

## ENPI CBCMED Programme MEDNETA project

- The Project

GAIA-heritage is an active partner of the Mediterranean Network to Promote arts, crafts and Design (MEDNETA). The project was launched by the "Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme" (ENPI CBCMED), a multilateral Cross-Border Cooperation funded by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). MEDNETA aims to build a Mediterranean network of creativity by linking Beirut, Athens, Tunis, Valencia, Florence, and Hebron. These six cities will collaborate on the execution of a number of events and projects, namely a rotating exhibition, workshops, pilot projects on creativity in urban regeneration and exchange of knowhow.



For more information of the project and our partners, please visit: [www.medneta.gaiaheritage.com](http://www.medneta.gaiaheritage.com)

Stay updated on recent activities in Beirut by following the project's [Facebook page](#)

- SWOT Conference - Creativity and Urban Regeneration in Mar Mikhael

On July 17th July, GAIA-heritage organised a conference at "La Grande Brasserie du Levant" in Mar Mikhael. The event, open to the public, raised awareness on the potential of the creative sector in the neighbourhood, identifying its **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats (SWOT). The final aim is to formulate the main lines of a development strategy involving both the creative and financial sectors and the inhabitants.

The conference was successful in gathering students, entrepreneurs, public actors and residents alike to talk about their experience and vision of the neighbourhood. Round tables and an exhibition of local creatives work enabled people from different

backgrounds to come together and reflect on the future of the area while acknowledging the need to preserve its unique and vibrant features.



More pictures are available on [Facebook](#)

**Don't miss the next conference "In Mar Mikhael" that will take place from January 16 - 24 2015!**

**All information on the [Facebook page](#) and on the [project page](#)**

- Urban Observatory for Mediterranean Cities

GAIA-heritage is a founding member of the Urban Observatory for Mediterranean Cities created within the ENPI CBCMED project MEDNETA.

In addition to capitalising the project results, the Observatory will conduct research, gathers documentation and study best practices around the theme of "Urban and Territorial Strategies" of the Mediterranean Region. Thought of as a permanent institution, the Observatory will take over and build on the dynamics impelled by MEDNETA. Its primary role will be to maintain the link between MEDNETA institutions and local actors by studying and documenting the repercussion of political decisions on creativity on the social composition and physical aspect of the urban fabric.

Just as the MEDNETA created a network of cities around the themes of culture and arts, the Observatory seeks to build upon this network by developing its capacities and broadening its perspectives. It will cover all types of issues that today shape urban areas around the Mediterranean sea, thereby offering a comparative tool for researchers, decision makers and entrepreneurs alike.

The Observatory will also provide training, online courses and meetings to raise awareness and develop

policy tools to be shared with local stakeholders. A dedicated website, blog and mapping tool and being completed.

## European Union Algeria- Projet Patrimoine (MAP)

GAIA-heritage is part of the winning consortium which provides technical expertise to the Algerian Ministry of Culture in the protection and promotion of its cultural patrimony. Financed by the European Union and led by GOPA consultants, this project focuses on strengthening local institutions and providing stakeholders with a detailed methodology ranging from asset identification to efficient and effective use of the patrimony.

Staff-training is considered a key element in the procedure, first to ensure that both material and immaterial heritage is adequately handled from the very beginning of the process and second to ensure the durability of the program. In order to concretise these recommendations, several pilot projects (12 in total) will be supervised by the consultants. These initiatives will be undertaken in areas which already benefit from the Ministry's protection. Eventually, the pilots will provide a modus operandi for future projects, underlining the importance of collaboration between stakeholders (public, private, local or international actors) in preserving Algeria's cultural wealth.

GAIA-heritage has already provided four consultancies, one being long-term, in tangible and intangible cultural heritage.



## Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities Red Sea

The Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities (SCTA), which ordered a report to "Tourism, Leisure and Sports" (T&L) and GAIA-heritage in 2013 for the development of the Red Sea, approved the final review and asked for a follow up of the project. The RED SEA Tourism Development Strategy, of which GAIA-heritage was a major partner, will therefore see the light in the following years.

## Souk Okaz

Developing Souk Okaz was part of the SCTA's "tourism destination and sight development program". Within

this framework, GAIA-heritage was contracted together with (T&L) to provide assistance and recommendation in protecting the immaterial heritage of the city. The report conceptualised the development of amenities (Language Academy, Museums and research centres on the Arabic Language, conference halls) to create a magnet for academic communities, students and researchers.

## World Bank/ Saudi Arabia Assessment of the SCTA Partnership Approach

Within the scope of nurturing its expertise in the Arab Countries, GAIA-heritage prepared a report for the World Bank, assessing the Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities (SCTA) partnership approach in tourism development and heritage conservation.

Various options were considered by the SCTA in order to best match Saudi Arabia's situation through Public-Private and Public Public partnerships. As an advisor, GAIA-heritage undertook three missions in Saudi Arabia to determine potential leeways for improvement, providing recommendations especially in methodology to achieve the commission's goal while maintaining and preserving the region's valuable heritage.



## French Agency for Development-AFD "Evaluation des Projets CHUD"

The AFD contracted GAIA-heritage in partnership with [Urbaplan](#) to evaluate the impact of the first part of the CHUD (Cultural Heritage and Urban Development) project in Tyre and Tripoli, in which cities the AFD funded operations. The final report, published in December, proposes solutions to be implemented in the project's second part. It reviews the initial objectives with regard to what has been



achieved so far. As a matter of fact, while some projects such as the St Gilles Citadel are very satisfactory from a rehabilitation point of view, the expected economic development did not fully take place yet. Preserving the cultural heritage of these cities is critical in revitalising the urban economy through tourism. However, the latter mainly depends on external factors and does not always generate development conditions. The report therefore underlined the importance of expanding economic and social development beyond tourism through public-private

partnerships, and by using its funds as magnets to attract parallel investments and private businesses.



## Cooperation with Sciences Po (Paris)

GAIA-heritage is cooperating with Sciences Po Paris' School of Urban Affairs. The newly created department includes programmes ranging from Urban and Territorial Strategies to the Governance of Large Metropolises, while offering double degrees with LSE, London.

As part of this collaboration, GAIA-heritage welcomed three interns over the past 7 months: Alexandra Laban, Antonin Dupin and Juliette Delaveau. Marie-Aimée Prost, a fresh graduate, also worked for GAIA-heritage over a period of 6 months.

The IEP and GAIA-heritage will undertake a 5 months-long Capstone Project (from January 2015 onwards) during which a team of students will reflect over Creativity in the City.

## Tous Urbains

Georges Zouain, GAIA-heritage Principal recently gave an interview in Tous Urbains (see below) about urban development economics, especially in cities of the Middle East and Mediterranean Regions.

Read the interview [now](#)

For those interested in urban issues, we recommend you subscribe to TOUS URBAIN. This quarterly journal of the "Press Universitaires de France" proposes an alternative view on subjects related to urban sociology and discusses the repercussion of globalisation on the urban space.



Please click [here](#) to fill the Subscription form

## New Team Members at GAIA-heritage

Elisabetta Pietrostefani, now coordinating the MEDNETA project, just finished her MSc in International Development from the IEP of Paris. She wrote her MA

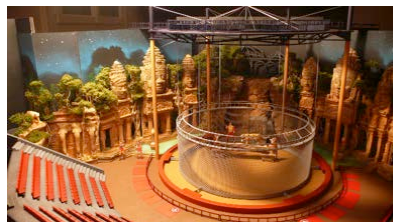
Thesis on "Valuating Urban Heritage in a Development Perspective in Lebanon". She also holds an MA in Cultural Heritage from UCL. She has previously worked for ICOMOS, the Lebanese NGO Biladi, Heritage for Peace Building and Patrimoine Sans Frontières.

Pierre Della Bianca and Michelle el Ferzley joined GAIA-heritage team as interns for summer and fall 2014. Holding a B.A in international affairs from the University of St. Gallen, Switzerland, Pierre also interned at the Swiss Embassy of China before coming back to Lebanon. Michelle is a recent graduate of Wellesley College who majored in Art History and Economics. Her research interests include architectural and urban histories of the Islamic world.

## News from Our Friends Creatime- Tiger World

[Creatime](#) is preparing the scenery and staging of a tiger training show - a dialogue between mankind, tigers and nature. The show will soon become a permanent attraction at Amnéville zoo in Northern France.

**Tiger Word** is the result of a joint collaboration between Creatime, Michel Louis (zoo director), Rémy Flachaire (trainer) and Francis Hugon (decors designer and constructor).



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