European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards (2024)
569-Education, Training and Skills 3. Education, Training & Skills

"Escuela de Carpinteria de lo Blanco de Narros del Castillo".

jezOEWNW

Entry details

General information

Main country of application	Spain
Registration number	HA2024-ES-30

Brief description of the project

> "White Carpentry" was the carpentry technique that from the 13th century to the 18th century made possible the construction of the roof trusses and wooden coffered ceilings that today cover thousands of religious and civil buildings in Spain. The creation of the Narros del Castillo White Carpentry school was born with the aim of teaching new generations of carpenters, architects, restorers and professions related to the conservation of heritage, this lost trade and reclaiming its category as an intangible asset for use of future generations.

Start date of the project	2014-10-06
Completion date of the project/initiative	Continues today
Website(s) of the project/nominee	carpinteriamudejardelamoraña.com
Facebook page of the project, if any	Angel Maria Martín Lopez. Carpinteria de lo Blanco. Escuela de carpintería de lo Blanco
Instagram page of the project, if any	Angel María Martín López
Does the site or heritage in question have national/regional/local cultural heritage designation or protection status in its country?	Yes

If yes, please specify:

> Although there are thousands of coffered ceilings and covers, made with the White carpentry technique that are preserved in the Iberian Peninsula and America, not all of them have a figure of protection. Despite this, there are numerous examples that in Spain have the highest category of protection (they are those declared BIC, "Asset of Cultural Interest")Aunque son miles los artesonados y cubiertas, realizados con la técnica de la carpinteria de lo Blanco que en La peninsula Iberica y America se conservan, no todos tienen una figura de protección. A pesar de eso son numerosos los ejemplos que en España tienen la máxima categoría de protección (Son los declarados BIC, "Bien de Interes Cultural")

Is the site or heritage in question included on the UNESCO World Heritage List, either as a single World Heritage Site or as part of one larger site?	Yes

If yes, please specify:

> Alhambra de Granada.

If relevant, is the site/heritage accessible to the public?	Yes

If relevant, is the site/heritage accessible to people with disabilities?

> The most important buildings that have coffered ceilings, yes. Although there are still places where this access has not yet been provided.

Contact details

Name of the entrant	Angel Maria Martin Lopez
Entrant's position	Creator and director of the project.
Organisation of the entrant	CICMA. (Centro de Interpretación de la Carpinteria Mudejar de Ávila). "Escuela de Carpintería de lo blanco de Narros del Castillo.
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Website of the entrant	https://carpinteriamudejardelamoraña.com
Organisation of the owner	CICMA

Name of the project leader	Angel María Martín López
Project leader's position	Teacher.
Organisation of the project leader	"Escuela de carpintería de lo Blanco de Narros del Castillo".
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Concise summary

Concise summary

The practically total oblivion of the historical techniques of "white carpentry", and its usefulness for the restoration of coffered ceilings and lacework roofs, motivated the creation of the "White Carpentry School", whose objectives are, on the one hand , the recovery of the carpentry technique as an intangible and irreplaceable asset and, on the other hand, the training of professionals capable of undertaking restoration and new construction projects, remaining faithful to the traditional rules of the trade. After 7 years of experience, there are already numerous students with a very varied profile (architects, surveyors, restorers, artists, carpenters, students) who have gone through the white carpentry school of Narros del Castillo. Some of them have been part of restoring projects of Spanish-Muslim roof trusses, others have incorporated structural and decorative aspects of lariat carpentry into their work, several university teachers have added white carpentry to their training plans as part irreplaceable part of the history of Spanish art, until now missing from study programs. It seems very important to us to give visibility to this carpentry technique, until now completely unknown, whose own characteristics differentiate it from other historical carpentry in countries around us, thus increasing the heritage of traditional European crafts.
Thanks to the transfer of the building of the old schools of the town of Narros del Castillo (Avila), by the municipal corporation, the project was able to begin. The training is free, the school is a non-profit project. The contribution requested from students is intended to pay for the material and syllabus provided in each course, the rest, if any, to purchase the wood and materials necessary for the creation of the didactic models that are the objects of study. In 2015, the contribution of each student was 40 euros for the training of a 25-hour course, the fee has been gradually increasing and is currently 150 euros for 30 hours. The number of attendees is around 20 per course. The continuity of the school is carried out depending on the students who become interested in each course that is proposed. We are currently the only training center in Spain that is exclusively dedicated to teaching white carpentry. carrying out a training program of four courses a year.

Objectives and work undertaken

Aims and objectives of the project/initiative

The fundamental objective that we set at the beginning was the training of professionals related to the numerous lignary heritage that our country has. Given that the professions involved in a restoration project are multiple, we wanted to bring the craft and carpentry techniques historically used to the different profiles involved (architects, restorers, historians, builders, carpenters, students, artists). On the other hand, it was of our interest to create a program of theoretical and practical content that encompasses the techniques historically used in our carpentry, from the point of view of design, layout and execution. The aspect of promotion and visualization of the school in our country is one of our main challenges because we see it as a fundamental tool so that the knowledge of white carpentry extends beyond specialized areas and can one day be part of the baggage of knowledge acquired in regulated vocational and academic training. We think that the first requirement to value is to know, that is why we wanted to give the school a traveling character to go, both on demand and on our own initiative, to a multitude of towns that have exceptional examples of historical carpentry and tell the history of the trade and the carpenters who built them.

Any historical and technical research undertaken for the project/initiative

> Diego Lopez de Arenas was a Sevillian Alarife who lived in the 17th century. He wrote a treatise on carpentry with the recipes and techniques of the trade used in his environment and in his time. Once recovered, it has been the result of studies throughout history, from which it has been possible to recover almost the main corpus of a trade that reigned in wooden constructions from the 13th to the 17th century. But White carpentry, as we say in school, does not begin or end with the medieval manuscripts found, since there were many centuries of tradition and many places where it was practiced on the peninsula. In these years we have been able to incorporate many new aspects into the school's training plans in each restoration or intervention in which we have participated. As an example, we have been able to confirm the existence of remains of ancient coffered ceilings on current roofs that were unknown. Or document new ways of constructing roof trusses that go beyond what has been taken as the norm. Planimeters have also been made for the first time of the historical reinforcements studied in the courses.

Activities carried out and stages of implementation of the project/initiative

> As a starting point, in 2014 the rooms of the old schools in the town of Narros del Castillo were renovated to adapt them to the new uses of the project, thus a carpentry workshop was set up and the furniture was installed to implement the training work. In the inaugural course, the first frames destined to form part of the exhibition collection of the "Mudejar Carpinteria Interpretation Center of La Moraña" were built. From now on, and as a fundamental part of the project, training courses, both introductory and more advanced, have been carried out throughout the time that the school has been in operation. (specifically, 18 courses have been carried out). In the heat of these courses, reproductions of roof trusses from the region around Narros del Castillo (Villamayor, San Pedro del Arroyo, Langa) and numerous didactic models that represent the different manifestations of Spanish historical carpentry have been made. In the province of Avila, informative presentations have been held in various towns that have requested it. At the University of Salamanca, conferences have been given on White carpentry requested by the History faculty. The Polytechnic University of Madrid hosted a sample of the work carried out in the courses taught where in turn we were able to explain to architecture students the true scope of our carpentry through the centuries. The school has also participated in conferences on White carpentry in Elvas (Portugal). Toledo (Historical carpentry courses) and La laguna (Tenerife). From the point of view of restoration work, we have intervened in the restoration of the roof reinforcement of the churches of Langa (Avila), Moriscos (Salamanca), Cuevas del Valle (Avila).

Challenges or problems encountered and solutions found to overcome them

> Our first challenge was to fight against the lack of knowledge that exists in our own country about white carpentry, because as we already said, we believe that it is the origin of the little interest it aroused in some areas. Naturally, dissemination and giving visibility to the school is another permanent challenge that lately and thanks to social networks is becoming easier. Furthermore, the number of people and institutions that know us and count on the school is increasing. One of the attractions that the town implemented to encourage people to join the courses was to offer the transient shelter as accommodation during the course.

Results and impact

Summary of the main results achieved and knowledge that has been gained. List the ways that the project/initiative contributes to the preservation and/or enhancement of the historical, cultural, environmental, educational and/or social values of the heritage in question. Mention the project's impact on conservation policy and practice, if any.

> 1st Training of the students who have attended the courses.
> 2nd dissemination of the heritage of historical deck trusses of the province of Avila in particular and the peninsula in general.
> 3rd incorporation of white carpentry into the training plans of formal education in some universities
> 4th advice to restoration companies and local heritage recovery plans
> 5th creation of training content for teaching white carpentry
> 6th incorporation into the labor market of school students as white carpenters

7th restoration and recovery of armor
8th creation of the visitable interpretation center of the Mudejar carpentry of Avila
9th investigation of technical aspects used in white carpentry
10th educational reproductions of deck armor from the province of Avila
Knowledge of white carpentry techniques makes it possible to undertake restoration and recovery tasks of wood heritage with efficiency and sense, and contributes to improving and preserving a multitude of armor and coffered ceilings. Likewise, this knowledge is the direct way to value and therefore appreciate our heritage, since in many cases it is the main tourist asset of hundreds of almost unpopulated towns that have exceptional coffered ceilings and historic ceilings in their churches that are centuries old. Giving visibility to this fact would help alleviate the lack of attractions and in some way its depopulation.

Aspects of the project that can be considered innovative within its area or field.

The Narros del Castillo school is the only training center in the world dedicated exclusively to teaching white carpentry. For this reason, we have already said that an entire program of theoretical and practical content has been implemented to achieve mastery in the trade. Likewise, we consider that its operation contributes to preserving the intangible heritage of the techniques used for centuries in the construction of reinforcements and lace coffered ceilings. We also consider it innovative to have an exhibition collection of models of historical and didactic armor designed to visualize and make the achievements of this carpentry more understandable to the general public. We are aware that there are more professionals in Spain who make and restore coffered ceilings and roof trusses, but what moves us is to make this work known and not keep it as if it were a secret.

Measures to ensure the sustainability/future viability of the project (in terms of future plans and funding).

We believe that the continuity of the school depends on maintaining the current conditions of collaboration with the town of Narros del Castillo. To guarantee this collaboration, we trust in the prestige that the school has acquired in terms of the quality of its teaching, which will have an impact on attendance. future of students to the courses, attendance at the courses provides business and life to the town, which with its 150 inhabitants, apart from being known for having a spectacular coffered ceiling in its church, is also already known for hosting the school. More teachers who can continue the training work will join the team. Given that the space has already become too small, the municipal corporation is considering incorporating another building that can house the future structures that are built. The work of teachers will continue to be unpaid.

Environmental sustainability of the project and contribution to climate action (in terms of results, techniques, materials employed, methodologies etc.), if relevant.

The use of wood as a material for the construction of roof trusses makes them ecological structures par excellence, and it is also renewable. On the other hand, many processes in the production of these covers require being carried out with manual tools, which makes them a product in which the human factor is decisive as it is far from mechanized and industrial mass production.

Dissemination of the project's results and knowledge gained and any outreach or educational activities.

In our case, we think that the best disseminators of the project are the students themselves, who with their evaluations have contributed to the school having a place in the panorama of training centers for traditional trades in Spain. Thus the school is within the network of traditional construction teachers.

Participation in the initiative (number of participants/audience/users per year and/or, in the case of websites and digital platforms, information regarding visitor numbers and online interaction).

The calendar of training courses is four a year and 20 students enroll in each course. The publication is made through the website of the Mudejar Carpentry Interpretation Center of Avila and through the Facebook profiles (380 followers) and Instagram (500 followers) in the name of Angel María Martín López. Also on Facebook with the name Escuela de Carpintería de lo blanco (150 followers).

Involvement of youth, community and/or non-traditional audiences.

> The school has participated in the dissemination of white carpentry to schoolchildren and children through introductory lacemaking workshops and interactive demonstrations of roof truss construction.

Contribution to intercultural dialogue and to the protection of cultural diversity.

> It is in the DNA of the origin of Spanish carpentry, since it was the fusion of cultures that made its formation possible, taking the structures of Central European origin and ornament from the Eastern world. Today the interests in white carpentry that we teach in school come from all over the world and all cultures. Students of various nationalities have already begun to attend some courses, creating an enriching multicultural environment.

Transferability of the initiative to other contexts and its scalability potential.

> One of the objectives set at the beginning of the project was that the school would be "travelling" to provide training wherever it was requested, thus courses have been given in several cities and towns in Spain. Continuing along this line, we believe that this initiative could well be exported to other European countries to share this carpentry technique with other similar schools.

Any related work that still needs to be completed, if applicable.

> The school is carrying out a research project on historical wooden lacework domes and how the construction tradition of spherical lacework could be continued in current constructions.

European and international dimension

European significance of the project/initiative/nominee.

> We believe that the incorporation of White carpentry into the cultural heritage of European carpentry traditions will enrich this field of traditional wood construction that is so important in Europe. This cultural exchange, we think, is a fundamental axis in the cohesion between the different peoples of Europe.Likewise, there are many countries in America that have coffered ceilings built with the white carpentry technique during the 16th and 17th centuries and that require specific knowledge for their conservation that we think our project could provide.We also think that our school's model could be valid for other European countries as a tool to avoid, to some extent, the depopulation of the rural world by relying on the rich heritage they have.

Costs of the project/initiative

Costs of the project (in euro), financial and management arrangements, funding partners and/or the type of funding.

> Initially (2014) a grant of €10,000 was received from the Excma. Provincial Council of Avila, intended for the conditioning of the premises provided by the Hon. Narros del Castillo City Council, and also the purchase of teaching materials, furniture and tools. Since then the school has not received any type of subsidy or financial aid, it is financed exclusively by the money from the registration fees of the students attending the courses (From the 40 euros that the first course cost to the current €150. amounts destined to maintenance of the premises, teaching materials, documentation, preparation of syllabi, purchase of wood, etc.) the training is free. The Narros del Castillo City Council, to the extent of its possibilities, also supports the school financially by taking charge of reprography, photocopying, electricity for the premises, and gas cylinders for the stoves.

Funding provided by the European Union or the EEA/Norway Grants (including programme, year and amount of the Grant), if any.

> We have not received any subsidies from the European Union.

Additional information

How would winning the European Heritage Award / Europa Nostra Award benefit you, your project and/or your organisation?

> For the school, it would mean recognition of a work whose purpose is the recovery of a forgotten trade, also a call to attention to the institutions to support the Carpinteria de lo Blanco school in the future. On the other hand, the great beneficiaries would be the hundreds of forgotten wooden roofs in many other towns in the rural environment that would see their great historical, architectural and cultural value recognized in some way.

In case this submission is the winner of the Grand Prix, what will the monetary award be used for?

> Without hesitation in improving the premises where we teach classes since they already require certain maintenance (painting, roof repair, etc.) and in the acquisition of heating equipment for the winter.

In case this submission is the winner of the Grand Prix, who will be the recipient of the monetary award?

> The money would go to the Lo Blanco Carpentry School in Narros del Castillo. And the Director of the school (Angel María Martín López) in consensus with the municipal corporation of the Town of Narros del Castillo would be in charge of managing it.

How did you find out about the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards?	Word of mouth
Is this the first time that this entry has been submitted to the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards?	Yes
On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you with this online submission form?	✓ 10
By submitting your data, photographs and other material to the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards you agree to the processing and sharing of your data in accordance with Europa Nostra's Privacy Policy. Please check the box to indicate you agree with the Privacy Policy.	✓

Log in to european-heritage.awardsplatform.com to see complete entry attachments.



Children's lacem... 361 KiB



School activities.... 198 KiB



Exercise carried ... 326 KiB



"Fundamentals ... 209 KiB



Preparation with... 229 KiB



The octagonal ro... 252 KiB



Course students... 128 KiB



II Historical Asse... 137 KiB



Students of the ... 266 KiB



Roof reinforcem... 257 KiB



Reproduction of ... 227 KiB



Restoration of t... 5.3 MiB



Course for youn... 5.4 MiB



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Poster announci... 6.9 MiB



Layout practices... 5.7 MiB



Advice on restor... 3.2 MiB



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Coffered ceiling.... 243 KiB



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20 - MARZO 2023... 41 KiB

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35 - MARZO 2023... 132 KiB

18 - MARZO 2023... 41 KiB

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