and respect for the culture being represented.

A review of the literature and case studies is employed to understand the principles and methodologies of incorporating ‘digital brain’ technology in immersive exhibits focusing on intangible heritage. The research outcomes aim to motivate museum professionals and communities utilizing ‘digital brain’ technology, fostering its application and development in making intangible heritage tangible for all visitors.

3rd Panel

Make Intangible Tangible for All



MUSEUM – an Active Player in the Fields Beyond the ‘Museum Land’

by Dr **TANJA ROŽENBERGAR**,
Museum
Councillor, Slovene
Ethnographic
Museum

In building new understanding, value and relevance of different manual skills in the digital era, museums have a very important role – not only at the level of museum documentation and museums’ educational programmes, but also when it comes to sharing museum sources with other professions from the arts, healthcare, social fields, etc.

In the digital era, materially empty spaces not only attract, but also confuse the modern man. Revived handicraft and other manual skills help us deal with the hardships of the digital world. These contents could be a place for our safety, trust, creativity and communication. There are more and more works of art that are based on artisanal skills, as well as creative socially engaged groups that express themselves through the media of traditional handicraft techniques, and these skills are highly desirable in a therapeutic manner. This is why museums should be (more) active players – also in the fields beyond the ‘museum land’.

The Legend of Veronika of Desinić

An Excellent Example of Intangible Cultural Heritage from the Veliki Tabor Castle

by **JURICA
SABOL**, Director of
the Museums of the
Croatian Zagorje

The Veliki Tabor Castle, one of the recognizable symbols of continental Croatia, is located in the north-western part of Croatia. The construction of the late medieval noble town was started by the Counts of Celje in the mid-15th century, and completed by the Rattkay family. Today, the Veliki Tabor Castle has the highest protection category and is a very popular cultural and tourist destination that attracts up to 30,000 visitors annually. Numerous stories and legends are associated with Veliki Tabor, and the most famous is certainly the oral tradition about the unhappy love between a member of the lower nobility Veronika of Desinić and the nobleman Frederick II of Celje. The Ministry of Culture recognized this oral tradition as an intangible cultural heritage and it was entered in the Cultural Heritage Register of the Republic of Croatia.

The story is based on real historical events and historical figures who lived in the first half of the 15th century. In the first half of the 19th century, the story of the unhappy love between Veronika and Frederick provided inspiration for many works of art, and thus various theatre plays were performed, novels were written, and the beautiful Veronika was often the main subject of famous painters at the beginning of the 20th century. Today, oral tradition is promoted at the Veliki Tabor Castle Museum through many educational-museum workshops, art contests for elementary school children, puppet shows, and recordings of radio and TV shows. In this way, intangible heritage is passed on to younger generations, and awareness is raised about the protection of oral tradition as part of the cultural identity of the Desinić region. With the help of multimedia installations, the story of Veronika and Frederick is presented in a modern way, and the video-mapping projection of the 'Legend of Veronika of Desinić' actively protects heritage, which certainly contributes to the sustainability of cultural tourism.

Leader / Mentor Project – Recommendations

by Dr **GORANKA
HORJAN**, Director
of the Trakošćan
Castle

Leader / Mentor Project has been building on the INTERCOM global research in which two-fold assistance models for leaders were suggested. One model offered regional forums as a platform for interaction that could gather competent leaders in the region willing to share their experience. This is seen as a suitable model for regional alliances and they can offer short-term training models suitable for those with a very busy agenda. The other model is peer-to-peer mentorship which asks for a longer commitment and can be supported by initiatives developed by different NGO's like the "Creative Mentorship" from Belgrade whose guidelines were presented during the implementation of the Leader/Mentor project. Mentorship was detected as an important tool for the museum leaders in the South-East Europe region since the countries share similar experiences dating back to the socialist past and international mentoring is thus possible and desirable.

Workshop





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