SERFENTA

RECOMMENDATIONS

WORKSHOP INTANGIBLE HERITAGE BE

EUROPA NOSTRA AWARD

Bruges, Belgium, 28 September 2023

Dear colleagues,

With much affection, we share this letter of support for Serfenta Association.

The Serfenta Association paves new ways for tradition of intangible cultural heritage in today's world.

Serfenta NGO, also accredited under the UNESCO 2003 Convention, commits to sharing, promoting, making accessible and managing knowledge about the living heritage of basketry weaving. Their activities over the past 15 years have covered research, educational activities like craft experience workshops, expert events, new services based on craft, interdisciplinary connections.

However, their energizing and inspiring approaches reach much further.
Serfenta creates connections between generations with a strong appeal to young people and new audiences.
The Serfenta team is working with a vibrant passion to make craft accessible with and for all. They share the pleasure of experience, joy of creativity and the values of connections with the nature everywhere you meet them.
All of their actions are connected with 'making by hand', sharing its practical wisdom and the benefits it brings for well-being and mental health in contemporary living.
Serfenta reaches out, thinks out of the box and travels across many borders, weaving and creating new connections and links, networks and paths with cultural heritage in Europe.

Serfenta's work has recently also been awarded the Jeonju International Award for Promoting Intangible Cultural Heritage (JIAPICH) for their successful work on sustainable business development in crafts.

I recommend their work and I wish them every success in the future work,

Jorijn Neyrinck
NGO Workshop intangible heritage (Belgium)

Sint-Jakobsstraat 36 | 8000 Brugge
(maatschappelijke zetel)
0473 38 19 07

Werkplaats immaterieel erfgoed
immaterieelerfgoed.be
info@werkplaatsimmaterieelerfgoed.be

September 18, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to recommend The Serfenta Association for their application to the European Heritage Awards 2024.

I met the team from the Serfenta Association while attending the UNESCO ICH conference in Rabat, Morocco in 2022. The Serfenta Association's work in the preservation and perpetuation of Poland's rich history of basket weaving, has been recognized around the world. The importance of intangible cultural heritage is often overlooked, yet they have brought a spotlight to it through their innovative programs. Not only does the Serfenta Association hold workshops to teach the craft of basketmaking, but they have also created a business model that incorporates the traditional craft of Polish basket weaving into the modern world.

This year, my organization, Art for Refugees in Transition, will partner with the Serfenta Association to create a program to benefit Ukrainian refugees living in Poland, using basket weaving and storytelling. This program will help to strengthen the community's knowledge of their culture and identity and help improve the well-being of the refugees and their host community's mental health.

I close this letter in strong support of the Serfenta Association and believe that they will continue to add great value to the preservation and evolution of European heritage. If you have any questions, I can be contacted via e-mail at info@artforrefugees.org or by phone at +1-917-757-6191.

Yours truly,

Sara Green
Executive Director

100 Bank Street, 5G, New York, New York, 10014, USA
1.917.757.6191 info@artforrefugees.org www.artforrefugees.org

Date: 10 October 2023

Recommendation for the Serfenta Association

Europa Nostra Award 2023

I recommend the Serfenta Association for this year's Europa Nostra Award. In my opinion, the organization's work requires special attention and notice. I met the Association while working on the JIAPICH 2022 award as a member of the jury. JIAPICH, Jeonju International Award for Promoting Intangible Cultural Heritage is the international award given by the Korean city of Jeonju and the CICS, the Centre for International Cultural Studies. Serfenta was on the long list of nominees and the team got the award as one of three winners.

Only two women, Paulina Adamska and Łucja Cieślar manage the Serfenta team. Together they outline the shape and future of basketry in Poland, and its neighbours. The Serfenta Association has a complex, well-thought-out strategy for its future. After years of research on traditional basketry in Poland, where the research team collected the knowledge about all basketry materials and techniques that are in use in Poland, then they took the time to study the skills of weaving. The Serfenta's research focussed on collecting knowledge and skills together. It was possible due to researchers and craft instructors, who were invited to be part of the team. All achievements concerning basketry materials and the art of weaving allowed the team to plan further, long-term goals including education.

Serfenta designed strategies for the protection of disappearing materials. They also know how to interest the younger generation in basketry and expand the craft to all interested people. Serfenta opens its studio and workshop to everyone who just wants to try the craft experience. Thanks to stories about the charm of natural materials and the opportunity to try even the simplest weaves, anyone can become part of the Serfenta's craft world. Crafts are egalitarian, for youngsters and seniors, no matter age, sex, skills or the place of origin.

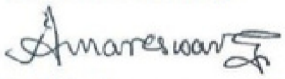
This is a new approach to the craft, which until now has been based on long-term, intensive practice in the work of older masters of this craft. Today these two women, Paulina Adamska and Łucja Cieślar, take us to the world of crafts in a modern way. They know how to talk about crafts and how to teach it in an attractive, beautiful way, making them widely accessible. One example can be mathematics lessons for children, during which knowledge about the value of manual work is provided and the price of craft products is calculated.

In 2023, Serfenta is taking part in the very original concept, the School of Craft in Cieszyn town, where the organisation has its base in the south of Poland. Six craft workshops, including the Serfenta basket-making workshop, teach crafts to a registered group of people all year round. The idea is to make the crafts accessible for all. Paulina Adamska took part in preparing

the idea of this School, sharing her experience, including educational and anthropological studies and graduation from the Folk Arts and Crafts University. The interest that this idea gathered shows already a great success of this concept, in which the Serfenta Association takes active part and is the creator of basketry workshops.

The above-mentioned characteristics fit with the objectives of the Europa Nostra award. The education model of Serfenta is one of the good practices in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. I believe the experience of the Team strengthens and stimulate the trans-frontier exchange of knowledge throughout Europe, increase public awareness and appreciation of Europe's cultural heritage and encourage further excellent initiatives through the power of example.

With best wishes,



Prof Dr Amareswar Galla,
UNESCO Chair on Inclusive Museums and Sustainable Heritage Development,
Professor of Inclusive Cultural Leadership,
Founding Director, International Institute for the Inclusive Museum
(a.galla@yahoo.com.au)

Hemslöjden

Letter of recommendation

People have been making and using baskets for thousands of years and baskets are found in most places on earth. The techniques are similar around the world even though the materials tend to be local. Baskets are still used for different purposes all over the world. However, the craftspeople skilled in basketry techniques are becoming fewer and fewer.

The knowledge of how to make baskets is an excellent example of an intangible cultural heritage. It is one of the mankinds oldest crafts and still today all baskets are made by hand. The craft association in Sweden has been working with different ways of safekeeping the knowledge for the future, and this is when we came to know of the polish company of Sefenta.

Serfenta is a great example of an organisation / business showing that is it possible to combine deep knowledge with a cooperation model. Their work contribute to basketmakers beeing able to sell their products as well as giving a variety of important activities such as workshops, research and exhibition that educates and increase peoples understanding of the baskets unique and yet fragile position as an intangible cultural heritage.

We have been following the work and methods of Serfenta as a inspiring example for other organisations to learn from, not only in Poland, but world wide. We would highly recommend Serfenta as a receiver of The European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards.

Stockholm 26 of september

Sofia Månsson
Skånes Hemslöjdsförbund, hemslojdeniskane.se
+46 70 918 80 77 sofia.mansson@hemslojdeniskane.se

Helena Åberg
Sörmlands Museum, sormlandsmuseum.se
+46 70 946 15 26 helena.aberg@regionsormland.se

Agneta Carlson
Svenska Hemslöjdsföreningarnas Riksförbund, hemslojden.org
+46 8 545 494 52 agneta.carlson@hemslojden.org

Sept. 18, 2023

Letter of Recommendation for the Serfenta Association

Dear Executive Committee for the European Heritage Awards,
As a UNESCO Accredited NGO member affiliated with the Serfenta Association (hereafter referred to as "Serfenta"), I am delighted to present this letter of recommendation in support of its application for the European Heritage Awards. I have been acquainted with Serfenta since its inception as an active participant in the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) NGOFORM.
The Serfenta Association is under the capable leadership of Director Paulina Adamska, an esteemed figure in the traditional Polish basketry sector located in the city of Cieszyn, Poland. Situated near the Czech Republic border, Director Adamska and her team, comprising talented young female professionals, have played a pivotal role in preserving and propagating the art of Polish basketry among the broader populace. They have achieved this through a diverse range of initiatives, including workshops, educational programs, online forums, and sustainable business operations.

I have had the privilege of getting to know the passionate advocates of traditional basketry from Serfenta during their visits to Jeonju, Korea, where my organization is based, in both 2021 and 2022. In 2021, their inaugural visit to Korea culminated in a collaborative effort to promote Poland's traditional basketry through an international forum hosted by my center, the Center for Intangible Culture Studies (CICS). This fruitful encounter led to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), solidifying our commitment to fostering enduring relationships and facilitating the exchange of research and educational endeavors in the realm of ICH.

Their return to Korea in 2022 coincided with their participation in the prestigious 2022 Jeonju International Awards for Promoting Intangible Cultural Heritage (JIAPICH), where they emerged as one of the three finalists. Serfenta's receipt of this esteemed award from Jeonju City unequivocally underscores the immense dedication and scholarly rigor they have invested in researching and promoting Poland's traditional basketry.
What truly distinguishes Serfenta in my eyes is its remarkable self-sufficiency and independence. Serfenta stands as a shining example of an NGO that embodies the essence of self-reliance. They have established an elegant website, exemplifying their motto of "Research to Business," where Serfenta members serve as international mediators, bridging the gap between master craftsmen and consumers on a global scale.
In Serfenta's members, I see the vanguard of the next generation of ICH custodians. Those of us in the international ICH community recognize the significance of not only nurturing the bearers of ICH but also empowering our facilitators. Therefore, it is with great honor and enthusiasm that I wholeheartedly endorse the Serfenta Association for the European Heritage Awards. They represent not only the torchbearers of the ICH field's future but also deserving recipients of the vital support and funding essential for their invaluable contributions, which not only enrich their local basketry culture but also facilitate the global dissemination of Polish Basketry to a diverse international audience.

Hanhee Hahm
Director
The Center for Intangible Culture Studies
285 Gweonsamdeuk-ro, Deokjin-gu
Jeonju, Korea
Phone: +82 10 9588 3285
Email: hanheeh@jbnu.ac.kr

Recommendation letter from Søre Skogen, Norway.

Søre Skogen is an ecological farm in the western part of Norway. Apart from running the farm we are doing educational work connected to farming, but also giving workshops in different crafts, mainly basketry. Each year we have quite a few groups coming to learn and get inspired by old building techniques, ecological farming, sustainable living and basket weaving.

We have cooperated with Serfenta since 2014 and got to know the organization through a EEC funded project that we named " Viva Basket!" The project lasted during several years and consisted of fieldworks in both Poland and Norway looking into old basket traditions. The result of our findings was presented in an exhibition that traveled all over southern Norway, but of course also in Poland and other countries. Serfenta was also hosting an international basketry conference, where one of the questions discussed was the future of the old heritage that basketry represents.

During these years we have been cooperating with Serfenta we got to know the people as a professional, hardworking, well organized and skillful group. They have proven their ability to complete projects of great complexity, and bringing forth the knowledge and traditions connected to basketry. During the years they have made connections and built network with craft people and scholars all over the world, and while doing so playing an important role in sharing more and better knowledge about basketry, an important cultural heritage.

It is a pleasure to highly recommend Serfenta.

Sincerely,
Drude Isene
~~www.soreskogen.no~~



RESEAU INTERNATIONAL POUR LE DEVELOPPEMENT DE L'ARTISANAT- RED INTERNACIONAL PARA EL DESARROLLO DE LA ARTESANIA- INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR CRAFT DEVELOPEMENT- www.ridanet.org/ www.facebook.com/ridanet.org

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

I have the honour to express my support of the application of Serventa Association, Poland for the 2022 Jeonju International Awards for Promoting Intangible Cultural Heritage.

I am well aware of the achievements of Serfenta Association, a recognized Polish non-governmental organization active in the field of basket making. Since 2015, as the former Director of Crafts and Design at UNESCO and as President of the International Network for Crafts Developement- RIDA, I have been following closely the activities and projects of Serfenta in research, training, design and promotion of basketry as a significant element of the intangible cultural heritage.

Among the numerous achievements of Serfenta Association, I wish to highlight its sustained efforts in ensuring the inscription of the traditional techniques and know-how of local basket weaving communities on the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage and subsequently for its recognition on the UNESCO Representative List.

Moreover, it is worth recalling that Serfenta Association has a proven record of realizations for the safeguard and promotion of this heritage through its several training workshops with Polish master weavers for the transmission of traditional techniques, with local designers for the combination of tradition and modernity to respond to contemporary needs and market demands and with promoters of basket weaving in other countries, namely in the Republic of Korea, India and Thailand.

Above all, Serfenta is reputed for its unique World Festival of Wicker and Basketry. This Festival provides a unique venue for the promotion of this intangible cultural heritage by bringing together weavers from all the continents. I can testify the professional interest of foreign participants in this exchange of ideas, experiences and knowledge as well as the pride of the Polish visitors at large for this showcase of their national cultural heritage.

In the light of the above considerations, I am pleased to certify that Serfenta Association is worthy of the Jeonju International Awards for the Promotion of Intangible Cultural Heritage.This Award will be not only a due recognition of the valuable achievements of this non-for profit Association but also a notable encouragement to pursue its projects and activities, both in Poland and at the international level.

Done in Paris, 28 April 2022

Indrasen Vencatachellum

President of RIDA

Museum
Europäischer Kulturen
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Museum Europäischer Kulturen · Staatliche Museen zu Berlin
Im Winkel 8 · 14195 Berlin

Sofia Botvinnik
Wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin
Im Winkel 8
14195 Berlin

Telefon: +49 30 266-42 68 14
s.botvinnik@smb.spk-berlin.de
www.smb.museum/mek

Berlin, 29. September 2023

Letter of Reference for Serfenta

Dear Sir or Madame,

I am one of the curators of the major special exhibition “ALL HANDS ON: Basketry” in the Museum Europäischer Kulturen (Museum of European Cultures) in Berlin, Germany. Basketry is a cultural technique that is thousands of years old, practised worldwide, regionally distinctive and still a handicraft in the truest sense of the word. Humans alone have mastered the complex weaving method, with no machine capable of replacing their artisanship. The exhibition focuses on this fascinating skill and reveals the interconnections between historically evolved knowledge and modern innovations.

The exhibition’s four sections – People, Protection, Material and Patterns – offer visitors the chance to discover numerous woven everyday objects from across Europe stemming from the museum’s collection. The different topics are illustrated by various multi-media stations showing additional information such as movies demonstrating different weaving techniques. For this tasked we have worked closely together with Serfenta who have done extensive research in the field of safeguarding weaving techniques. Their ethnographical research and documentation are a vital source of knowledge for a craft that in some regions only a few still practice. In addition, the MEK has hosted Serfenta for a workshop in Polish coiling techniques in autumn of 2022. The workshop has been very successful, bringing together a very varied group of people to the museum to learn a weaving technique together. The members of Serfenta are very skilled teachers, their passion for the craft shows in their workshops. All has been extremely professionally organized and the participants have been very happy with their results.

I hope to consider Serfenta’s application as their work is one of the very few examples of an organization working on safeguarding a craft by promoting skills and high quality products.

Best wishes

Sofia Botvinnik

Musum Europäischer Kulturen

Dear Executive Committee

Zamek Cieszyn, which is the Polish regional design centre, has been cooperating with Serfenta for several years. We know excellent projects and realizations of Serfenta. We had an unique opportunity to observe the growth of the Association, from an organisation that started out as an ethnographic study of braiding to a globally recognised ngo, specialising in combining crafts and business. Now, after the very consequent way of development, they offer their customers not only contact with crafts, but also a specific craft experience (e.g. a craft tour), which is the best way to preserve the intangible cultural heritage.

Serfenta has developed a unique selling proposition and very interesting business model as the association working in the field of intangible heritage. That is very impressive that their customers are not only local, but they come all over the world (e.g. Japan, South Korea, Canada).

As the design center we really appreciate what they do in the field of combing tradition and design. We had the opportunity to present some of the exhibitions prepared by Serfenta and design students from Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków. Their project was also selected for the exhibition presenting finalists of the competition "Silesian Icon" organized by us.

Serfenta has a great contribution into transferring braiding skills to young designers. Because their projects are not only traditional, but have the modern form as well, Serfenta has a big impact on the popularisation of craft among youth. Also the workshops organized by Serfenta are well recognized and in Poland are quite unique possibility to learn braiding. They also became a member of the Network of "New Craftsmen" in Poland, organized by us.

Serfenta is recognized with the ingenuity, innovation and quality of implementation of the projects. They are also known for their professionalism in preserving the intangible heritage, they work in the field, but also cooperate with the best experts from around the world to enhance their knowledge and skills. Serfenta has not only unconventional ideas, but also the courage to put them into practice. We consider cooperation with Serfenta as a very valuable and recommendable experience and their contribution to intangible cultural heritage conservation is indisputable.

Signature:

ZAMEK CIESZYN
zastępca dyrektora
Lubomira Trojan

Name of the recommender: Lubomira Trojan
Affiliation: Zamek Cieszyn
Date: 26.05.2022