

## SAVING POMPEII FROM ANOTHER DEATH

Professor Stefano De Caro, Director-General of ICCROM (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property) centred in Rome, delivered one of the keynote speeches at the recent CIPA Symposium in Strasbourg, France. Professor De Caro, who is archaeologist, owns a considerable experience in the preservation work of Pompeii, one of the most prestigious UNESCO World Heritage Sites. He is co-operating with Professors Albrecht Matthaei and Erwin Emmerling from Technische Universität in Munich and the Fraunhofer Institute, Germany, other international scientific institutions and Italian responsible authorities, in the new Pompeii Sustainable Restoration Project. The project has started the phase of fundraising, aiming to collect 10 million euros for over a ten year site restoration accompanied by a training activity in cultural heritage conservation.

The city of Pompeii in Southern Italy was destroyed by the volcanic eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79. This mummified city offers the world's oldest continuous archaeological dig that reveals authentic evidence of life from the Roman imperial era. The excavations have continued since the mid-18th century. The uncovered ruins need constant vigilance in protection and preservation. The structures, and the mosaics and frescos decorating the houses deteriorated over the years. In 2010 the seat of an association, the so called *Schola Armaturatum*, collapsed.

Archaeological competence is of central importance. For securing the ruins of each house one would need at least 270 million euros, according to Pietro Giovanni Guzzo, who was Superintendent of Pompeii until 2009. Fortunately the site received 105 million euros from the Italian government and EU for the preservation work that started at the beginning of this year to save the site from the another death. 2,3 million tourists all over the world visit the site every year. Expectations are for another 300, 000 more.

Digital documentation has produced several 3D models of the city houses. During the CIPA symposium in Strasbourg new ways in the documentation of the "petrified" bodies from Pompeii with 3D modelling were presented by Sebastian Varia. In London a large British Museum exhibition of Life and death in Pompeii and Herculaneum, that has been open over this summer and closes at the end of September, finely revives the neighbouring dead cities.

Minna Lönnqvist