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# WHAT'S NEWS

THE ICOMOS-EPWG AFRICA MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## IN THIS SPECIAL EDITION

Editorial (p.2)

Meeting with H.E. José Maria Neves, President of the Republic of Cape Verde (p.3)

5 exhibitions to see in our African museums in 2023 (p.5)

Interview with Edmond Moukala (p.8)

Highlights on the Youth Museum Forum "The New African Museum" (p.12)

5 questions to Maria Manjate (p.15)

Portr'Elles: Dr Silvie Memel-Kassi, women of month (p.18)



# EDITORIAL

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Alyssa K. Barry

Dear Readers,

The month of May has a special significance for us as emerging African heritage professionals.

First of all, we are celebrating the first anniversary of this Newsletter. A year ago, we set ourselves the challenge of publishing a new issue each month that would represent our work and dedication to the heritage cause of our continent. In one year, we have taken up the challenge, working hard to shed light on African heritage sites, assets, initiatives, institutions and actors. This thirteenth issue therefore has a special flavour for us, and gives us the opportunity to thank once again all those who have agreed to contribute to this beautiful project since its inception, but also to recall the essential role of ICOMOS in highlighting emerging heritage professionals on a global scale.

A year ago, thus, we chose to launch the Newsletter on the occasion of the celebration of the African World Heritage which takes place on May 5 since its adoption by UNESCO in 2015. The 5th of May is also the World Portuguese Language Day. Portuguese is spoken in 5 African countries known as PALOP (Portuguese-speaking African countries), for which this language is often a challenge for the application of international texts such as the World Heritage Convention...

For this special issue, we wanted to highlight African heritage by giving a special place to PALOPs. To this end, we have had the great honour of giving the floor to His Excellency José Maria Neves, President of the Republic of Cape Verde, who was recently named Champion for the preservation of African cultural and natural heritage by the African Union. For this occasion, we are also pleased to present a Portuguese version of this issue.

Edmond Moukala, currently Head of the UNESCO Office in Mali and who actively participated in the adoption of the symbolic date of 5 May, is also part of this month's issue, which also features, as usual, young professionals, initiatives and heritage assets across our continent. As we also celebrate International Museum Day on 18 May, we also offer an overview of some of the current exhibitions in several museums across the continent, and look back at the youth vision for the "New African Museum" in the framework of the Youth Museum Forum.

So, in this very special month, I wish us all a happy celebration of Africa's world heritage and of museums, and a long life to our beloved Newsletter !

Enjoy your reading !

# SPECIAL TALK CONVERSATION WITH H.E. JOSE MARIA NEVES

by Alyssa K. Barry



**H.E. JOSE MARIA NEVES**  
PRESIDENT OF CAPE VERDE

- Excellency, you have been President of the Republic of Cape Verde since 17th October 2021. What place does cultural heritage have in the policy you are pursuing in your country?

I often like to say that the apparently simplest questions are very often the most complex. One could consider that cultural heritage is only made up of the historical remains that are found in a given territory, and of cultural manifestations such as performing arts, songs and dances. But cultural heritage is also a collective way of life and art conditioned and stimulated by the physical, economic and social environment. Languages, beliefs, know-how, customs, creative singularities, ways of thinking and acting, the feeling of belonging to a group, the desire to preserve a natural and social living environment and to transmit the wealth of collective memory from generation to generation make cultural heritage the expression of a way of life between the heritage of the past and the environment that surrounds us.

As President of the Republic, I always strive to encourage awareness of the richness of collective memory and the importance of its preservation: this is the only way to know our history better, to reclaim it in order to share it with the world. I inscribed my magistracy under the seal of influence diplomacy: through dialogue and consultation, we can all work together to improve the legal, administrative and even social framework of heritage protection. I am in permanent dialogue with the actors of environmental preservation, notably the NGOs and institutions linked to the preservation of the natural environment, the biosphere and marine life, but also the municipalities, associations, communities and individuals who value and revitalize our tangible and intangible cultural heritage. This allows us, all together, to see and learn about the good safeguarding practices that are being carried out, to know the difficulties of certain properties, to identify those that are in danger and to analyze the emergency measures that must be adopted.

Another action I am undertaking is cultural diplomacy. When I travel abroad or receive foreign visitors, I do not fail to make known the richness of this heritage.

- You were appointed by the African Union on 23 February this year as "Leader for the preservation of African cultural and natural heritage". What does this title mean?

The title of Champion for the Preservation of African Cultural and Natural Heritage that has just been awarded to me follows that of the late President of Mali, Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta, who was appointed in February 2019 as the "African Union Champion for Arts, Culture and Heritage".

My mission is to coordinate, together with the Heads of State and Government of the continent, African institutions, international and consultative organizations for the preservation of natural and cultural heritage, actions aimed at better safeguarding and enhancing the collective memory of Africa.

The African Union has always had as its primary concern the safeguarding and enhancement of African culture. However, in the last decade, the emphasis has been placed on the creation of institutions to better accompany the structuring projects of heritage preservation. Thus, the African World Heritage Fund was created to improve the quality of World Heritage applications and to strengthen the capacities of African human resources to better preserve cultural wealth. In 2021, the African Union chose as its theme: "Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers to build the Africa We Want".

The African continent has an extremely rich and diverse natural and cultural heritage with famous treasures such as the pyramids of Egypt, the monuments of Zimbabwe and the mausoleums of Timbuktu, etc. The richness of Africa's intangible heritage (music, languages, songs, dances, traditional tales, culinary arts, pharmacopeias, etc.) plays a fundamental role in building strong cultural identities and shared values across the continent. Africa is also rich in landscapes and exuberant biodiversity which make it a privileged destination for international tourism.

However, this exceptional potential hides many weaknesses reflecting vulnerabilities in both physical integrity and management of assets and practices. Last year, UNESCO celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the 1972 Convention and yet Africa has not yet passed the mythical milestone of 100 sites inscribed on the World Heritage List, i.e. for a whole continent, less than 2 sites per year. Indeed, Africa currently has 98 sites inscribed, i.e. 8.49% of the World Heritage List, but 15 sites on the List of World Heritage in Danger, i.e. 30% in sub-Saharan Africa.

In the name of and with the support of the Heads of State and Government, I commit myself to working relentlessly for the affirmation of a positive image of Africa, so that, in accordance with our common and pan-African vision, we will resonate more with the world. There are many examples of how concerted efforts are still needed to ensure that Africa's rich cultural and natural heritage contributes effectively to building the Africa We Want, as expressed in our Agenda 2063.

- As we celebrate African World Heritage Day on 5th of May, what is your vision for Africa's cultural and natural heritage?

Indeed, since 2015, Africa's cultural and natural heritage, both tangible and intangible, has been celebrated around the world, to raise awareness of the importance of its preservation and the challenges that the continent is constantly facing for its conservation.

Many international organizations are joining UNESCO in strengthening measures to preserve Africa's natural and cultural environment.

The African continent possesses a landscape, ecosystems and natural resources that are essential not only for the survival of its people but also for the humanity of which it is the cradle. In this environment, women and men have developed traditional skills and technologies, as well as lifestyles that constitute the exceptional wealth of the continent's natural landscape and cultural heritage. They are also strategic assets for sustainable development and for reducing inequalities between rural and urban populations.

In all African countries, efforts have been made to recognise and protect these natural and man-made assets. These efforts range from simple popular and/or ritual celebration for cultural expressions to local, community, municipal, regional, national, transnational, trans-border or trans-regional classification for both nature and culture. Thus, all African countries have places, natural sites, rituals and cultural expressions protected for future generations.

Enhancing this wealth is a categorical imperative for sustainable development, poverty reduction, peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Africa. With such potential, if we dare to combine our efforts and knowledge, we can build a solid foundation for inclusive economic progress.

- The 5th of May is also World Portuguese Language Day. What is the place of PALOPs (African countries with an official Portuguese language) in the preservation of cultural heritage on the continent? What place will you give to these countries during your mandate as Leader for the preservation of African cultural and natural heritage?

I would like to remind right away that Equatorial Guinea has joined Angola, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Sao Tome and Principe in April 2021. Only three countries in this group - Angola, Cabo Verde and Mozambique - have properties on the World Heritage List. Looking at the Tentative List of countries, the three countries that have an inscribed property have a fairly large inventory while Guinea Bissau has only one inventoried property, the Bijagos Archipelago Biosphere Reserve, Sao Tome and Principe has two properties, a natural site and a series of roças as a cultural property, and Equatorial Guinea has not yet listed any natural or cultural site for inscription.

Several individual African countries have more sites inscribed than the PALOPs as a whole. Today, the PALOPs need to be given a boost, with capacity building for human resources and training in the preparation of nomination files in the languages they speak best, to improve Africa's presence on the World Heritage List.

I regularly meet with the Presidents of all these countries with whom we share many historical and cultural realities. Together with my Portuguese-speaking counterparts, I intend to plead with the international institutions and the advisory organizations for greater consideration of our countries in the framework of the safeguarding of natural and cultural heritage.

- What is your message to African emerging heritage professionals, and to the continent's youth in general?

It is interesting to see today, with the debates on global warming, the awareness and commitment of the youth for the preservation of the environment. As such, I think this global framework is stimulating for young professionals who are committed to protecting Africa's natural and cultural heritage. Young people who are active in reforestation, the protection of forest parks and protected areas, the monitoring of rare birds or marine turtles as in Cabo Verde, are more and more numerous.

It is also young people who are constantly recreating and revitalizing the intangible cultural heritage and perpetuating traditions through dance, song, music, painting, sculpture, crafts, pharmacopeia, culinary arts, fashion, etc.

Valorising the natural and cultural heritage is a categorical imperative for sustainable development, poverty reduction, peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Africa. With such potential, if we dare to combine our efforts and knowledge, we can build a solid foundation for inclusive economic progress.

Today, more than 62% of Africa's population is under the age of 30. They are an inescapable force for the preservation and transmission to other generations of our natural and cultural heritage. The establishment of a synergy between the creative economy, culture, crafts and tourism can create new development opportunities and give hope to the youth.





# DID YOU KNOW ? 5 EXHIBITIONS TO SEE IN OUR AFRICAN MUSEUMS IN 2023

*Florentine Okoni*

For the “Did you know?” section of this edition, we have decided to shed light on a few museums of our beloved African continent. Indeed, in May we not only celebrate African World Heritage Day on May 5, but also the International Museum Day on May 18. We first had the idea of telling the story of the creation of the oldest museum in Africa to finally decide to highlight some exhibitions that take place on the continent in 2023. In order not to focus only on the past of the museums of our continent, nor to only project themselves towards their future and to forget the present moment, it seemed more interesting to share some information on exhibitions which are currently in progress.

This research was not an easy task. There are exhibitions in Africa, many in art galleries, but also in private museums and national museums. What is less obvious is finding information on national museum exhibitions when you are not there. Communication is often done in the local press, through posters in town and sometimes less on websites or social networks. However, our African museums are dynamic and we would be happy to have your feedback on the exhibitions you have seen this year, which have challenged you, inspired you or which you would simply like to communicate about.

The exhibition “Art of Benin yesterday and today: from restitution to revelation. Contemporary component” which invites you to discover the diversity of Benin art. Mohammed VI Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Rabat, Morocco. From January 18 to May 15, 2023.



The new permanent exhibition of the National Museum of Ethiopia in Addis Ababa retracing the archaeological history of Ethiopia inaugurated in September 2022.

The exhibition “Africa and artists”

Organized as part of the month of heritage in Algeria and whose theme focuses on the African depth of Algerian cultural heritage National Museum of Fine Arts, Algiers, Algeria. From April 18 to May 18, 2023.



The exhibition “When We See Us: A Century of Black Figuration in Painting” which focuses on black self-representation and celebrates global black subjectivities and black consciousness from a pan-African and pan-diasporic perspective. Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, Cape Town, South Africa. From November 20, 2022 to September 3, 2023



The “Lamba” exhibition which showcases the social uses of the lamba fabric in its historical and anthropological dimension, Madagascar Photography Museum, Antananarivo. From April 2 to September 2023



# SENIORS' VOICE

*interviewed by Florentine Okoni*

*Currently Head of the UNESCO Bamako Office and UNESCO Representative in Mali, Mr. Moukala, a Congolese sinologist, holds a master's degree in law and a civil engineering degree. He specializes in the areas of heritage preservation, sustainable tourism, capacity development of local populations and dialogue among civilizations. Mr. Moukala has been working for UNESCO for more than 25 years, 11 of which in Asia as part of the "Silk Road" projects, more specifically in China, Mongolia and Japan. From 2004 to 2010, he worked in the Intercultural Dialogues Division where he initiated and organized the commemoration of the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade and slavery in the United Kingdom (2007) and the United States (2008). He developed with the Department of History of Harvard University, the first Atlas of Scientific and Cultural Interactions between Africa and the Americas by Afro-descendants. He also contributed to the implementation of UNESCO's action plan for the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures and the promotion of dialogue among civilizations. From 2014 to 2020, as Head of the Africa Unit of the World Heritage Center, he coordinated the implementation of the 1972 World Heritage Convention in 46 African countries. It is in this context that he initiated the African World Heritage Day. Mr. Moukala undertakes research in the fields of diplomatic relations between Africa and China, Africa and its development potential and the comparative study of the case of Chinese economic development and its added value for the development of Africa. He is the editor and co-editor of several publications, including the one on heritage preservation and sustainable development.*

**1- After a 30-year career in the field of heritage safeguarding for peace and development, including 25 years with UNESCO, notably as Head of the Africa Unit of the World Heritage Centre, then currently as Head of the UNESCO Office in Mali, what have been the highlights of your career?**

Ecclesiaste tells us "What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun." Indeed, the testimonies of the past are sources of inspiration for our future in order to take advantage of their achievements while avoiding the mistakes of the past.

Thus, ignorance of one's past can inevitably lead us to disasters of the future. But the mastery of ancestral knowledge allows us to face the future with more assurance.



**Edmond Moukala**

Likewise, one cannot stifle the authenticity of history, for what has been cannot be eclipsed perpetually. Therefore, the highlights of my career were the discovery of the breadth and richness of peoples culture (Africans, Americans, Asians and Europeans).

I started my career in China where I worked, from 1998 to 2003, along the Silk Roads for the safeguarding of cultural heritage, in particular on the sites of Chinese dynasties (for example the ground soldiers in Xi 'an, the palace of Genghis Khan Karakorum in Mongolia and the Goguryeo empire in Korea, Chinese royalties). These experiences allowed me to appreciate the thousand-year-old richness of Asian civilizations and their contributions to the affirmation of their identities.

I was happy to discover that the African presence was recorded in the cave paintings of the tombs of Chinese royalty. This aroused my curiosity to understand the scope of the impact of African civilization in the world.



**Culture is a source of identity and cohesion for communities and peoples. It is their collective memory. It forges, through time, the national identity as much in the political and diplomatic dimension as in the economic fields.**



When I arrived at UNESCO headquarters in Paris in 2004, I was appointed responsible for the commemoration of the bicentenary of the abolition of slavery in France and overseas countries. I organized the bicentenary of the abolition of slavery in the United Kingdom (London) in 2007 and the United States of America in 2008.

These experiences allowed me to develop, in collaboration with the History Department of Harvard University, the first atlas of interactions between Africa and the Americas. This atlas has made it possible to appreciate the scientific, cultural, religious, economic and military contributions of Africans to the socioeconomic development of the Americas.

It is always in the same spirit and in order to allow African youth to appreciate their history that I have developed the concept of the "Annual Celebration of African Heritage" in order to allow youth around the world and African youth in particular to better appreciate their history, to be ambassadors of their culture and heritage and to design a future rooted in their identity. Thus, it is with the support of my hierarchy that May 5th was proclaimed "African World Heritage Day".

Today, as UNESCO Representative in Mali, my plea is to promote peace in Mali by relying on its cultural wealth, a vector of peace, social cohesion and development.

2- It was under your mandate as Head of the Africa Unit of the World Heritage Center that the African World Heritage Day was proclaimed by the 38th session of the General Conference of UNESCO (November 2015). Can you tell us more about the importance of this proclamation for Africans?

As you know, Africa is the cradle of Humanity. Its natural and cultural diversity is matched only by its historical depth. Rural or urban African territories constitute the essence of African cultural identity through the socio-cultural, economic and spiritual exchanges that have taken place there over time and which have given rise to unique creations in the world that are expressed through their intangible and tangible heritage. The enhancement of this rich culture and heritage, within local, departmental, sub-regional and regional communities which represent new spaces of coherence, reinforces their cultural dimension and undoubtedly brings an improvement to living conditions of African populations.

Nevertheless, these natural and cultural heritage resources today face many challenges related to armed conflicts (linked in part to the rise of violent extremism), poaching, the lack of appropriate management of spaces and to the adverse effects of climate change. Despite the undeniable qualities and commitments made, significant efforts are needed to protect these resources. The strategic action of local authorities gives little place and interest to these invaluable resources of natural and cultural heritage.

Such disinterest in one of the most important reservoirs of cultural diversity is surprising. In addition, we must remember that those who should be most concerned about their heritage, local people and communities and their spokespersons, are not. It is time to make the necessary efforts to improve the protection and enhancement of heritage by African local authorities. Several local authorities have not yet realized the existence of the potential offered by the cultural assets and biodiversity that abound in their territories. Concerns about history and heritage and its valuation were seen as a luxury compared to development challenges such as food, health and other basic needs. Thanks to the global mobilization led by UNESCO, the evolution of people's perception today indicates that the safeguarding and enhancement of heritage contribute to development and the fight against poverty. The classification, protection and enhancement of exceptional cultural and natural properties play a major role in the sustainable development of a country.

As such, it is also not debatable that cultural heritage contributes to the strengthening of local pride, to the dignity of peoples and to the development of a sense of belonging, not to mention the creation of jobs and opportunities as well as income-generating activities. These aspects of local heritage management policies must be explained to African local authorities and must be the subject of training for local elected officials and their staff and awareness programs for the general public. Local elected officials and their staff must develop their capacities in the inventory, publication, archiving and safeguarding of heritage, as well as its presentation to the public.

***What was your role in the proclamation of the African World Heritage Day and its importance for African heritage?***

Heritage, in all its forms, attests to human experience and aspirations. It is a shared experience that reinforces cultural identity while highlighting the similarities and particularities of cultural identities.

For me, African heritage offers the sons and daughters of Africa and the youth a unique opportunity to discover themselves. It makes them more vigilant and ensures an intergenerational sense of belonging and ownership of African World Heritage, highlighting its potential as a source of creativity and socio-economic development and the status of men and women as promoters of heritage in our societies.

It was in the years 2014 to 2019, as Head of the Africa Unit at the World Heritage Center and within the framework of the 2063 Agenda "the Africa We Want", that I completely fulfilled my role and duty to find solutions adapted to UNESCO's mandate for a better appropriation of African World Heritage by Africans and the international community. It is with this resolute attitude that I coordinated with determination and efficiency the implementation of the 1972 World Heritage Convention in 46 African countries. A godsend for me to initiate "World Heritage Day for Africa", celebrated on May 5th.

This annual program allows the African public and the international community to visit natural parks, buildings, monuments and heritage sites, most of which remain inaccessible to the public. With the aim, among others, of:

- (a) raising awareness among African citizens on the wealth of African World Heritage;
- (b) creating a favorable climate for the appreciation of the diversity of African World Heritage;
- (c) preventing the destruction of heritage in all its forms;
- (d) informing young people, the public and political authorities about the need to protect World Heritage against new threats;
- (e) offering training sessions relating to the preservation and promotion of heritage to social, cultural and political actors;
- (f) inviting Africa to identify solutions to the economic and socio-political challenges it faces in the field of African World Heritage conservation.

3- What were the significant actions of the UNESCO Office in Mali in the field of World Heritage under your mandate?

Since 2020, the UNESCO Office in Mali has been strengthening the promotion and enhancement of Malian culture through intersectoral activities:

- *Safeguarding ancient manuscripts*

Within the framework of the Safeguarding of Ancient Manuscripts, UNESCO organized, through the Memory of the World Programme, an international consultation on the theme: "Safeguarding, accessibility and promotion of ancient manuscripts of the Sahel", held from 22 to 24 January 2020, in partnership with the Ministries of National Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research and that in charge of Culture. At the end of the three-day workshop, some sixty experts from Africa, America, Asia and Europe formulated recommendations whose implementation should make it possible to ensure better exploitation of ancient manuscripts and promote access to knowledge through scientific research in the Sahel.

In 2021, UNESCO supported the production of a National Policy Framework Document for the Safeguarding and Management of Mali's Ancient Manuscripts. This framework document was validated by experts on December 17, 2021 under the leadership of the National Directorate of Libraries and Documentation.

Through the implementation of the project "Creation of a D.U.T training course on ancient manuscripts", UNESCO has, for more than 2 years, strengthened the capacities of 30 teachers from the Ahmed Baba Institute of Higher Learning and Islamic Research (IHERI-ABT) in the fields of digitization, codicology and conservation of ancient manuscripts, among others, and equipped the Institute with state-of-the-art technical equipment and educational tools.

As part of training and raising awareness on ancient manuscripts, UNESCO implemented the project "Preservation and accessibility of ancient manuscripts in Mali"; this support made it possible to:

- Prepare and submit in November 2022 to the Memory of the World Program Mali's quadrennial report on the preservation, promotion and accessibility of documentary heritage, including digital heritage for the period 2019-2022 ;
- Provide the higher education sector with innovative programs on the knowledge of ancient manuscripts and design models for continuing education and diplomas. In total, five models have been developed, two of which relate to diploma training and three to continuing education.

In 2022, an international consultation on the economy of culture through ancient manuscripts in Mali brought together around thirty national and international experts. At the end of the meeting, a declaration known as the "Ségou Declaration" on the management of ancient manuscripts was drafted in the form of recommendations.

- *Rehabilitation and enhancement of protected buildings in Timbuktu*

In March 2021, a ceremony brought together Mr. Xing QU, Deputy Director-General of UNESCO; Colonel Assimi GOITA, Vice-President of the Transition; Mr. Moctar OUANE, Prime Minister, Head of Government; Mr. Malick DIAW, President of the National Council of the Transition (CNT); Mr Chile Eboe-Osuji, President of the International Criminal Court; Mrs. DOUMBIA Mama KOITE, President of the Board of Directors of the Fund for the Benefit of Victims; Madame Fatou BENSOUA, Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court; members of the Government; Ambassadors and Representatives of International Institutions in Mali; Technical and Financial Partners; and the representatives of the local authorities and communities of Timbuktu, to receive from the hands of the International Criminal Court (ICC) the symbolic Euro on behalf of the international community within the framework of collective reparations in the Al Faqi case for the prejudice suffered following the destruction of the mausoleums and the secret door of the Sidi Yahia mosque.

As part of the implementation of this ICC order, UNESCO, in collaboration with the Fund for the Benefit of Victims and the Government of Mali through the Ministry of Crafts, Culture, Industry Hospitality and Tourism, is responsible for the implementation of the cultural heritage restoration system that the Office implements through the project "rehabilitation and enhancement of protected buildings in Timbuktu".

It is within this framework that the capacities of one hundred and twenty (120) traditional masons and other actors in the value chain of the conservation and management of protected buildings in Timbuktu have been strengthened on the issues of the conservation of built cultural heritage (October 12 and 13, 2022) and on improved earthen architecture techniques (December 13, 14 and 15, 2022).

Three technical studies guided the development of annual work plans; they also revealed that it was also necessary to plant trees, hedges, as well as solar electrification on the intervention sites.

The finalization of the reconstruction work of the Al Farouk monument and the redevelopment of the Place de l'Indépendance in Timbuktu. The inauguration took place during an official ceremony in June 2022 under the chairmanship of the Minister of Crafts, Culture, Hotel Industry and Tourism in the presence of several Technical and Financial Partners including the EU, MINUSMA, UNESCO and the Embassy of South Africa. It should be noted that the reconstruction of this square is part of the major rehabilitation program that UNESCO is implementing.

In 2020, with funding from the European Union, the Office carried out a study on the economic and social value of cultural heritage to measure the impact of the crisis on the communities of the sites of Timbuktu, Djenné, Gao and Bandiagara.

- *Reconstruction and rehabilitation of the built heritage of Bandiagara*

In 2021, the Office acquired funding from the International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Areas (ALIPH), for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the built heritage of Bandiagara. The general objective of the project is to provide shelter and strengthen the resilience of the populations affected by the destruction of the World Heritage of Bandiagara. The following achievements were recorded:

- The availability of a technical study which assessed the needs relating to the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the built heritage of the Cliffs of Bandiagara in the villages of Sobane-Da, Ogossagou, Djombolo and Tégourou. The study made it possible to list 71 houses, 51 male granaries, 27 female granaries and 57 sheds to be rebuilt or rehabilitated instead of 70 houses, 51 male granaries, 26 female granaries and 57 sheds in the four villages listed in the project ;
- The reconstruction of 15 male granaries in Sobane-Da;
- Carrying out an awareness campaign on the culture of peace and conflict resolution in the villages and good office missions in the villages;
- Contribution to the resilience of site communities through the provision of cereals.

From 2020 to 2023, in Timbuktu and Djenné respectively, the capacities of hundreds of young masons from the sites of Djenné, Timbuktu, Gao and the Bandiagara cliffs (Dogon Country) have been strengthened in earthen architecture techniques.

#### 4. What is your vision for World Heritage in Mali and Africa for the coming years?

As you know, culture is a source of identity and cohesion for communities and peoples. It is their collective memory. It forges, over time, the national identity both in the political, diplomatic and economic dimensions. Through its contribution to creativity, it contributes to the emergence of open, inclusive, pluralistic and resilient communities.

The cultures of the world in their diversity give meaning to their exchanges and their mutual inspiration. They require, through international cooperation, that each side recognizes the distinct cultural dynamics of the other. It invites everyone to study the cultural dynamics of the other in order to acquire a mutual understanding of traditions, history, languages and way of life in order to guarantee a balance in relations, a guarantee of mutual enrichment.

I am convinced that the commitment and motivation of a people to promote their culture undoubtedly depends on the positive perception they have of their history and their cultural geniuses as expressed in the tangible and intangible heritage (monuments, mausoleums, languages, etc.). This implies the necessary effort to get rid of all the falsifications, deformations and biased interpretations that its past contains to be reinvested in a new strategic vision essential for the development so desired to achieve their optimal efficiencies.

As Professor Iba Thiam from Senegal pointed out: "Indeed, the greatness of people, like the vitality of its culture, depends on their ability to manage their memory. The generational duty to remember people is the successful prerequisite of any cultural policy. It is the foundation of national solidarity, the guarantee of its power, the guarantee that openness to others can be achieved, without complexes, ostentation or absorption."

My vision in this context is that States, as well as subregional, regional and interregional institutions, including development banks, must join their efforts for concerted action to support, on the one hand, the development of the cultural sector as a major asset for economic and social development, on the other hand, the integration of culture, from a cross-cutting perspective, in the broad spectrum of sustainable development. For, in addition to being an autonomous policy domain, culture cuts across the broad spectrum of public policy, acting as a catalyst and driver to achieve a variety of development perspectives. For sustainable and inclusive development, climate action, quality education for all, civil society engagement, social justice and strategic partnerships, integration of culture in policies, strategies, plans, programs, projects and development processes offer a multitude of opportunities for communities. This transversal dimension of culture echoes the logic of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which promotes a holistic approach to sustainable development through its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its 169 targets.

In short, protecting and safeguarding the world's cultural and natural heritage and supporting creativity and cultural sectors are fundamental to meeting the challenges of our time: the fight against the effects of climate change, poverty, including inequalities (the digital divide) and ever more complex emergencies and conflicts. UNESCO is convinced that no development can be sustainable without a strong cultural component. Indeed, only a human-centered approach to development based on mutual respect and open dialogue between cultures can lead to lasting peace.

## 5. What is your message for African youth?

My message is that of Mr Federico Mayor, former Director-General of UNESCO; I paraphrase his remarks: to occupy the place that our nations claim in the current millennium, populations and civilizations must, without further delay, reconstitute their civilizational heritage in all its authenticity, to revisit it, to make it known and loved, because it represents their irreplaceable contribution to the heritage of the Universal. It is the nourishing sap from which the elites and all social strata must drink, if they want to find the best answers to the challenges of the present and those of the future, on the one hand, and on the other hand, strength, vitality and the confidence necessary to take part in the debates where the destiny of the world is sealed.



# HIGHLIGHTS ON THE YOUTH MUSEUM FORUM - "THE NEW AFRICAN MUSEUM"

Alyssa K. Barry

The poster is for a webinar titled "LE NOUVEAU MUSEE AFRICAIN" / "THE NEW AFRICAN MUSEUM". It is scheduled for 28 April 2023 / 28th April 2023, from 14h-16h / 2PM-4PM (GMT-1). The poster includes a QR code for scanning, with the text "SCAN ME" and "ID de réunion : 357 085 5776" and "Code secret : 44549273". The speakers listed are Betty Karanja, Conservatrice Principale aux Musées Nationaux du Kenya, and Dr. Ribio Nzeza, Directeur du Département Culture à l'Université Senegalese. Logos for EPA, Youth Heritage Africa, and ICCROM are visible in the top right corner.

"The future African museum must be "alive" to boost endogenous development and support collective achievement initiatives while integrating new technologies."



Uriel Ngnigepaha



Laurine Azebaze

"My conception of the African museum of the future is a living space. A space for cultural transmission and retransmission. An environment that combines both tradition and modernity."

"The museum of the future is a networked museum where every property of every country becomes a movable asset of the African cultural heritage that we all have to protect."



Degbelo Carly Sèdjro



Moustapha Dieye

"The museum of the future must be a symbolic and dynamic space that preserves and transmits the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of a community."

"I think an ideal museum of the future for Africa should amongst others be embraced by an increased visibility of Africa's rich diversities."



Tscholofelo Kenathetswe

# 5 QUESTIONS TO MARIA MANJATE

by Alyssa K. Barry

1. From graduating in Management and Cultural Studies from the Faculty of Culture Studies of the Instituto Superior de Artes e Cultura – ISArC in Mozambique to working as a Programmer Officer at the Observatory of Cultural Policies in Africa (OCPA), who is Maria Manjate?

From being graduated in Management and Cultural Studies and working at OCPA, Maria Manjate is a freelancer Cultural Administrator, has been operating in the field of Performing Arts, Cinema, Research and Marketing. From 2015 to 2018, she cooperated as Assistant producer at Xiluva Artes, Festival Marrabenta, More Jazz Series, as a Marketing Assistant during the 7th edition Azgo Festival and as an Assistant Film Producer at Nigma Pictures.

She was also a field Assistant during the production of the Civil Society Report on the “Implementation of the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Conditioned Immobility” research project undertaken by the Health Education and Culture for Development (SECED) in 2015.

She provided technical assistance at the 13th edition of the Njingiritana International Children Festival in 2022, and was a film fixer from 5th- 12th January 2023 in Maputo during the filming process for the “Demain L’Afrique” Documentary series, whose objective was to introduce 10 major cities of Africa through personalities and places that embody the modernity of Africa.

She was also selected to cooperate as Young Expert on “Fair Culture” at the German Commission for UNESCO initiative, from September 2022 to July 2023.

2. What exactly is your role as Programmer Officer at OCPA?

My roles are to:

- Liaise with partners, national and international collaborators, regarding the implementation of the OCPA’s programmes activities and collaborative framework in respect to the OCPA Strategy and Plan of Action and several specific projects namely in the field of information, research, training and policy making;



- Assist the Research Coordinator in activities related to the implementation of research and publication;
- Provide cultural assistance to the civil society initiatives and institutions of Mozambique in information and technical assistance;
- Undertake missions to the African States and worldwide in the field of culture and art sector, cultural policies, heritage, etc.;
- Keep the Executive Committee informed with detailed and accurate reports or presentations.

3. How did you join the World Heritage field?

My passion and interest with cultural heritage started when I was still at ISArC through discussions on the cultural heritage management classes, mainly on the lack of protection, conservation, intervention, sense of ownership, and high deterioration of some crucial historical places in downtown Maputo, Maputo being the capital city of Mozambique.

At that time, in conversation with a colleague, we came up with an idea of creating a club “Amigo de Património” (Friend of heritage), which would be a movement to mobilize young people for the valorization, protection and enhancement of cultural heritage in Maputo, but unfortunately the idea was never implemented.

I provided technical assistance to Pedagogical visits (CFM Museum, Maputo Fortress and Museum of Natural History); a program undertaken with a view to raise public awareness in heritage management and the need to explore historical sites as sources of education from a very early age.

The most impactful moment was my participation in the 3rd Youth Forum on African World Heritage in 2018 in Mozambique, and sharing some thoughts on Youth perspectives on the conservation and sustainable development of African World Heritage: experiences and practices.

#### 4. What are the specific challenges and issues faced by cultural heritage in Mozambique and the PALOPs in general?

The many challenges and issues faced by cultural heritage in Mozambique are:

- Challenges of conservation and restoration of built heritage;
- Heritage management and preservation process challenged with many technical and financial support;
- Lack of intervention strategies to mitigate threats due to terrorism and climate changes;
- Poor management of Museums;
- Non-operative legal framework regarding the protection of the cultural heritage, which compromise the heritage management to be more effective;
- Weak ability on new media and digital platforms to promote and reinforce cultural heritage management;
- Tourism value chain and sustainability;
- The current context of terrorism makes it difficult, if not impossible, for tourism development and assessment to emergency response for affected cultural heritage.

In the PALOPs, the major challenges are:

- Lack of flexibility of public policies and national development plans which take heritage as a lever for sustainable development;
- Lack of promotion of activities around heritage properties, especially in World Heritage sites;
- Lack of trends in number of evidences that benefits of tourism are shared with local communities;
- Lack of trends in amount of heritage income for local business;
- Intangible Cultural Heritage in need of urgent safeguarding;
- Lack of programmers and progress of museums and galleries in the new digital era;
- Lack of specific management plans, measures and indicators to manage visitors, tourism activity and derived economic (jobs creation, heritage income for local businesses, etc.), socio-cultural and environmental impacts;
- The non-representation of heritage properties on the world heritage list largely affects the exclusion of this group from the eligibility of some funds;
- The political situation makes it difficult, if not impossible, tourism development in countries in context of terrorism;
- Lack of valorization of colonial architecture, including vernacular and colonial heritage.

#### 5. What is your message to the African Youth?

My very short message to African Youth is this: it is time to act, seek our roots, know and understand our history. Whether from the diaspora or another corner of the world, it is necessary to seek identity. With these values it is possible to define bases and lines of cohesive actions, whether for the promotion of peace, justice, well-being, culture, heritage, or art, and building a fairer society and cohesive with a freedom to speak, create and express with a view to fostering participation for all in cultural life, prosperity and livelihood.







# PORTR'ELLES - WOMEN OF HERITAGE

*interviewed by Affoh Guenneguez*



*We continue our journey to discover African women leaders of heritage. And for this special issue, we needed a special woman. This month, the Port'Elles section takes us to Côte d'Ivoire, the land of the Elephants, to discover a true Amazon, defender of African heritage, so much so that her name resonates throughout Africa and beyond. Let's discover together the inspiring journey of Dr Silvie MEMEL-KASSI.*

Dr. Silvie MEMEL-KASSI is a Teacher-Researcher in Culture and Development, Heritage and Museology Option and Head of the Research Laboratory on cultural and tourism policies, cultural economy, heritage, crafts and cultural and creative industries at the Institut National Supérieur des Arts et de l'Action Culturelle (INSAAC) in Abidjan.

Formerly Director of the Museum of Contemporary Art of Cocody (community museum) from 1993 to 2006, then Director of the Museum of Civilizations of Côte d'Ivoire (national museum) from 2006 to 2021, she also served as Director General of Culture from 2021 to 2022. Her long and rich experience at the head of museums (30 years), have made her the national specialist in charge of issues related to the restitution of cultural property, illicit trafficking and museums for the Ivory Coast, UNESCO, ECOWAS and the African Union. As such, she has participated several times in international debates and carried out major national and international projects.

Author of several publications and a doctoral thesis on these themes, Dr. MEMEL-KASSI is also the President of the Pan-African NGO African Museums and Heritage Restitution (AFRIMUHERE) whose headquarter is in Nairobi (Kenya) created in September 2021, and the representative of the West African Alliance on the Academic and Programming Council of ICOM-IMREC, the International Centre for Research and Exchange of Museums of ICOM since October 2021. Officer in the Order of Cultural Merit of Côte d'Ivoire thanks to the major actions of the NGO (Tapa Foundation) that she created in 2001 to support African museums, Dr. MEMEL-KASSI is a married woman and mother of three children who lives and works in Abidjan.

The Museum of Civilizations of Côte d'Ivoire, which she directed for 16 years, is the most important state museum in the country. Created in 1942, this ethnographic and archaeological museum has a collection estimated at more than 15,000 pieces from all cultural areas of the country. It has undergone important changes according to national policy. It became CENTRIFAN from 1943 to 1960, then the Center for Human Sciences until 1971. From 1972, it became the National Museum of Abidjan, in order to present the independent Ivory Coast in its diversity and cultural unity. In 1994, the National Museum of Abidjan became the Museum of Civilizations of Côte d'Ivoire. From 2006 to 2021, it has experienced a full expansion with an increase in the number of visitors, constructive partnerships, the hosting of researchers and trainees of various nationalities, the organization of temporary and traveling exhibitions, thanks to its inclusive and dynamic policy called "The New Vision" implemented by the management team at the time. The current exhibition "Pride, Symbols and Identity", organized with the support of the NGO Tapa Foundation, has different spaces under seven themes, namely Oratory Art, Social Life, Political Life, Economy, Royalty, Archaeology, Craft, Invention and Technology.

## AMBITIONS FOR AFRICAN MUSEUMS AND AFRICAN WOMEN IN THE SECTOR.

The 38th UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society, adopted in 2015 in Paris, sheds light on the importance of these institutions seen as spaces for cultural transmission, intercultural dialogue, learning, discussion and training, which play an essential role in education, social cohesion and sustainable development.

From then on, the problem of the mobilization and appropriation of the museum by the local African public appears to be a major challenge to be met. Dr. MEMEL-KASSI explains: "I think that this lack of attendance is explained by the fact that the discourse held until then by most ethnographic museums inherited from the colonial administration, was inaudible due to the absence of an exhaustive documentation that did not accompany the collections left on site after the accession of colonized countries to independence. This is why I believe that as a teacher-researcher and African professional, the question of research is fundamental in the current context, given that it is only through the knowledge gained from research that the full potential of museums can be realized and brought to the public. Indeed, one is only interested or attached to something when one knows it well. I will conclude by inviting African women to engage in this sector. Although to date, there are still not many of them at the head of museums on the continent, I strongly encourage them to get involved because the job is very exciting. My whole professional life is built around the museum and I must admit that I am not disappointed."

# YOUNG PROFESSIONALS AT AFRICAN HERITAGE SITES

ICOMOS EPWG AFRICA



Chelvin Ramsamy (Maurice) / Memphis and its Necropolis: the Pyramid Areas from Giza to Dahshua, Egypt. 2020



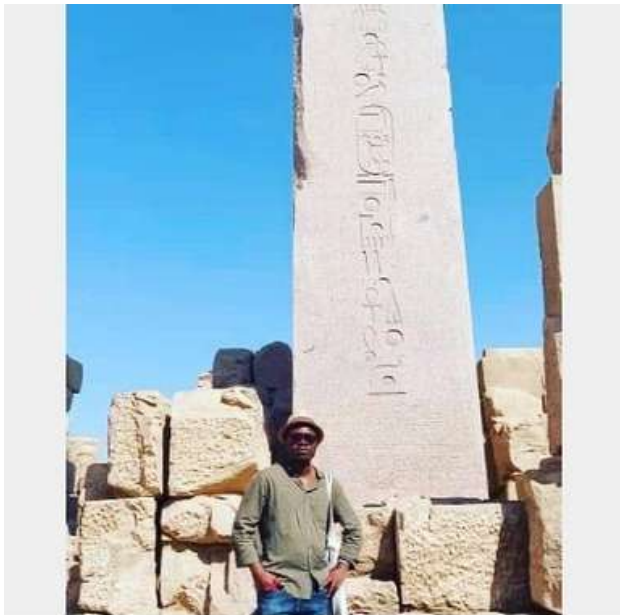
Tinhinane Bachir-Cherif (Algeria) / Ksar ait ben haddou, Morocco. 2018



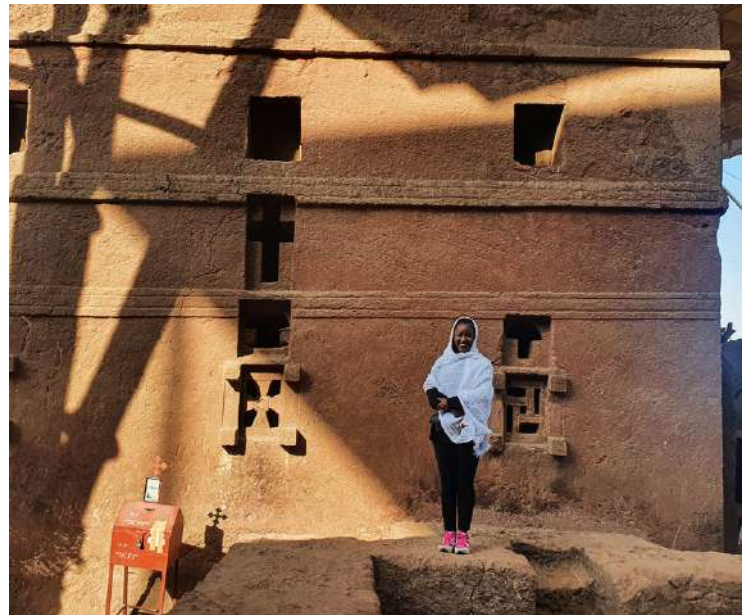
Tsholofelo Kenathetswe (Botswana) / Table Mountain in Cape Town, South Africa. 2022



Samson Faboye (Nigeria) / Robben Island, South Africa. 2022



Franck P. Gonné ( Côte d'Ivoire) / Temple of Amun, Egypt. 2022



Alyssa K. Barry (Senegal) / Churches carved in the rock in Lalibela, Ethiopia. 2023

# YOUNG PROFESSIONALS AT AFRICAN HERITAGE SITES

ICOMOS EPWG AFRICA



Moussa Wele (Senegal) / Goree Island, Senegal. 2020



Florentine Okoni (DRC-Germany) / Aapravasi Ghat, Mauritius. 2021



Jean-Paul Lawson (Benin) / Temple of Karnak in Luxor, Egypt. 2017



Affoh Guenneguez (Côte d'Ivoire) / Kong Mosques, Côte d'Ivoire. 2022



# INITIATIVE OF THE MONTH : PATRIMUNDUS

Avenir G. Meikengang



Association PatriMundus was created in 2019 in Choisy-le-Roi, France, and recognized under N°W941016753 since July 20, 2020 by the French State. It aims to contribute to the safeguarding and enhancement of heritage by reconciling it with sustainable economic, social and cultural development through a participatory and inclusive approach. Organized around its motto "So that heritage lives on", the PatriMundus association has very early equipped itself with internal operating tools whose ultimate goal is to enable it to respond effectively to its mission: "To put its expertise at the service of the safeguarding and enhancement of heritage".

Our field of action throughout Africa and Europe is built around three closely related strategic axes:

- IDENTIFY & PROTECT heritage elements in all their forms in order to allow them to play their identity, social and economic role in the communities of today and tomorrow;
- RESTORE & RECONSTRUCT monuments and sites that are increasingly being damaged by human and natural action, at the request of grassroots communities;
- RAISE & TRANSMIT to the general public, especially to "children", the dangers, but also the stakes to which the heritage is exposed, through educational projects and short and quality trainings.

To date, the Association has conducted and realized many projects among which:

- An international webinar on the theme: "African Museums and Intangible Heritage", in response to the celebration of International Museum Day in 2020;
- The Virtual Exhibition on Traditional Costumes of Cameroon: "Dressing for Identity" available at [www.costumestradi.patrimundus.org](http://www.costumestradi.patrimundus.org);
- The "HERITAGE FEELINGS" project, which gives a voice to young African heritage professionals to express their feelings on the African heritage of today and tomorrow; and
- The "Young African Heritage Professionals Meetings (YAPM) " since 2022 with the aim of bringing together experts and young African heritage professionals around conferences-debates in order to reflect on the problems and factors that weaken African heritage, the challenges faced by museums, issues related to sustainable development, climate change, etc.

It should be noted that the association attaches great importance to the cultural diversity of its members, which is a guarantee of its richness and dynamism. Gender parity is a value carried by the PatriMundus association and is part of its objectives and mode of operation. It brings together mostly young people, students, researchers, specialists and professionals around the cultural heritage in general and African heritage in particular. Skills development, training, etc., are important issues for the association, which currently brings together graduates in the humanities and social sciences, but also in other disciplines such as information science and documentation.

To learn more about the PatriMundus Association, write to us and work with us:

Mail: [patrimundus@gmail.com](mailto:patrimundus@gmail.com) | website: [www.patrimundus.org](http://www.patrimundus.org)

Facebook: [@patrimundus](https://www.facebook.com/patrimundus) | LinkedIn: [@patrimundus](https://www.linkedin.com/company/patrimundus)

# DIARY OF THE MONTH

CELEBRATION OF THE AFRICAN WORLD HERITAGE DAY 2023  
UNESCO & the African World Heritage Fund are organizing a round table on the theme: "Our natural and cultural heritage at the service of an Africa without borders".

This conference will take place on May 05, 2023 from 10:00 am (GMT). To register and participate, click on the link: <https://bit.ly/3oXZvvz>.



The EPWG Africa celebrates the African Heritage Day 2023 on the theme: "HERITAGE IN THE HANDS OF YOUTH". This will be an opportunity to give the floor to young professionals from Senegal, Kenya and Morocco, who have initiatives in the field of heritage through an experience sharing session on 04 May 2023 from 16h00 (GMT).

To participate at this event, click on the link: [https://meet.jit.si/ICOMOS\\_EPWG\\_Africa](https://meet.jit.si/ICOMOS_EPWG_Africa).



The International Council of Museums invites the international community to celebrate the International Day of Museums on 18 May 2023. This year's theme is "Museums, Sustainability and Well-Being". Are you planning to organize an event in the framework of this celebration? [The website dedicated to the International Museum Day](#) provides you with all the information, tools and materials needed to participate in the 2023 edition.



## LATESTS OPPORTUNITIES

- Offer of a doctoral contract financed by the MESRI, starting on October 1st 2023. Applications are to be submitted to the Ecole doctorale SEPT of the University of Burgundy Franche-Comté. For more information: <https://bit.ly/3LPS82o>. Deadline: 15 Juin 2023.
- ICCROM is calling for applications for the 21st International Course on Stone Conservation, which will be held in both online and face-to-face versions in Mexico City from 11 September to 3 December 2023. For more information: <https://bit.ly/41ZXPX>. Deadline: May 21, 2023

## MASTHEAD

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