

WORLD MONUMENTS FUND

Media Inquiries

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WMF CONVENES INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ITALIAN TUFF TOWNS

WHAT

In May 2008, the **World Monuments Fund (WMF)**, in collaboration with the **Northwest Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies in Italy (NIAUSI)**, is **convening an international symposium at Civita di Bagnoregio, Pitigliano, and Orvieto to develop effective conservation strategies for the tuff towns**, the legendary hilltop towns of Tuscany, Umbria, and Lazio. Participants include geotechnical engineers, conservators, local government officials, as well as experts in regional planning, cultural tourism, and sustainable economic development.

WHEN

May 14-17, 2008.

WHERE

Sessions will be held in Civita di Bagnoregio, Pitigliano, and Orvieto, Italy.

WHY

Perched on cliffs and hillsides, the tuff towns are rapidly eroding, due in large part to the soft nature of the volcanic tuff stone upon which they are built. In addition, the accelerating decline of permanent inhabitants alongside a boom in tourism has substantially altered the social and cultural fabric of the towns, particularly at Civita di Bagnoregio, which now has fewer than 20 year-round residents but is visited by several thousand tourists every summer. The tuff towns were placed on the 2004 World Monuments Watch List of 100 Most Endangered Sites; Civita di Bagnoregio was named to the 2006 list.

The symposium will focus on geotechnical issues affecting these tuff towns and explore possible models for the sustainable development of the dozens of similar towns in the region.

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Founded in 1965, the World Monuments Fund is the foremost independent nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation of endangered architectural and cultural sites around the globe. From its headquarters in New York City—and offices and affiliates in Paris, London, Madrid, and Lisbon—WMF works with local partners and communities to identify and save important heritage through innovative programs of project planning, fieldwork, advocacy, grant-making, education, and on-site training. To date, WMF has helped save historic structures at more than 550 sites in over 90 countries. For more information, visit www.wmf.org.

NIAUSI

The Northwest Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies in Italy (NIAUSI) is a non-profit corporation established in 1981 by academics, architects, students, Italians, and professional members of the Pacific Northwest design community. For more information, visit www.northwestinstitute.com.

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