



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

***PREVENTIVE CONSERVATION  
IN MAJOR MUSEUMS  
COMPARING STRATEGIES***

OCTOBER 12, 2018

**PRESS RELEASE**

*“The Vatican Museums are pleased to host the directors of the great universal museums visited by millions each year. Their daily challenge consists in finding new ways to manage and preserve such an important and highly exposed cultural heritage. I hope that this conference, which aims to promote a real and direct debate, will contribute to the development of common strategies that could provide a concrete help for all museums.”*

**Barbara Jatta**

*“Preventive conservation has become an increasingly important issue for the "good health" of our cultural heritage. The great museums are, in this regard, an extremely sensitive laboratory, as they represent a natural bridge between the widespread cultural heritage and the smaller museums. If we are able to remind ourselves that we are not the "owners" of our cultural heritage, but its guardians in the name and on behalf of future generations, preventive conservation will take the right importance as a complex of practices and technologies that are not aimed at hibernating the past, but at fecundating the future.”*

**Salvatore Settis**

The global concern for the future of large art collections is the theme of this important international conference, ***Preventive Conservation in Major Museums: Comparing Strategies*** held on Friday, October 12 2018 at the Vatican Museums.

The conference is hosted by Barbara Jatta, Director of the Vatican Museums, and Salvatore Settis, an internationally renowned scholar and an attentive observer of the Italian cultural heritage, with the collaboration of Vittoria Cimino, the coordinator of the initiative and Head of the Conservator's Office. It aims to promote high-level reflection on the issues of mass tourism management and the planned conservation of heritage, both which are among the most urgent challenges of the third millennium.

Preventive conservation also means a dialogue and debate on one of the fundamental aspects of the management of fragile, highly exposed, heritage of humanity gathered in those treasure chests that are the great universal museums, visited every year by millions of people.

The Vatican Museums are particularly concerned about these issues because their mission is to *make aware, preserve and share the extraordinary legacy of culture, history, beauty and faith that the Roman Pontiffs have collected and preserved for centuries.*

It is the responsibility of the museum directors, who conserve such wealth, to think in a way to *preserve and to share* the works that have been entrusted to them. This discussion is held on October 12<sup>th</sup> at the Vatican Museums.

In attendance is Antonio Paolucci, Director the Vatican Museums from 2007 to 2016, who has a long history with the responsibility in the public administration as well as the protection and development of cultural heritage. Other participants include directors from many important museums, both nationally and internationally, who will discuss the operational strategies or specific cases they faced in light of their role: Jean-Luc Martinez from the Louvre Museum, Gabriele Finaldi from the National Gallery in London, Laurent Salomé from the National Museum of Versailles and Trianon Palaces, Mikhail B. Piotrovskiy from the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, Miguel Falomir Faus from the Prado Museum, Timothy Potts from the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles, and Christian Greco from the Egyptian Museum in Turin.

Today the conversation of cultural heritage requires synergy and regularity of application, scientifically tested protocols, the commitment to properly trained professionalism, verification of results, and certainty of funding.

The strategy of the programmed conservation of the Vatican Museums is rooted in the ancient tradition of preservation implemented by the popes and in the regular care of the cultural heritage, which anticipates the concept of museum itself. This includes through the study of documents that are kept in the Historical Archives of the Vatican Museums.

The operating model adopted by the Vatican Museums is a multi-lane system where, alongside the traditional restoration activities, the care of exhibition environments, the regular execution of the programmed maintenance plans of collections, systems, and settings effectively interact.

Today the *Pope's Museums* can count on an internal staff that supervises the cultural heritage exhibited and stored in more than 40 storage areas and that takes care of the systematic environmental and climatological monitoring in the places of exhibition, conservation and workspaces. The conservation strategy is also developed throughout the daily operations involving collections and itineraries, such as the meticulous removal of dust, the regular and systematic control of the moveable artworks and the timely repair of small damages, which are carried out by a team of external restorers operating under the Office of Preventative Conservation.

During the conference, the volume by Vittoria Cimino, "The Conservation of the Vatican Museums. A Ten Year Project Completed", will be presented. It is the recent English version of "Come Si Conserva Un Grande Museo. L'esperienza dei Musei Vaticani", published by Musei Vaticani-Allemandi in 2016. The manual, which illustrates the programs, methods and activities of programmed conservation in use at the Vatican Museum, was written to share the "path" pursued to date with other institutions involved in the protection and conservation of the cultural heritage.

The entire conference is made possible by the generous sponsorship of Minsait, an Indra company, which supports the Vatican Museums for the protection and security of the works and the people.

Conference Presentation and Programme [www.museivaticani.va](http://www.museivaticani.va)