

## **Press Release**

**Under the patronage of HH Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qassimi,  
Ruler of Sharjah**

**The "Protecting the Past 2018" conference will be launched next Tuesday**

**Sharjah, UAE (4-6 December 2018)**

**Sharjah, 2 December 2018** - Under the patronage and in the presence of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, Member of the Supreme Council, Ruler of Sharjah, the “Protecting the Past 2018” conference entitled “From Digital Documentation to Heritage Management in the MENA region” will be taking place at the Regional Conservation Centre in Sharjah (ICCROM- Sharjah) from Tuesday 4th to Thursday 6th December 2018.

The conference is jointly organised by Regional Conservation Centre in Sharjah (ICCROM-Sharjah ), the Endangered Archaeology of the Middle East and North Africa (EAMENA) project, Art Jameel and the Global Heritage Fund, with the additional support of Abu Dhabi Department of Culture and Tourism, Barakat Trust and Bonzai Agency.

Protecting the Past 2018 in Sharjah will explore how digital documentation is becoming embedded in the heritage management practices of the MENA region. Academics, national heritage stakeholders, professionals, and NGOs are invited to share their research, experience, and views on how digital documentation has changed or should change heritage management in the MENA and adjacent regions.

Protecting the Past 2018 conference addresses 5 main themes, including: digital documentation as a preparedness and preventive tool; digital documentation and post-disaster heritage recovery; new documentation technology; capacity building in the region; and finally donor perspective. A special session of the conference will be bringing together the representatives of cultural heritage funders including the Arcadia Fund, the British Council’s Cultural Protection Fund, the International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Areas (Aliph) Fund, and Abu Dhabi Department of Culture and Tourism to discuss donor priorities in funding cultural heritage documentation projects in the MENA region.

Over three days, presentations and round tables will see the participation of 42 international and regional speakers from **Belgium, Egypt, France, Jordan, Iraq, Iran, Italy, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and**

**the United States.** Speakers come from a range of organisations including UNESCO, UNOSAT, European, MENA and North American universities, museums and NGOs.

Protecting the Past is an international conference and workshop series organized by the Endangered Archaeology of the Middle East and North Africa (EAMENA) project at the Universities of Oxford, Leicester and Durham in collaboration with partners in the field of cultural heritage. Since 2015, Protecting the Past has been held annually in Amman, Sulaimaniyeh, and Tunis before coming to Sharjah for its 2018 edition.

The purpose of Protecting the Past is to move beyond describing the threats facing the cultural heritage in the Middle East and North Africa region and focus on understanding them through new approaches for heritage protection. Protecting the Past promotes debate and discussion on the range of threats to cultural heritage sites, facilitates communication between different groups, and enhances understanding of the issues and their regional significance. The series aims to facilitate opportunities for different stakeholders to formulate strategies aimed at preserving cultural heritage sites and developing long-lasting partnerships within the MENA region.

**We are pleased to invite you to attend/cover the activities of this important conference which will start at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and continue until Thursday the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018 at the Regional Conservation Centre in Sharjah (ICCROM-Sharjah), UAE.**

**Notes:**

More information and a conference programme may be found on its website [www.protectingthepast.com](http://www.protectingthepast.com)

The conference proceedings will be live streamed (see <https://www.facebook.com/protectingthepast/> for more details) and updates will be posted on Facebook and Twitter by the organising partners. The conference hashtags are #ptp18 and #protectingthepast.

Organisers' media:

- EAMENA: @EAMENAProject (Facebook); @EAMENA123 (Twitter)
- Art Jameel: Art Jameel (Facebook); @Art\_Jameel (Twitter); @art\_jameel (Instagram)
- Global Heritage Fund: @globalheritagefund (Facebook); @global\_heritage (Twitter)
- ICCROM-Sharjah: @ICCROMATHAR (Facebook); @ICCROM\_ATHAR (Twitter)

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