

APSAD and Factum Foundation Sign Accord

March 24th 2014

Translation from the French provided by APSAD

At the initiative of Raya Daouk, president of the Association for the Protection of Sites and Old Buildings (APSAD), the Factum Foundation, which specializes in the application of digital technologies for high-resolution color documentation and three-dimensional heritage recording, visits Lebanon. The goal: save the state of the our heritage, assess the degree and type of risk and create records that will be a specific reference to the detection and management of changes that could threaten the integrity of the historical heritage.

The signing of the partnership agreement was held at the National Museum of Beirut on March 24 during a joint press conference given by the Minister of Culture HE Rony Arajji, Raya Daouk, James Macmillan-Scott and Alexander Peck, who explained to the media the extent and importance of the project.

Also present were Lady Yvonne Sursock Cochrane, APSAD founder, and committee members: Nadim Souhaid, Asma Freiha, Dolly Khawam, Hani Zgheib, Nabil Nassif, Oussama Kallab and DGA archaeologist Assaad Seif.

On this occasion, HE Minister Arajji thanked APSAD for its continuous efforts to protect the heritage as well as the FACTUM Foundation for its double mission which will be supplied gracefully: digital high-resolution recording of archaeological and architectural heritage of Lebanon and training and the establishment of a team of local experts who can, in the future, use these specialized tools to continue the work. The Minister also announced that operations will begin on the site of Nahr el-Kalb, this year. He concluded that the partnership between the Ministry and civil society organizations is possible and welcome as long as it fits within a framework of general interest.

Speaking, Raya Daouk, APSAD President, recalled that APSAD, the first of its kind based in the Arab world for the preservation of heritage, this year celebrates 54 years. "APSAD's accomplishments are many, but insufficient, through lack of budget. We simply do not have the means to match our ambitions," said the president, adding that " the agreement with Factum Foundation will, however, allow us to realize large projects. For high resolution 3D technology will be the cornerstone, the ultimate reference for any conservation or restoration, since it will improve readability and aesthetic integrity of a building or archaeological relic that passes from generation to generation. The resulting data will be available in case of damage, destruction or alteration of objects, and to avoid bad actions(...). "

For his part, James Macmillan-Scott stated that "conservation and preservation institutions are aware of the importance of digital recording with high resolution to obtain very precise detail. The accumulated data are used to create documentation, create a digital archive, essential to monitor and study with accuracy and timeliness of inventory and rate of degradation. The equipment used is custom designed for optimal recording results" he added. The Factum Foundation has teams of artists, technicians, engineers, software - authors, architects, restorers and craftsmen dedicated to digital recording.

The Foundation is currently working with governments, private institutions and museums such as the Louvre (Paris), the Prado (Madrid), Pergamon (Berlin), the Vatican, the British Museum (London), the Supreme Council of Antiquities (Egypt), Fondazione Giorgio Cini the (Venice) and The National Gallery (London). But also in the USA, North Africa and Egypt, where it is currently involved in the installation of a replica of the tomb of Tutankhamun in the entrance to the Valley of the Kings, Luxor.

Most recently, the Foundation has been introduced by Raya Daouk to al-Madina al-Munawara, Saudi Arabia.

Beirut