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**EU Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Award 2017 for**

**two projects in the UK: Cromford Mills and SAMPHIRE**

**Brussels / The Hague, 5 April 2017** - The European Commission and Europa Nostra revealed today the winners of the 2017 European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Awards, Europe’s top honour in the heritage field. The 29 laureates from 18 countries are being recognised for their notable achievements in conservation, research, dedicated service, and education, training and awareness-raising. Among this year’s winners are **two outstanding projects from the United Kingdom**: the rehabilitation of **Cromford Mills: Building 17, Derbyshire**; and **SAMPHIRE: Maritime heritage project in western Scotland**. Independent expert juries examined a total of 202 applications, submitted by organisations and individuals from 39 countries across Europe, and chose the winners.

Citizens from around the world can now [vote online](http://vote.europanostra.org/) for the Public Choice Award and rally support for the winning project(s) from their own or another European country. Voters have the chance to win a trip for two to Finland and be a special guest at the Awards Ceremony that will be held in the historic city of Turku on 15 May. During the ceremony, the seven Grand Prix laureates, each of whom will receive €10,000, and the Public Choice Award winner, chosen from among this year’s winning projects, will be announced.

*"I congratulate all the winners. Their achievements demonstrate once again how engaged many Europeans are in protecting and safeguarding their cultural heritage. Their projects highlight the significant role of cultural heritage in our lives and our society. Especially today, with Europe facing many big societal challenges, culture is vital in helping us to raise awareness of our common history and values and to foster tolerance, mutual understanding and social inclusion. The European Year of Cultural Heritage in 2018 will be an ideal opportunity to focus on what binds us together as Europeans - our common history, culture and heritage. The European Commission will continue to support this prize and other heritage projects through our Creative Europe programme,”* said **Tibor Navracsics**, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport.

*“I warmly congratulate this year’s winners and pay tribute to all those who made these exceptional achievements possible, thanks to their formidable talent, passionate commitment and great generosity. They are now among a select group of some 450 remarkable accomplishments awarded by Europa Nostra and the European Commission in the past 15 years. All our winners demonstrate that heritage is a key tool for sustainable economic development, social cohesion and a more inclusive Europe. EU leaders should seize the historic opportunity of the European Year of Cultural Heritage in 2018 to recognise the multiple benefits of heritage and its fundamental value in bringing countries, communities and cultures together in Europe and beyond,”* stated **Plácido Domingo**, the renowned opera singer and President of Europa Nostra.

The winners of the EU Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Awards 2017 will be celebrated during a high-profile event co-hosted by EU Commissioner Navracsics and Maestro Plácido Domingo commencing in the late afternoon on 15 May at St. Michael’s Church in Turku. The European Heritage Awards Ceremony will assemble some 1,200 people, including heritage professionals, volunteers and supporters from all over Europe as well as top-level representatives from EU institutions, the host country and other Member States.

The winners will also present their exemplary heritage accomplishments during the Excellence Fair on 14 Mayat the Sigyn Hall of the Turku Music Conservatory, and participate 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.

Applications for the 2018 edition of the Awards can be submitted from 15 May to 1 October 2017 through the dedicated [website](http://www.europeanheritageawards.eu/).

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**2017 Award Winners**

*(listed alphabetically by country)*

**Category Conservation**

▪ St. Martin’s Chapel in Stari Brod, near Sisak, CROATIA

▪ Baroque Complex and Gardens in Kuks, Hradec Králové region, CZECH REPUBLIC

▪ Ancient city of Karthaia, Island of Kea, GREECE

▪ Bastion of the Grand Master's Palace in Rhodes, GREECE

▪ White Pyramid in Rome, ITALY

▪ The King’s Road across Filefjell, NORWAY

▪ The Clérigos’ Church and Tower in Porto, PORTUGAL

▪ Cultural Palace in Blaj, Transylvania region, ROMANIA

▪ Cap Enderrocat Fortress, Mallorca, SPAIN

▪ Roof for the ruins of the Monastery of San Juan in Burgos, SPAIN

▪ Cromford Mills: Building 17, Derbyshire, UNITED KINGDOM

**Category Research**

▪ Rode Altarpiece Research and Conservation Project, Tallinn, ESTONIA

▪ ‘Carnival King of Europe’, San Michele all’Adige, ITALY

▪ ‘Museum Piranesi’, Milan, ITALY

▪ Bosch Research and Conservation Project, ‘s-Hertogenbosch, THE NETHERLANDS

**Category Dedicated Service**

▪ Mr. Ferdinand Meder, Zagreb, CROATIA

▪ Mr. Jim Callery, County Roscommon, IRELAND

▪ The Norwegian Lighthouse Society, NORWAY

▪ Mr. Zoltán Kallós, Transylvania region, ROMANIA

**Category Education, Training and Awareness-Raising**

▪ Erfgoedplus: Online heritage platform, Hasselt, BELGIUM

▪ Centre of Visual Arts and Research, Nicosia, CYPRUS

▪ Educational programme for Czech cultural heritage, Telc, Vysočina region, CZECH REPUBLIC

▪ Paavo Nurmi Legacy project, Turku, FINLAND

▪ Heritage Crafts Initiative for Georgia, Tbilisi, GEORGIA

▪ Cultural Heritage and Barrier-free Accessibility project, Berlin, GERMANY

▪ *ilCartastorie*: Storytelling in the archives, Naples, ITALY

▪ Jewish Cultural Heritage: Educational programme, Warsaw, POLAND

▪ Advanced Master in Structural Analysis of Monuments and Historical Constructions, European programme coordinated in Guimarães, PORTUGAL

▪ SAMPHIRE: Maritime heritage project in western Scotland, UNITED KINGDOM

A Europa Nostra Award is also presented to remarkable heritage projects from two European countries not taking part in the EU Creative Europe programme.

Category Conservation: Kılıç Ali Paşa Hamam in Istanbul, TURKEY

Category Research: Philippe Stern’s Collection of Timekeepers, Geneva, SWITZERLAND

**Cromford Mills: Building 17, Derbyshire**

Cromford Mills is a large complex of industrial mills set in the beautiful Derwent Valley in Derbyshire, a UNESCO World Heritage site. It consists of 20 buildings, the earliest and most substantial of which were built commencing in 1771 by Sir Richard Arkwright, the inventor and entrepreneur. Arkwright, with his patented water frames, revolutionised the manufacture of cotton from a small cottage industry and created what is now regarded as the world’s first successful factory at Cromford Mills.

The project to recover Building 17 of the complex was initiated by **The Arkwright Society**, a small voluntary organisation. The organisation bought the building and secured substantial funds from the **Heritage Lottery Fund** and the **European Regional Development Fund** to redevelop this Grade I listed site into a gateway to the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site and a centre for creative industries on the upper floors.

“*This project represents a good adaptive reuse of a notable site of industrial heritage and is a key component of an important ensemble of buildings. Had it been demolished or left to further deteriorate, it would have been a scar on this World Heritage site”*, said the jury.

The building, the largest of those in the complex, was in a very poor state due to a complete lack of maintenance and the unsuitable interventions added by a previous owner. These additions compromised the structural integrity of the building and presented a great challenge.

The conservation works were further complicated by the extensive contamination of the site due to its previous use as a colour pigment works. The dedicated team were forced to resolve this and the other constraints on the conservation with ingenuity and strategic phasing. The jury noted this aspect of the project, stating that “*the adaptive reuse of this building, which incorporates respectful and reversible interventions, addressed problems of contamination with innovative research. The result is a building with a social function that offers the perfect gateway to the World Heritage site of the Derwent Valley Mills*”.

The jury noted the high quality of the visitor centre and stated that *“the interpretive activities and materials for children are a great addition to the site and its educational function is significant for the entire World Heritage site”.*

**SAMPHIRE: Maritime heritage project in western Scotland**

In exploring beneath the waves of Scotland’s West coast, the team behind **SAMPHIRE - Scottish Atlantic Maritime Past: Heritage, Investigation, Research & Education** has added a rich new layer to the fabric of Scotland’s history. The holistic approach of this project was impressive and left no stone unturned in investigating new approaches to safeguarding our shared underwater heritage.

The project is the result of a collaboration of **researchers from Scotland, Spain and Australia** which sought to investigate how community engagement in West Scottish coastal communities could increase our understanding of archaeological sites off the Scottish coast.  Its unique approach has fostered dialogue between professional maritime archaeologists and local community members including divers, fishermen, historians and others with knowledge of the seafloor in their area.

SAMPHIRE’s well considered methodology is repeated on an annual basis. The team dedicatedly researches, raises awareness and distributes their findings both online and on the ground in local communities through focus groups and print materials. They achieve this through contact with museums, community halls, dive clubs and harbour offices.

“*A major part of this project’s success was the community’s choice of their own ‘local champion’, giving ownership of the heritage to these local communities. The project gave these participants the skills and confidence to participate in a major archaeological project which may otherwise have been viewed as being in the inaccessible domain of specialists*”, stated the jury.

In the period since the project began three years ago, over 100 new sites have been revealed and recorded thanks to their mammoth efforts. This exceptional figure is telling of the effectiveness of SAMPHIRE’s approach and makes a strong case for engaging communities as a means to accurately identify, record and protect archaeological sites, maritime or otherwise. “*We appreciated this project’s commitment to engaging and learning from local communities and the way in which they have shown that working together can lead to great discoveries*”, added the jury.

“*This project was not just a survey but also contributed to identity building in these West Scottish communities and encouraged the participants to act as stewards of their heritage. It has had a far reaching and long lasting effect in inspiring consciousness of heritage sites and, impressively, informing fishing practices where known drowned heritage assets are located*. *SAMPHIRE’s methodology has a great degree of transferability and is an excellent model for similar sites throughout Europe*”, emphasised the jury.

Background

**EU Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Awards**

The [European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Awards](http://www.europeanheritageawards.eu/) was launched by the European Commission in 2002 and has been run by Europa Nostra since then. It celebrates and promotes best practices related to heritage conservation, research, management, voluntarism, education and communication. In this way, it contributes to a stronger public recognition of cultural heritage as a strategic resource for Europe’s economy and society. The Prize is supported by the **Creative Europe** programme of the European Union.

In the past 15 years, organisations and individuals from **39 countries** have submitted a total of **2,720 applications** for the Awards. Concerning the number of entries by **country**, **Spain** is first in the ranking, with 498 projects, followed by the **United Kingdom**, with 286 applications, and **Italy**, with 278 entries. With regard to the **categories**, Conservation has had the most submissions (1,606). Next comes Education, Training and Awareness-Raising (457), then Research (340), and, finally, Dedicated Service to Heritage (317).

Since 2002, independent expert juries have selected **455 award-winning projects** from **34 countries**. In line with the number of entries, **Spain** tops the list with 61 awards received. The **United Kingdom** is in second place with 60. **Italy** comes third (37 awards), **Germany** fourth (29 awards), and **Greece** fifth (27 awards). Regarding the **categories**, Conservation has the most winners (267) followed by Dedicated Service to Heritage (67), Education, Training and Awareness-Raising (65), and, lastly, Research (56).

A total of **95 Grand Prix** of €10,000 have been presented to outstanding heritage initiatives, selected from among the award-winning projects.

The EU Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Awards has further strengthened the capacity of the heritage sector in Europe by highlighting best practices, encouraging the cross-border exchange of knowledge and connecting various stakeholders in wider networks. It has also brought major benefits to the winners, such as greater (inter)national exposure, follow-on funding and increased visitor numbers. In addition, it has raised awareness of our shared heritage amongst the general public while highlighting its intrinsic European character. The Prize is therefore a key tool to promote Europe’s heritage.

**Europa Nostra**

[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.

**Creative Europe**

[Creative Europe](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/index_en.htm) isthe new EU programme to support the cultural and creative sectors, enabling them to increase their contribution to jobs and growth. With a budget of €1.46 billion for 2014-2020, it supports organisations in the fields of heritage, performing arts, fine arts, interdisciplinary arts, publishing, film, TV, music, and video games as well as tens of thousands of artists, cultural and audiovisual professionals. The funding will allow them to operate across Europe, to reach new audiences and to develop the skills required in the digital age.