

Welcoming Address



Cultural heritage has been handed down from the past, is important in the present and should be preserved for the future. In a rapidly changing world, it can be a source of identification and continuity. Heritage as a concept implies that it will continue to exist for generations. Maintaining our cultural heritage is not only a theoretical concern but also plays an important role in the economy and employment for craftsman and the real estate industry as well as in tourism.

This is exactly where the leading European trade fair *denkmal Leipzig* comes in. It is the Europe-wide meeting place for experts who deal with the topics of monument preservation, restoration and old building renovation. With its combination of exhibition and extensive conference programme, *denkmal* is regarded throughout Europe as the industry's most important platform for further education and training and offers the opportunity for interdisciplinary and cross-border exchange. *denkmal* is an impressive example of the fact that trade fairs do not just perform an economic function. They bring companies and customers from a wide range of different branches together and thus serve as both a political bridge-builder and a catalyst for social cohesion. That is why it was only logical that the trade fair was one of the three highlights in the German contribution to the European Cultural Heritage Year 2018.

The fact that this successful concept also works outside Germany has been demonstrated by the restoration fairs modelled on *denkmal Leipzig* in Moscow, *denkmal Russia-Moscow*, and Heritage Preservation International (HPI) in Shanghai, which have been respectively in existence since 2011 and 2015. The rising exhibitor and visitor numbers illustrate the great interest in the topics and prove that exhibitors and partners benefit from experience and networks in these countries. The trio *denkmal Leipzig*, *denkmal Russia-Moscow* and HPI have also succeeded in encouraging international discourse on the preservation of cultural heritage and in establishing the specialist topics of monument preservation and restoration at international trade fairs.

Leipziger Messe would like to thank the German National Committee of ICOMOS and ICOMOS Russia, especially Prof Jörg Haspel and Leonid Kondrashev, for their outstanding commitment to the preservation of historical-cultural heritage at national and international level. We would also like to express our appreciation for the numerous joint projects that have resulted from this endeavour and for the many years of cooperation. We look forward to many more collaborations at *denkmal 2020* and beyond.

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