



WORLD  
MONUMENTS  
FUND

Sites and Projects in

MEXICO





# World Monuments Fund Sites and Projects in Mexico

In the years since a 1985 earthquake devastated Mexico City and destroyed many historic buildings, World Monuments Fund has been privileged to work in collaboration with a number of local partners in Mexico. Conservation projects have spanned centuries of heritage, and the World Monuments Watch has provided opportunities to assess the ongoing threats to the country's cultural heritage, while developing advocacy strategies to help create sustainable solutions. Projects are organized according to the individual needs of each site and local capacity, and WMF's work has evolved over the years to integrate conservation, training, and advocacy in as many projects as possible. World Monuments

Fund provides the necessary expertise while consistently prioritizing effective partnerships with local cultural heritage authorities. The conservation of historic sites is a goal that encompasses both the need to build local engagement while also raising public awareness and appreciation of these sites. The selection of sites highlighted here demonstrates that the range of activities is vast, and that educating the public about these places and their value is an essential element in World Monuments Fund's work. Our hope is that at the conclusion of each project, the public has a stronger understanding of how a historic site enriches the lives of local residents, as well as those visiting for the first time.





# CURRENT PROJECTS



## Chapultepec Park

### MEXICO CITY

Mexico City's Chapultepec Park is the oldest and largest urban park in Latin America, and one of the oldest urban parks in the world. Originally sited on the outskirts of the city, today this large forested area is completely surrounded by the urban center. Many strands of Mexican history are interwoven with the history of the park, with public figures such as Nezahualcōyotl, Moctezuma, Hernán Cortés, Maximiliano, Porfirio Díaz, and Lázaro Cárdenas directly connected to Chapultepec Park. For centuries, the site has been the setting of important water management systems including a pre-Hispanic aqueduct created by the Aztecs—vestiges of this system can still be seen in the park. The Cárcamo de Dolores, a massive water tank inside a pavilion, features a mural and fountain designed by Diego Rivera. From 1951 to the 1990s, the Cárcamo acted as the main water collection point from the distant Lerma River before it was diverted to the reservoirs, supplying up to a sixth of the city's water.

Containing nine museums, a zoo, an amusement park, and a variety of green recreational spaces located near popular commercial districts, Chapultepec Park is an in-

valuable ecological oasis, and a cultural, social, and civic space for the city residents and its visitors. Up to 15 million people visit the urban park each year, often keeping to a few of the more popular areas. A group of committed citizens have been working together since 2004 to rehabilitate the park, and to reactivate underused areas that have great development potential for continued public enjoyment. The inclusion of Chapultepec Park on the 2016 World Monuments Watch supports the ongoing efforts to restore the park's environmental balance, functionality, and beauty, and to highlight its heritage values. Through 2016 and 2017, WMF will work alongside the Chapultepec Trust in the restoration and adaptive reuse of the former nineteenth-century gatehouse building, which served as an entrance to the military school that once operated in the park. With the support of American Express, the building will be used as a museum and orientation center, providing visitors with information about the park's significant history and architecture, the rehabilitation program, and the variety of cultural programs hosted throughout the year.



## Mexico City Historic Center

The earliest buildings in the historic center of Mexico were constructed in the sixteenth century by the Spanish on the ruins of Tenochtitlán, the old Aztec capital built on several islands within Lake Texcoco. Tenochtitlán flourished until 1521, when Hernán Cortes and his army captured the city. In 1524, the Spanish conquerors founded Mexico City and started the process of draining the lake and building a colonial city that was to be the gateway to America; first constructions included the Zócalo and the Metropolitan Cathedral, the largest church on the continent. The eighteenth century saw the construction of great stone palaces for wealthy merchants, and in the nineteenth century the city was transformed by urban expansion and the expropriation of religious property. The city was modernized in the twentieth century with the introduction of public works, transportation systems, and grand public buildings such as the Palace of Fine Arts. Mexico's historic center has been an epicenter of politics, finance, and religion since the pre-Hispanic era, and a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1987. In the 1960s, the historic center of Mexico City began to decline, losing a third of its population, while being subject to architectural deterioration, pollution, and increased crime. In 1985, the city was hit by two devastating earthquakes that destroyed a large number of historic buildings and had a tremendous death toll. As a result of the draining of the lakes in the area by the Spanish several hundred years prior, the clay

that had formed on the basin lost its water content and shrunk, which in turn caused the city to sink, in large part due to the excessive pumping of water from the hundreds of wells located just below the surface.

In 2005, World Monuments Fund and the Fundación Centro Histórico—sponsored by Carlos Slim—agreed to take on a program in the historic center with the objective of promoting conservation while encouraging economic growth and community development. A key component of this initiative is adapting the remnants of the Rule Building—a Neoclassical, early twentieth structure badly damaged in the 1985 earthquake—and the nearby open space—formerly occupied by the cloister of San Francisco—for use as an education and interpretation center for visitors and residents alike. The first phase of construction were completed in mid-2011, and a virtual visitor information center of the City of Mexico was completed in 2012. The virtual site offers the opportunity to access many databases containing tourism information related to the City of Mexico, to create and print personalized itineraries, and it also incorporates the Historic Resources database created as part of the World Monuments Fund Historic Center of Mexico Documentation project developed between 2005 and 2010. The project is being completed by the Fundación Centro Histórico and the Secretary of Culture of the City of Mexico and will be inaugurated in 2016.





## San Miguel Arcángel Convent

### MANÍ

Related to other Franciscan foundations in the Yucatán at Izamal, Sisal, Conkal, Homún, and Tekantó, the former convent of San Miguel Arcángel in Maní was built between 1548 and 1557 by Friar Juan de Mérida. The convent had a two-level cloister, living quarters for the monks, a church, a portico with four chapel-shrines, an open-air chapel, the first school for the natives in the Yucatán, and a hospital. The church, currently maintained solely by the parishioners of Maní, has one of the best collections of locally made altarpieces, sculptures, and mural paintings dating from the colonial period (seventeenth–nineteenth centuries). The complex, now reduced to the cloister, the church, the sanctuary of the open-air chapel, and one of the four chapel-shrines, remains as a valuable testament to Franciscan artistic, architectural,

and social intervention in the Yucatán over a 250-year span. The overall building structure, in particular the roof, suffered from considerable cracking and water infiltration, which resulted in the progressive deterioration of the sandstone masonry and interior renderings, wall paintings, and sculpted architectural elements. In 2003, WMF—in partnership with Banamex—supported the structural consolidation of the Church’s exterior and interior. A 2012 Robert W. Wilson Challenge to Conserve Our Heritage award will allow the completion of restoration works at the convent and the installation of a Museum of Yucatec Embroidery. The museum will display a collection of pieces that represent the different techniques employed by the embroidery crafts tradition—the most important cultural expression of Maní.





## Santa Prisca Parish Church

### TAXCO DE ALARCÓN

This church is a highly authentic and nearly intact eighteenth-century example of the Mexican baroque style. A local silver miner named José de la Borda commissioned its construction in 1751, after his fortunes soared with the discovery of an extensive silver deposit. The church's main theme is the glorification of martyrdom, reflected in its grandiose architecture and sumptuous altarpieces. Santa Prisca, still in use as a parish church, is seen by Taxco's local residents as the soul of their town. The church had cracks and fissures in its dome and vaults, and its walls were separating from the ceiling due to assorted natural and man-made disturbances. Previous conservation interventions were partial, and few resources were spent in consolidating the structure. After 1996, the Association of

Friends of Santa Prisca lobbied successfully for protective measures such as changing street directions, controlling the passage of trucks, entering into agreements with the mining company about the use of detonators, and above all beginning to consolidate the most damaged areas of the structure. WMF provided funds for the restoration of the main dome, transepts, main nave, crossing, sanctuary, storeroom, the vaults of the main façade, Chapel of Padre Jesús, Baptistry, Office and Priest's House. The final phase of work implemented with the support of Banamex completed the restoration of the baptistry, upper choir, interior woodwork, exterior atrium and perimeter wall. A bilingual book describing the church and its restoration will be published in 2016.



# PAST PROJECTS



## Apostle Santiago Church and Immaculate Conception Chapel

NURIO

Located in the Michoacán Sierra, this eighteenth-century chapel and church form a part of a hospital complex (huatápera). These hospitals were the product of the social aims of the Spanish magistrate (and later Mexican bishop) Vasco de Quiroga, who was sent by the crown to investigate accusations of cruelty and abuse leveled against the conquistadors. After his arrival in the New World, Quiroga devoted his life to the priesthood and to the indigenous people. Drawing inspiration from Thomas Moore's *Utopia*, he founded the huatáperas.



The religious complex, located in a poor and isolated area inhabited by indigenous people, had fallen into an extreme state of disrepair due to recent changes in the micro-climatic conditions, and a lack of finances. The interior finishes were in poor condition due to insect infestation, fungal attack, and exposure to moisture. Between 2000 and 2004, WMF—in partnership with Adopte una Obra de Arte, Michoacán—provided funds for the restoration of the polychrome wood ceilings, mural paintings, portals, and ornate altarpieces of these two monuments.





## Archaeological Covers Workshop

### PALENQUE, CHIAPAS

Exposure to wind erosion, ultraviolet rays, rain, and other elements threaten and contribute to the persistent loss of archaeological sites around the world. In many cases the only option for long-term protection is the installation of well-designed and monitored protective covers. Mexico is no exception; the wide typology and climatic conditions found in the thousands of archaeological sites under the jurisdiction of the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) are in urgent need of weather protection. In the past, many covers have been designed and built without following the proper terms of reference previously established by a multi-disciplinary team, which have resulted in not only a lack of the necessary protection, but promoted accelerated damage, by creating harsh micro-climates around the elements to be preserved. Based on this premise, WMF in collaboration with Banamex, a longtime private funding partner in Mexico and the INAH, held an international workshop on protective

covers for archaeological sites of Mexico that took place in Palenque, Chiapas, October 2-8, 2009. This workshop brought together Mexican and international experts from the fields of archaeology, conservation, design, tourism, and site management and sparked a discussion about the state of the art in protective cover design in Mexico and around the world, and came up with basic terms of reference to be followed in the design and construction of protective covers in Mexico. Some of the sites used as examples for this purpose included Yaxchilán, Teotihuacan and Chalcatzingo, former Watch sites and active WMF field projects. The discussions and proposals presented at the six-day workshop have been compiled in the publication *Guidelines for the Installation of Architectural Protective Covers for Archaeological Sites*. Moreover, the success of the workshop led to the organization of a second workshop held in Trujillo, Peru in 2011, and a third one held in Guatemala in 2013.





## Chalcatzingo

### MORELOS

Chalcatzingo, which in Náhuatl means “venerated place of sacred water,” is a prehistoric site established around 1500 B.C. in central Mexico. It reached its greatest development between 800 and 300 B.C. as an important ceremonial center for Olmec culture, when the construction of temples and stelae generated a strong transformation on the urban landscape. The archaeological site features a vast number of architectural elements representative of the different periods of settlement. The most impressive are the carving and sculptures on the sacred mountains, stelae, and altars. Threats by encroachment

of cattle, insufficient or defective shelters, poor drainage, vandalism, and quarrying in the surrounding mountains resulted in serious deterioration of the site and the need for urgent assistance. In 2008, World Monuments Fund—in collaboration with the Butler Foundation—initiated a project that included a graphic and photographic documentation of existing conditions, cleaning and conservation of several carved stelae, the evaluation of existing protective covers, and the development of recommendations for future installations. The project was completed in February 2012.





## Fundidora Park

### MONTERREY

Fundidora Park is an industrial archaeology museum and public park in the heart of Monterrey. Originally developed as the site of the Compañía Fundidora de Fierro y Acero de Monterrey, a steel foundry from 1900, this once important industrial center now serves a recreational and educational purpose for the city and its visitors. The park contains several structures from the old foundry, including the 1968 blast furnace known as Horno Alto No. 3, one of the most important pieces of equipment in the building's history. Designed by Arthur G. McKee & Co., an American engineering company based in Cleveland, Horno Alto No. 3 was a technological breakthrough at the time of construction. It was the first automated blast furnace in Mexico, with an unparalleled capacity for production. The foundry closed in 1986 and in 1988 its transformation to a new use began. Fundidora Park was declared an Industrial Archaeological Museum Site by the state government in 2001. The structure that houses Horno Alto No. 3 became a science and technology center managed by a

nonprofit organization known as horno3. It is an educational facility that showcases the origin of the industrialization and modernization of Mexico, and the important role of the foundry in this venture. Horno Alto No. 3, abandoned and exposed to the elements for 20 years, showed signs of corrosion that required attention. Fundidora Park was included on the 2014 World Monuments Watch, and Watch Day was celebrated on site in August 2014 with 3,000 participants gathering at Horno3 to attend drawing sessions, guided tours, a concert, a screening of a documentary about the museum, and more. Fundidora Park also received an award from American Express to support conservation work on the blast furnace, specifically the steel plate of the stack and adjacent stairs, pipes, and valves. In addition, the award supported an awareness-raising campaign and signage designed to maintain the park's central place in the community of Monterrey. Work on these projects began in December 2014 and was completed in September 2015.





## Jesús Nazareno Church

### ATOTONILCO

The eighteenth-century Sanctuary of Jesus Nazareno of Atotonilco, built by father Felipe Alfaro Neri, has served as a spiritual center and pilgrimage destination for over 200 years. The church is famous for the pictorial murals by Miguel Martínez de Pocasangre that cover the interior space and reflect a syncretism of Catholic religious iconography and native religious beliefs. The murals and the numerous works of art within the chapels create an iconographic program that depicts the spiritual exercises of San Ignacio de Loyola.

Over the years, a lack of adequate maintenance—particularly on the roofs—allowed rainwater to infiltrate several areas of the building, which threatened to destroy the rich pictorial collection. The threats were compounded by sudden changes in temperature, smoke from votive candles, and insufficient ventilation. Beginning in

1996, with financial support from WMF, Adopte una Obra de Arte was able to complete a survey of the building and develop a comprehensive restoration plan. The restoration of the façade and three stone altars located in the main nave was completed in 2009, and was followed by conservation work at the choir, the Chapel of Gloria Escondida, the Chapel and Anteroom of the Virgin of Loreto, the Chapel of the Virgin de la Soledad, the frames of the Chapel of El Calvario, and the easel paintings of the Chapel of Belen, which were completed in 2011. The final phase of work completed in 2014 included conservation of the mural paintings at the chapels of El Santísimo and Loreto, conservation of the gilt altar of the chapel of El Santísimo, and production of a bilingual publication about the Sanctuary of Atotonilco and its restoration work.





## Las Pozas

### XILITLA

Las Pozas, a former artisanal coffee plantation, is located among the mountainous jungles of the Huasteca region of San Luis Potosí, in central Mexico. In 1947 Edward James, a British artist and wealthy patron of surrealism's avant-garde, acquired the land to grow orchids, but a severe cold snap in 1960 destroyed the collection, and he subsequently decided to build "something more permanent." Collaborating with Plutarco Gastélum Esquer and local artisans, James designed and built a series of canals, pools, and architectural follies, fashioning his own version of the Garden of Eden. The surrealist landscape features a "stairway to nowhere," a cinema with no seats, a library without books, and a building called La Casa de Tres Pisos (The Three-Story House), which in fact has five stories, as well as more than 30 other follies that were left unfinished

when Edward James died in 1984. Over the years, the jungle grew increasingly interwoven with the structures, and threatened to overwhelm the exotic architecture. WMF included Las Pozas on the 2010 Watch, and initiated a conservation project for the environmental and cultural heritage of the site. An ambitious campaign has since been launched to preserve the natural and man-made elements of this unique landscape. In 2010 World Monuments Fund, with the support of Friends of Heritage Preservation, provided support for the restoration of Edward James' Cabin, completed in 2011; and in 2013, through a Robert W. Wilson Challenge to Conserve Our Heritage award, WMF completed the restoration of the Three-Story House and the installation of an interpretive display intended to teach visitors about the site and James' legacy.





## Madera Cave Dwellings

### CHIHUAHUA

Located in the Municipality of Madera, Chihuahua, the Madera Cave Dwellings are a series of pre-Colombian sculpted clay structures nestled in the naturally occurring caves and cliffs along the Papigochic River Basin. From the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries, indigenous people belonging to the Paquimé Culture—descendants of ancient North Americans from the southeast—constructed and inhabited these dwellings. There are hundreds of sites containing cliff dwellings in the county of Madera, and resources are not available to conserve and manage all the sites, especially in light of improvements to access roads and private explorations, both of which have made these sites especially vulnerable to vandalism and tourism

pressures. Moreover, hundreds of years of exposure to the elements has caused partial damage to some archaeological remains, while others are truly in danger of irreversible destruction. In 2001 World Monuments Fund—in collaboration with INAH-Chihuahua and other local organizations—initiated a series of conservation, interpretation, documentation, and integrated site management projects with support from the J. M. Kaplan Fund. These projects include work at the sites of Cuarenta Casas, Cueva Grande, Huápoca, Rancherías, and Cañón del Embudo. More recently, Cueva de la Olla and Cañón del Embudo were added to the conservation program and completed in 2013.





## Maya Sites of the Yucatán

Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula contains some of the best preserved examples of architecture and urban settlements from the pinnacle of Maya culture (Late Classic Period, A.D. 800-1000), including Aké, Chichén Itza, Kabáh, and Xocnaceh, all of which are cities that have ceremonial centers marked by impressive building ensembles. Temple pyramids, palaces, plazas, and structures such as ritual ball courts and arches remain as testaments to the technical ingenuity and aesthetic acuity of the Maya.

These sites have been compromised over time by exposure to the elements, which has deteriorated the stone and mortar and destabilized the monuments. The structural integrity of many of the buildings has been further

compromised by inappropriate repairs implemented in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 2004, WMF partnered with the Cultural Foundation of Banamex to develop a program to support field projects at several Maya settlements in the Yucatán Peninsula. The initiative completed in 2014 directed funding to multidisciplinary teams of experts working at Aké, Kabah, Xocnaceh and Chichén Itza, and coupled "best practice" conservation measures with ongoing and new archaeological investigations. The overall program objectives included documentation of exposed monuments, as well as treatment of monuments in poor condition and the removal of unsympathetic repairs.





## Monte Albán Archaeological Site

### OAXACA

Situated atop a flattened mountain overlooking the city of Oaxaca in South-Central Mexico, the ancient Zapotec metropolis of Monte Albán is one of the most important ancient cities in Mesoamerica. Founded in the sixth century, the site chronicles 13 centuries of history that spread over some six and a half square kilometers; much of what we see today, however, dates to the Late Classic period (A.D. 650–800) when the site reached its apogee following the fall of its northern rival and sometime overlord, Teotihuacán, in the Valley of Mexico. Monte Albán features numerous structures built around a Great Plaza, the north and south ends of which are anchored by massive platform mounds and has yielded numerous stelae, many of which bear so-called *danzantes*—figures once thought to have been depictions of dancers but now known to be images of captives—and inscriptions rendered in Zapotec script.

With the decline of the Zapotec culture in the late eighth century, monumental building at the site ceased and the area was not reoccupied until the arrival of the Mixtec peoples in the late fourteenth century. Monte Albán was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1987. While most of the monumental architecture at the site was restored, its sculptural and epigraphic legacy remained threatened as a result of inadequate tourism management, and forest fires around the site. WMF listed Monte Albán on the 2008 Watch, and with the collaboration of the Robert W. Wilson Challenge to Conserve Our Heritage, The National Institute of Anthropology and History, and The Alfredo Harp Helú Foundation, funds were allocated for a project, which included the conservation, documentation, and interpretation of the carved stones, as well as the construction of a laboratory and storage facility, completed in 2011.





## Old Guerrero City

### TAMAULIPAS

The city was founded in 1750 by José de Escandón at the confluence of the Salado and Rio Grande rivers, and for two centuries, along its grid of streets and plazas, the citizens of Guerrero masterfully built a sandstone city of religious, public and residential structures, cobblestone streets, sidewalks, and markets, with unique stone details. The 1953 construction of the Falcon Dam Reservoir forced the city's 3,000 residents to evacuate, but despite 50 years of abandonment and periodic flooding, many of the qualities that make Guerrero architecturally exceptional still remain in evidence today. After an eight-year drought, the flooding subsided, but its threat still exists, and if left alone the remaining structures will eventually collapse and the historic and architectural legacy of "Antigua Ciudad Guerrero" will be lost. Chartered in 1997 by

members of families who lived in the historic city, "Hijos y Amigos de Antigua Ciudad Guerrero" embarked on an ambitious plan to restore the primary monument and symbol of their community: Our Lady of Refuge Church. In 1998, a new roof was installed, fallen walls and arches were reassembled with their historic stones, columns were consolidated, and standing walls were re-pointed. In 2000, the organization received a WMF/Robert W. Wilson Challenge to Conserve Our Heritage grant for conservation work in order to stabilize the remains of the original eighteenth-century church tower, the arches of the parián, or city market, the rehabilitation of two structures to serve as guard station and site museum, the consolidation of unstable walls, and an archaeological investigation at the old church tower.





## Palace of Fine Arts

### MEXICO CITY

The Italian architect Adamo Boari, along with a team of outstanding artists and craftsmen, first conceived of the design for Mexico City's new National Theatre, known today as the Palace of Fine Arts. Construction began in 1904 in the Art Nouveau style, but was interrupted in 1916. It was subsequently completed in 1934 by the architect Federico Mariscal, who introduced the Art Deco motifs that decorate the interior. The National Institute of Fine Arts has occupied the building since 1947, and it currently houses murals and paintings by outstanding Mexican artists, as well as a number of exhibition halls to display sculpture and paintings. The Palace of Fine Arts was

among the important buildings scheduled for completion to celebrate the centenary of the independence of Mexico, an epoch also referred to as the age of resistance. In recent years, seasonal rains led to water penetration through the skylights, which seriously endangered the murals on the walls as well as the structural integrity of the building itself. In 1998, World Monuments Fund supported the restoration of one of the lateral semi-cupolas with funds from American Express. The main dome restoration was completed with support from World Monuments Fund and the National Institute of Fine Arts in September 2004.





## Palafoxiana Library

### PUEBLA

The donation of approximately 5,000 volumes by Bishop Juan of Palafox and Mendoza during the first half of the seventeenth-century was hailed by his contemporaries as a major act of philanthropy. In 1773 the bishop Don Francisco de Fabián and Fuero commissioned the construction of a magnificent edifice to house the Palafoxiana Library, located in the historic center of the city of Puebla. During the colonial period, the library retained its value, and leading Mexican historic figures donated large quantities of prints and manuscripts. The collection of the Palafoxiana Library now includes 43,000 volumes, in addition to architectural and decorative elements such as the original wooden bookcases constructed in the eighteenth century. The June 15, 1999 earthquake in the state

of Puebla gravely affected the structure, bookshelves, and collections of the library. As a result, the Secretary of Culture of the State of Puebla, WMF and Banamex, joined in an effort to support the complete restoration of the Palafoxiana. The restoration program consisted of three phases, and included consolidation of the building structure and annexes, restoration of the building, and interior renovation. The scope of work supported by World Monuments Fund and completed in 2010 included the restoration of the wooden bookcases, the Virgin of Trapana altar, the sculpture of Don Juan of Palafox and Mendoza, the main door, and the historic tile floor. The cataloguing and conservation of the collection was supported by Banamex.





## Roberto Montenegro Murals

### MEXICO CITY

Roberto Montenegro was among the artists who—together with Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco, David Siqueiros and others—pioneered the twentieth-century Mexican muralist movement that began in the 1920s with major commissions from the Mexican minister of culture, José Vasconcelos. Many of his mural paintings have since been destroyed, making those that survive all the more precious. The most comprehensive artistic program created by Montenegro during the 1920s is *The Feast of the Holy Cross*, which adorns a stairwell in the former convent of Saint Peter and Paul, one of the oldest and finest

sixteenth-century colonial buildings in the historic center of Mexico City, now home to the National Center of Conservation of the National Institute of Fine Arts (INBA). In order to restore the murals damaged by years of leaks and raising damp, WMF and INBA implemented a conservation program with partial support from the Friends of Heritage Preservation of Los Angeles. Some sections of the mural were temporarily removed from their supports in order to waterproof the wall and provide drainage control. The entire mural paintings were cleaned and areas of loss reintegrated. The completed project was inaugurated in 2005.





## Ruta de la Amistad

### MEXICO CITY

Ruta de la Amistad, or the Route of Friendship, consists of 22 large-scale sculptures that were commissioned ahead of the 1968 Summer Olympics to serve as permanent markers of the event in the landscape of Mexico City. The sculptures were designed by artists of international renown hailing from five continents and were primarily constructed of concrete and steel. Nineteen of the sculptures were spread along a 17-kilometer route that united distant Olympic venues, and which has since developed into a major highway around Mexico City, the Periférico Sur. The ensemble was completed by three special commissions that were installed near the route.

Threatened by demolition after the conclusion of the games, the sculptures were neglected for many years, and they faded into obscurity as their immediate contexts and the surrounding landscape changed drastically. The Patronato Ruta de la Amistad, a non-for-profit group dedicated to the preservation of this important collection of modern art, nominated the site to the 2012 Watch, hoping to raise international awareness about the plight of several sculptures that were threatened by the con-

struction of an elevated highway. WMF, supported by a grant from American Express, was able to support the conservation of the Muro Articulado (by Herbert Bayer), Janus (by Clement Meadmore), Station #9 (by Todd Williams) and Reloj Solar (by Gregorz Kowalski) sculptures, and the rehabilitation of their natural landscape by exposing the lava outcroppings and returning the native vegetation of the area known as El Pedregal. WMF also collaborated with the Patronato on the organization of many public activities such as bicycle tours, poster campaigns, film festivals, art installations, and an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art of Mexico, with the objective of bringing back the forgotten Ruta de la Amistad into the imaginations of the citizens of Mexico, and especially young people. WMF's support was instrumental in obtaining the support of other institutions such as CONACULTA and the Government of the City of Mexico, and although much work is left to do in terms of landscape recovery and continuous advocacy and education, the sculptures have been preserved and a "new" Ruta de la Amistad has been launched.





## San Agustín Convent

### SALAMANCA

In the cultural context of the Hispanic world, the altarpiece represents a paradigm that unites architecture, painting, and sculpture with iconography, history, and technology. The altarpiece of San Agustín de Salamanca is an important and outstanding example of this union. The artist Pedro José de Rojas daringly used sinuous, undulating, and bold forms that surpassed standard contemporary decorative practice, and allows us to appreciate the exuberance, originality, and joy of the baroque provincial style. Rojas, who launched his career with the altarpieces of the Church of Cadereyta in Querétaro, lat-

er applied his creativity at Salamanca and Celaya. Of the three collections, only Salamanca's has survived to date. The altarpieces, which are made of carved wood, were affected by the constant changes in humidity and temperature that led to cracks and shifts which jeopardized the structural stability of the altarpiece as a whole. In 2001, World Monuments Fund and Adopte una Obra de Arte raised the necessary funds to restore the altar. The project included cleaning, fumigation, and consolidation of the altarpieces, as well as the restoration of the existing polychromy.





## San Francisco de Tzintzuntzan Convent

### MICHOACÁN

Begun in 1525, the Franciscan convent of Tzintzuntzan was completed 71 years later under the direction of Vasco de Quiroga, the first bishop of Michoacán. As a result of his appointment, the convent church became the first cathedral in the region. De Quiroga also commissioned several huatáperas, or hospital complexes, for the Purépecha community. The hospital complexes provided health-care as well as religious training, and served as gathering places for local communities. The Tzintzuntzan complex includes a large atrium, two open chapels, two churches, a cloister, and a hospital. The site was in poor condition as a result of earthquake and weather damage, and a lack of maintenance. Parts of the complex were abandoned,

and some walls and roofs had collapsed. Adopte una Obra de Arte, Michoacán developed a conservation master plan and adaptive reuse strategy for the site that included the use of the complex as a training school for the local community. Between 2005 and 2007 WMF supported the conservation of one of the complex's exterior façades, and the restoration of the west wing of the former sacristy, which is the part of the complex at greatest risk of collapse. The restored complex will be adapted for use as a museum and community center. The museum will be dedicated to an exhibition of archaeological and colonial artifacts and regional crafts, and the community center will house workshops where indigenous crafts will be taught.





## San Gabriel Convent—Pilgrim's Portal

### CHOLULA

The Franciscan church of San Gabriel, dating from 1520, is one of the oldest parish churches in the Americas. It was designed in the Plateresque style and is a prime example of Spanish colonial architecture in Mexico. At one time, this church was the destination of so many new Christian converts that an open-air chapel had to be constructed to accommodate them. The complex doubled as a fortification in time of distress; its outer walls contain an orderly system of secular and sacred functions. Numerous inappropriate repairs, restoration cam-

paigns, modifications, and damage caused by the 1999 earthquake left this fortified church ensemble in urgent need of conservation and interpretation. The arcades of the "Pilgrims' Portal" had been filled with concrete, the rooms gutted, and the second floor lost to fire. In 2001, World Monuments Fund funded the repair, conservation, and reconstitution of the Pilgrim's Portal to become the Fray Bernardino de Sahagún Center of Humanistic Studies, which serves as a repository for the Franciscan Order of the Americas archives.



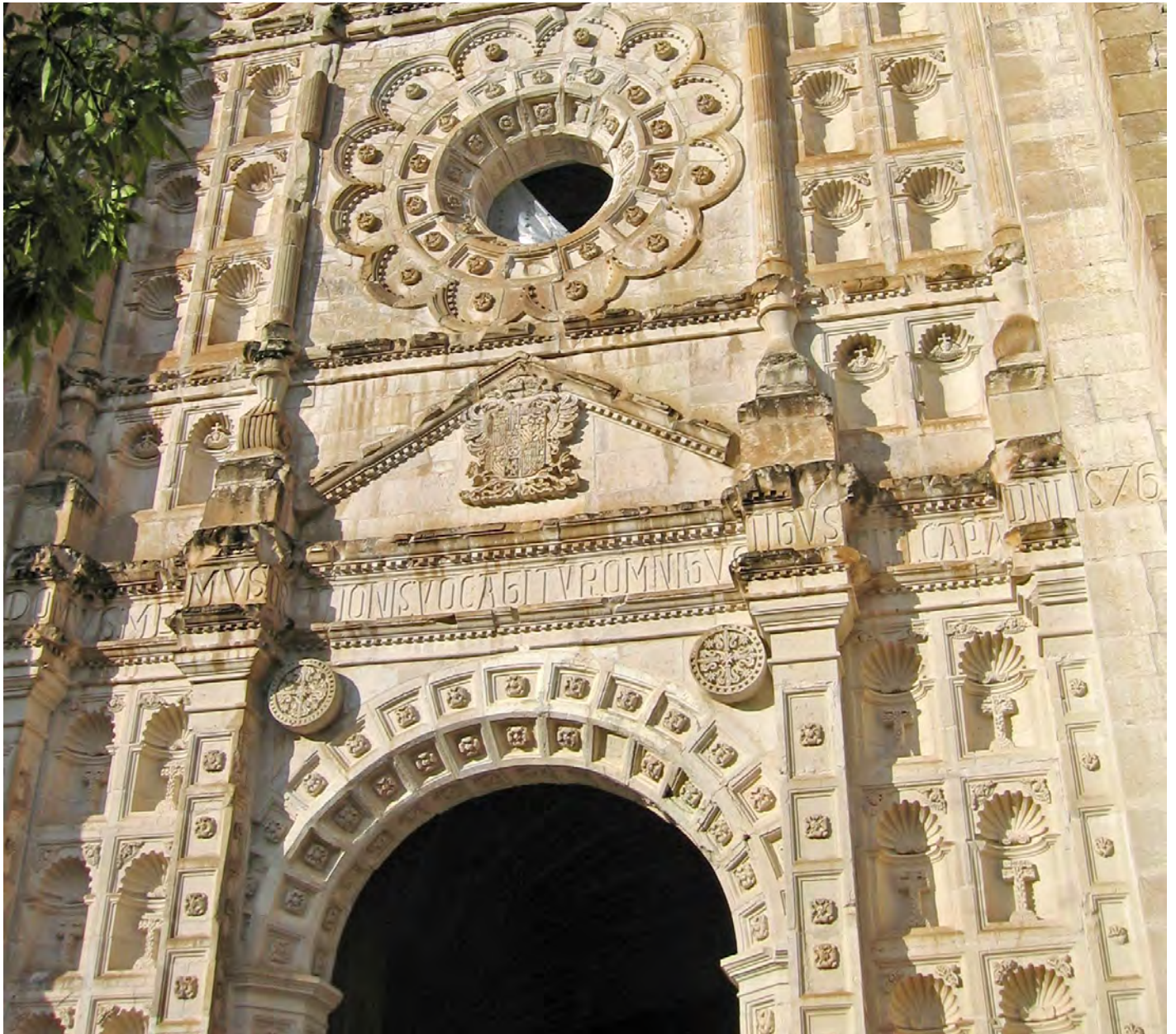


### San Juan Bautista de Cuauhtinchan

The Franciscan convent of Cuauhtinchan was built between 1528 and 1554 to support the religious conversion of the indigenous population. The complex is composed of an atrium, church, convent, pilgrims' portal, garden, and cemetery. The church's main altar is the oldest, complete remaining reredos in Mexico. The complex was abandoned after the departure of the Franciscan order from the region and reopened for religious use in 1973, and since 1992 the complex has served as both a functioning church and as a museum. The sanctuary of the church is threatened by sharp drops in humidity and temperature, which have caused the main altar to shrink and crack, and structural elements to be displaced. In addition, the accumulation of dirt and animal guano together with natural aging, biolog-

ical growth, and inadequate maintenance have contributed to the slow but persistent deterioration of this part of the convent. The long-term preservation plan proposed by the nominator, a local advocacy group working with the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH), includes the conservation of all the mural paintings, altars, and objects in the complex and the promotion of cultural tourism to generate economic benefits for the community. The first phase of work included the restoration of the main altar by the Friends of Cuauhtinchan Foundation, while a second phase supported by WMF addressed the environmental problems and completed the restoration of walls, murals, and lateral altars in the sanctuary of the church. The project was completed in 2010.





## San Juan Bautista de Coixtlahuaca

San Juan Bautista Church of Coixtlahuaca Convent is one of the most recognized and important colonial churches in the state of Oaxaca. Its construction began in 1545 and consists of a Dominican complex rendered in the highly-ornate Plateresque style, which means “in the manner of the silversmith.” The exterior of the church is dominated by a main portal framed with Corinthian columns and topped by a sculpture of the Holy Ghost. The interior of the church is distinguished by a series of paintings—including Christ Crucified, Saint Joaquin, and the Assumption of the Virgin among others—and a richly decorated sixteenth-century altar that was embellished with Baroque details in the eighteenth century. The majority of the paintings and sculptures in the altar are attributed to Andrés de Concha—one of the first and most renowned painters of “New Spain”—who arrived at the site in 1568. In all, the altar incorporates 11 paintings, 7 sculptures, and

various objects dating from the sixteenth century, and is complemented by four sculptures and three paintings dating from the eighteenth century.

A combination of seismic activity, insect infestation, and inadequate maintenance had resulted in the serious deterioration of the convent. In 2007, a collaborative effort was made by WMF, the Robert W. Wilson Challenge to Conserve Our Heritage, the Alfredo Harp Helú Foundation, and the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) to conduct a two-year project that included conservation and stabilization of the altar, reconstruction of elements damaged beyond repair to match the originals, treatment against further insect and biological deterioration, conservation and cleaning of the paintings and sculptures, documentation and publication of the process, and training workshops with the local community to perform routine maintenance work on the altar and church.





## San Juan de Ulúa Fort

### VERACRUZ

The fort's construction was begun in 1518 with the arrival of Juan de Grijalva at the beginning of the conquest of continental America. It served as the entrance for Christianity in the New World, and was an important link in the chain of ports and commercial and navigational defenses in the West Indies. During the colonial period, it was looted and invaded because of the gold, silver, jewels, and other valuables that entered the continent from Europe. The fort also served as a prison, and prestigious thinkers, politicians, artists, and religious activists lived within its walls. In 1825, the capture of the fort by Pedro Sainz de Baranda marked the end of Spanish rule. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries it was the presidential headquarters.

The fortress is surrounded by the sea, and the action of the waves has been undermining its foundations, while

the walls and roofs have developed cracks and structural fractures. Humidity then penetrates the cracks, and erodes the earthwork materials. Some structures, such as the bulwarks and ramparts that face the navigation channel, are threatened with collapse. The National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) developed a comprehensive conservation plan that was implemented between 2000 and 2004. In 2005, the construction of a 300-meter-long protective steel wall along the undermined foundation of the bayside walls was completed. WMF supported the restoration of the Luneta de Santa Caterina and the Revellín de San José. The complex functions as a historical museum, art gallery, restoration school, auditorium, facility to hold INAH investigation workshops, and an international cultural embassy.





## Santo Domingo de Guzmán

### TECPATÁN

This Dominican religious complex was built in the seventeenth century to evangelize the natives of Southeast Mexico. The convent occupies an entire city block, and consists of a church and a convent built of stone in the Renaissance style. It is located in the Zoques province of Chiapas, an area that because of its significant natural and cultural patrimony was placed on UNESCO's tentative list of World Heritage in 2001. The church does not have a roof, and only parts of the convent are currently

in use. The Instituto de Mejoramiento Integral de Poblados—a local NGO working with the State of Chiapas—and the private group Patronato de Chiapas developed a conservation plan that includes the exterior and interior restoration of the convent, temple, and atrium to support religious uses and house a community and cultural center with museum, library, crafts center, hotel, and restaurant. WMF supported the restoration of the south wing of the convent, which was completed in 2008.





## Teotihuacan Archeological Site

### SAN JUAN TEOTIHUACAN

The largest and most visited cultural site in Mexico, Teotihuacán is a monumental testament to the rich heritage of Pre-Colombian Mesoamerica. This “city of the gods” was in its heyday (A.D. 350–650) the most important religious, cultural, and political center in the region. Two monuments have been the focus of WMF work at Teotihuacán: the residential complex of Tepantitla, decorated with vibrant mural paintings; and the Temple of Quetzalcoatl, where the façade is covered with elaborately carved images of the feathered serpents for which it was named. The first project, now complete, was the conservation and presentation of the mural paintings at Tepantitla, where the restoration has already attracted increased visitor interest. The current focus of the project is the Quetzal-

coatl Temple, where the stone façade of the temple has been damaged by rising damp and has been deteriorating more rapidly in recent years due to the application of an inappropriate waterproofing layer in the 1980s. WMF is collaborating with the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) in a comprehensive conservation project that includes the rehabilitation of the drainage system of the Citadel complex, partial elimination of the cement “shell” and prior architectural reinforcement, monitoring the environmental and moisture conditions of the temple, and performing specialized analysis of the causes and effects of deterioration. The project also includes laser scanning of the Quetzalcoatl Temple. An exhibition of the conservation work was inaugurated in December, 2015.





## Yaxchilán

### CHIAPAS

Amongst the last great Maya cities to be excavated, this Classical urban complex was of great regional significance between A.D. 500 and 700, and is considered a perfect expression of the Usumacinta style, which is characterized by the proportions of its architecture adorned by epigraphic inscriptions and extensive relief sculptures. The site is shaped by the Usumacinta River and surrounding Lacandón forest that were its lifelines; its rival and twin across the river was Piedras Negras (present-day Guatemala). Since 1882, important epigraphic discoveries have been made from the stelae, lintels, and altars of Yaxchilán, which have provided astonishing insights for Maya scholars regarding the extent and complexity of urban society, regional networks, and trade. The last decade has brought visitors, researchers, and looters to the site in increasing numbers, and largely outside of government regulation. The Mexican government chose at the outset of excava-

tions to conserve Yaxchilán as a park in dynamic equilibrium with its natural context, rather than fighting a continuous battle with the encroaching vegetation. Since 2001, WMF has provided continuous support toward the development of a conservation management plan with input from resident and expert stakeholders, to address the site's natural and cultural resources. From 2002–2003, WMF financed a conservation project that addressed the structures around the Main Square, Temple 33, the structures in the Small Acropolis, and Temples 39 and 40 of the Great Acropolis. The project also included the redesign and replacement of protective covers and a training course in conservation and maintenance for the site guards. WMF supported the initial development stages of a site redevelopment and interpretation plan within a comprehensive management plan, which was completed by the National Council of Protected Areas CONAMP in 2011.





## Yucatán Indian Chapels

### YUCATÁN PENINSULA

Scattered throughout the Yucatán peninsula, over 100 ecclesiastical buildings formally known as “Indian chapels” (capillas de indios) arose as early as the sixteenth century to provide sacred spaces for congregations lacking resident priests. The main architectural features of these buildings include vaulted sanctuaries with bell towers, parapets, and mural paintings by Maya artists under the supervision of Spanish missionaries, and many of the sites function as community spiritual and cultural centers. Van-

dalism, exposure to rain, wind erosion, and inappropriate repairs has resulted in the complete destruction or severe scarring of the chapels. In 1996, WMF listed the Yucatán Indian Chapels on the Watch, and in collaboration with the Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán and with support from American Express, established a pilot project that included documentation and conservation work, as well as an exhibition describing appropriate restoration techniques for colonial vernacular structures.





## Zacán Hospital Chapel

### ZACÁN

Amid the mountainous eastern region of the Mexican's state of Michoacán, the Zacán Hospital Chapel, also known as Santa Rosa de Lima, dates to the sixteenth century and consists of thick stone walls, asbestos roofing, clay floors, a window, and an arched stonemasonry gateway enclosed by wooden doors. Neglect and inadequate maintenance resulted in cracking and serious material de-

terioration. Due to the lack of maintenance and neglect that threatened to further damage the structure, World Monuments Fund, in collaboration with the Friends of Heritage Preservation, provided funding for a project that included documentation, stabilization, and restoration of the gateway at Zacán Hospital Chapel, which was completed in 2005.



# 2016 WATCH SITES



## **Chapultepec Park** (SEE CURRENT PROJECTS)

## **Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso** MEXICO CITY

The Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso, currently a museum in the Cuauhtemoc borough of Mexico City, preserves four centuries of history. Its origins as a Jesuit seminary date back to the mid-sixteenth century. The baroque building standing at the site was built at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and is one of the most distinguished examples of civic architecture in New Spain. Following the expulsion of the Jesuits by King Charles III in 1767 the building served a number of functions, until in 1867 it became Mexico's first National Preparatory School, where many of the country's intellectuals, artists, and entrepreneurs were educated. In the 1920s, the school became the cradle of the Mexican muralist movement. Its walls featured the first murals by such artists as José Clemente Orozco, Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and others.

After the school closed in 1978, the building sat aban-

doned until a 1992 intervention by architect Ricardo Legorreta transformed it into a museum and cultural center. The Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso now regularly organizes performances, festivals, public lectures, and performing arts events, in addition to temporary exhibitions and related programs.

Many buildings in the historic center of Mexico City face challenges and San Ildefonso is no exception, as it struggles with structural problems resulting from the regular sinking process caused by the geological characteristics of the terrain. Refurbished over two decades ago, the building suffers from outdated lighting and climate control systems that hinder its function as a world-class exhibition space. Inclusion on the 2016 World Monuments Watch draws attention of the need to improve structural and environmental systems in the building to assure its continuing enjoyment by visitors.



# ALL WATCH SITES IN MEXICO

Acueducto de Tembleque, Hidalgo and Mexico State, 2010  
Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso, Mexico City, 2016  
Carolina Hacienda, Chihuahua, 1998  
Chalcatzingo, Morelos, 2006  
Chapultepec Park, Mexico City, 2016  
Chihuahua Missions, Chihuahua, 2008  
Colonial Bridge of Tequixtepec, Oaxaca, 2012  
Fundidora Park, Monterrey, Nuevo León, 2014  
Huaca Historic Neighborhood, Veracruz, 2008  
Inmaculada Concepción Chapel, Nurio, Michoacán, 2002  
Jesús Nazareno Church in Atotonilco, Guanajuato, 1996  
La Tercena, Metztitlán, Hidalgo, 2004  
Las Pozas, Xilitla, San Luis Potosí, 2010  
Madera Cave Dwellings, Chihuahua, 2000, 1998  
Mexico City Historic Center, Mexico City, 2006  
Modern Mural Paintings, Mexico City, 1996  
Monasteries of San Juan Bautista in Tetela del Volcán and Tlayacapan, Morelos, 1998  
Monte Albán Archaeological Site, Oaxaca, 2008  
Oxtotitlan, Acatlán, Guerrero, 2004  
Palace of Fine Arts (Palacio de Bellas Artes), Mexico City, 1998  
Pimería Alta Missions, Sonora, 2006, 2004  
Retablos de los Altos de Chiapas, San Cristóbal de las Casas and Teopisca, Chiapas, 2014  
Ruta de la Amistad, Mexico City, 2012  
San Francisco de Tzintzunzan Convent, Michoacán, 2004  
San Juan Bautista in Cuauhtinchan, Puebla, 2006  
San Juan de Ulúa Fort, Veracruz, 2002, 2000, 1996  
San Nicolás Obispo, Morelia, 2006  
Santa Prisca Parish Church, Taxco de Alarcón, Guerrero, 2000  
San Bartolo Soyaltepec Church, Oaxaca, 2010  
San Felipe Tindaco Church, Tlaxiaco, Oaxaca, 2010  
Santos Reyes Church and Monastery, Metztitlán, Hidalgo, 2010  
Teotihuacan Archaeological Site—Quetzalcoatl Temple, San Juan Teotihuacan, Mexico State, 2004, 2000, 1998  
Teuchtitlán-Guachimontones Archaeological Zone, Teuchtitlán, Jalisco, 2008  
Vega de la Peña Archaeological Site, Veracruz, 1998  
Yaxchilán Archaeological Site, Chiapas, 2002, 2000  
Yucatán Indian Chapels, Yucatán, 1996