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|   **PRESS RELEASE** |  |

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**Rehabilitation of Kılıç Ali Paşa Hamam in Istanbul**

**wins a Europa Nostra Award 2017**

**The Hague, 5 April 2017** – The rehabilitation of **Kılıç Ali Paşa Hamam in Istanbul** has received a **Europa Nostra Award 2017**. The public announcement was made today by Europa Nostra, the leading heritage organisation in Europe. The Europa Nostra Award is presented to outstanding achievements from European countries not taking part in the EU’s Creative Europe programme. This award-winning achievement from **Turkey** will be honoured – together with this year’s winners of European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Awards – at a ceremony to be held on 15 May in the historic city of Turku, Finland. The renowned opera singer and President of Europa Nostra **Plácido Domingo** will host the European Heritage Awards Ceremony together with the European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport **Tibor Navracsics**.

The objective of this restoration project was to reinstate the structural, material and formal characteristics of this Sinan-period architecture that was lost over the preceding centuries and to revive and update its functional purpose, that is, as a traditional Ottoman bathhouse. Like many medieval structures in Istanbul, the Kılıç Ali Paşa Hamam has suffered extensive damage from earthquakes, especially to the dome, as well as subsequent negative effects from unsuitable maintenance measures.

Alongside the necessary repair of the seriously damaged surfaces and the fortification of structural elements, a key task in this restoration project was the identification of original elements of the Sinan design which had been partially or entirely obscured by later additions. These later additions, generally having been incorporated to cater to the changing demands of the Hamam’s customers, had negatively affected the rich spatiality of the original design. Wooden dressing rooms and lockers which were added to a previously open platform enveloped the entire interior space and hindered the view of the main dome. In the restoration, these later additions were removed and replaced with a non-obtrusive design solution to meet the needs of the customers and to preserve the architectural integrity of the space.

The Jury noted that “*this living heritage site has been revitalised with a combination of expertise in architecture and craftsmanship. It is a prime example of an Ottoman bath and the success of this project has considerable power of example”*.

The project was initiated and privately funded by the owner, **Mr. Nureddin İren**, whose desire to return the Hamam to its original function in a respectful way was implemented by **Mr. Cafer Bozkurt** and his architectural team.

“*This is an important building by the iconic architect Mimar Sinan in central Istanbul which has been expertly restored with the use of traditional techniques and crafts, especially in the restoration of the dome. There is fine attention to detail evident throughout this project, for example, in the restoration of the original shoe lockers in the* frigidarium, *which speaks volumes about the dedication of the team to restoring the Hamam as close to its 16th-century interior as possible”*, added the jury.

The winners of the [EU Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Awards 2017](http://www.europanostra.org/) – which are presented to projects from European countries taking part in the EU’s Creative Europe programme – were also announced today.

The European Heritage Awards Ceremony will take place in the late afternoon on 15 May at St. Michael’s Church in Turku. Around 1,200 people, including heritage professionals, volunteers and supporters from all over Europe, will participate in the event. The winners will present their exemplary heritage accomplishments during the Excellence Fair on 14 Mayat the Sigyn Hall of the Turku Music Conservatory, and take part in various events at the [European Heritage Congress in Turku](http://europanostra.org/european-heritage-congress/) (11-15 May). Organised by Europa Nostra, the Congress will provide an inspiring platform for networking and debating the latest European developments related to heritage with a special focus on the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018.

Background

[Europa Nostra](http://www.europanostra.org/)is the pan-European federation of heritage NGO’s which is also supported by a wide network of public bodies, private companies and individuals. Covering more than 40 countries in Europe, the organisation is the voice of civil society committed to safeguarding and promoting Europe’s cultural and natural heritage. Founded in 1963, it is today recognised as the most representative heritage network in Europe. **Plácido Domingo**, the world-renowned opera singer and conductor, is the President of the organisation.

Europa Nostra campaigns to save Europe's endangered monuments, sites and landscapes, in particular through ‘The 7 Most Endangered’ programme. It celebrates excellence through the EU Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Awards. It also contributes to the formulation and implementation of European strategies and policies related to heritage, through a structured dialogue with European Institutions and the coordination of the European Heritage Alliance 3.3.

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