

The Best in Heritage © • Dubrovnik • Croatia

in partnership with Europa Nostra (Hague, Netherlands)

Under the patronage of ICOM, UNESCO (BRESCE), Europa Nostra, ICOMOS, ICCROM, WFFM, IFLA and City of Dubrovnik

The Best in Heritage /Europa Nostra - Excellence Club - crème de la crème in museums, heritage and conservation Exponatec, Cologne, 17. - 20. Nov. 2009.

The growing variety of national and international awards and prizes for excellent achievements are the reality of the competitive world we live in. **Professionals concerned with Heritage have learned that they too have to establish and develop mechanisms of benchmarking in the converging heritage world.** Presenting prize winning projects together results in the transfer of high quality professional experience, demonstrates multidisciplinary insight, especially in understanding the public relevance of projects and their contribution to development and gives inspiration.

"The Best in Heritage" was initiated eight years ago as an annual presentation of a handpicked choice of museum, heritage and conservation projects, awarded the previous year, to an international professional public. It has been a story of success, crowned by a partnership with Europa Nostra (also representing EU awards) and supported by the European Commission. As well as the steady increase of participants (135 in 2009, from 27 countries), this conference is shared by the wide distribution of an excellent interactive DVD featuring the entire conference and by a steep rise of visits to the, now renovated website: www.TheBestInHeritage.com

All awarded projects are nominated for our **Excellence Club**. Once shown in Dubrovnik, and if decided by our Board, these projects become **Excellence Club members**, - so far about 150 of them. Our endeavour receives constant patronage and support from the most prestigious professional heritage organisations worldwide. UNESCO Venice office and the City of Dubrovnik, who are both our patrons and sponsors, are paramount in our efforts to remain successful. The Ministry of

Culture of Croatia, Dubrovnik Museums and ICOM Croatia are our precious local supporters.

It was a matter of the same sensitivity to excellence that brought Dubrovnik and Cologne together. EXPONATEC, Cologne, is a first class fair for museums, conservation and heritage, and our cooperation happened as a matter of shared interest. The concern with excellence generates sympathetic allies. The mutual freedom of the participants proves the possibility of coexistence between activities driven by different missions, such as the symbiosis of culture and travel in the successful discipline of cultural tourism. New links from culture and heritage to development and commerce are delicate and challenging and require excellent, well-informed, and well-equipped professionals.

We therefore ask some of our best presented projects from Dubrovnik to join us in Cologne, bringing the publications which they enthusiastically produce. Our spacious stand together with that of Europa Nostra, contains the **Excellence Club**, - the examples of best practice. From this year on, we intend to turn our stand into a functional digital studio where we shall hold interviews and panel discussions with representatives of the projects presented, and with some outstanding participants of the Fair. The passing visitors will either stop and take part or will simply be reminded that all that our presenters convey, be it in Dubrovnik or in Cologne, is easily accessible at our interactive web site. Soon it will contain 130 hours of on-line, live testimonies to the professional excellence in heritage based professions. We see our stand also as a lively meeting place of concerned professionals of high quality from all over the world.

See you at Exponatec, stand K-70 / 71.