



EMYA2024

Annual Conference & Awards Ceremony

1 - 4 May 2024 ≈ Portimão



THE WINNERS OF EMYA2024 ARE ANNOUNCED!

Press release - 4 May 2024

The European Museum Forum is happy to announce the winners of the European Museum of the Year Awards for 2024. The winners in different categories under the EMYA scheme were presented on the last day of the EMYA2024 Annual Conference and Awards Ceremony that was held on 1-4 May 2024 in Portimão.

Organised by the European Museum Forum and hosted by the Municipality of Portimão, the event took place in a traditional EMYA format with a physical, rich and intense annual conference and award ceremony and brought together members of the EMYA community including this year's nominees, former winners, partners and friends.

This year, the main theme of the conference was defined as "Museums in Pursuit of Social Impact".

The European Museum Forum expresses its gratitude to the 50 nominated museums who kept faith with EMYA in applying and in welcoming the judges. Special thanks go to our partners for their continuous support for EMF, as well as about 250 participants who joined us in Portimão and kept the event alive.



THE EMYA – EUROPEAN MUSEUM OF THE YEAR AWARD

Presented by Amina Krvavac, Chair of the EMYA Jury

Each year, the European Museum of the Year Award goes to a museum which contributes profoundly to our understanding of the world as well as to the development of new paradigms and professional standards in museums. Within a distinctive overall atmosphere, the winning museum shows creative and imaginative approaches to the production of knowledge, to interpretation, presentation, and social responsibility - all from a transparent base of core values of democracy, human rights, and inter-cultural dialogue, a commitment to sustainability, a practice of inclusion and community participation, and a recognition of conflicts and the courage needed to confront them.

The 2024 winner of the European Museum of the Year Award, Sámi Museum Siida is a museum that distinguishes itself by enabling ethical participation and inclusive conservation practices. The museum has shown excellence in its open, participatory, and transparent integration process, which creates new opportunities for local communities and the broader population to link past and present. It effectively equips citizens to understand cultural dialogue and provides professional leadership in bridging cultures through ethical restitutions and reparations in culture and heritage.

The Winner of the EMYA - European Museum of the Year Award 2024

[Sámi Museum Siida](#), Inari, FINLAND



Exterior view of Siida - Sámi Museum and Nature Centre by Nina Nuorgam
All rights Sámi Museum Siida

THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE MUSEUM PRIZE

Represented by Ms Luz Martinez-Seijo, Committee on culture, science, education and media of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)

The Council of Europe Museum Prize is awarded to a museum that has contributed significantly to upholding human rights and democratic citizenship, to broadening knowledge and understanding of contemporary societal issues, and to bridging cultures by encouraging inter-cultural dialogue or overcoming social and political borders. The Prize aims to highlight Europe's diverse cultural heritage and the interplay between local and European identities.

Selected by the Culture Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) on 5 December 2023 and awarded at a special ceremony that took place on 16 April 2024 in Strasbourg's Hotel de Ville, the prize was given to the Sybir Memorial Museum, Białystok, POLAND, a museum that works with the strong narrative of deportation, reducing research-based material to the essentials, working with strong spatial images that give a voice to the selected authentic objects, according to the committee representative for the Museum Prize, Constantinos Efstathiou (Cyprus, SOC). Sybir Memorial Museum's ability to convey history through workshops, events, media, publications and new formats is impressive and brings it to a broad audience.

The Winner of the Council of Europe Museum Prize 2024

[Sybir Memorial Museum](#), Białystok, POLAND



Symbolical steel poles. Forest of steel poles brings to mind Siberian taiga or anonymous lost lives. Author: Jan Szewczyk, Copyrights: The Sybir Memorial Museum

THE KENNETH HUDSON AWARD FOR INSTITUTIONAL COURAGE AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY

Presented by Joan Roca, Chair, European Museum Forum

The Kenneth Hudson Award for Institutional Courage and Professional Integrity goes to a museum, a group or an individual – not necessarily an EMYA candidate - to celebrate courageous, at times controversial, museum practices that challenge and expand common perceptions of the role and responsibilities of museums in society.

The 2024 Kenneth Hudson Award for Institutional Courage and Professional Integrity goes to an individual who has been the driving force behind numerous initiatives to safeguard museums and heritage sites across Ukraine by mobilising resources and expertise to protect priceless artefacts and historical landmarks. Through strategic guidance and collaborative efforts, this individual has worked tirelessly to document, digitise, and preserve cultural heritage in areas ravaged by the conflict and to promote the idea of the integral role of cultural heritage in fostering resilience and healing. His unwavering commitment to preserving Ukraine's cultural legacy amidst the ravages of war embodies a spirit of resilience and hope that will inspire future generations.

The Winner of the Kenneth Hudson Award for Institutional Courage and Professional Integrity 2024

Ihor Poshyvailo, Director General of the National Memorial to the Heavenly Hundred Heroes and Revolution of Dignity Museum (Maidan Museum), UKRAINE



Curator Ihor Poshyvailo holds the ceramic cockerel that has become a symbol of Ukrainian resistance. Photograph: Maidanmuseum.org

THE PORTIMÃO MUSEUM PRIZE FOR WELCOMING, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING

Presented by Teresa Mendes and Jose Gameiro, Municipality of Portimão

The Portimão Museum Prize for Welcoming, Inclusion and Belonging celebrates a friendly atmosphere of inclusion, where all elements of the museum, its physical environment, its human qualities, its displays and public programmes, contribute to making everyone feel they are valued and respected and belong in the museum.

The museum which has won this award, Salt Museum, hosts a variety of educational and cultural activities to bring together its community and foster a shared sense of history, industrial heritage, and environmental sustainability. It is a particularly welcoming, dynamic, and engaging place that makes visitors feel at home, listened to, and valued. It has been most impressive in engaging and involving all members of the local community in not only creating the museum but also in its continued development. This is a place full of heart, humility, and a prevailing willingness to make a difference.

The Winner of the Portimão Museum Prize for Welcoming, Inclusion and Belonging 2024 [Salt Museum](#), Messolonghi, GREECE



Salt workers. Traditional harvesting of salt. Photographer-Dimitra Karetsou. Copyright-Diexodos

THE SILLETTO PRIZE FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Presented by Carol Jackson, Silletto Trust

The Silletto Prize for Community Participation and Engagement celebrates a deep, continuous and empowering involvement between a museum and its stakeholders, that places the museum as a point of orientation and reference at the centre of its communities, whether these be local, national, global or otherwise defined.

The museum which has won this award is a small community-driven city museum that empowers its citizens by actively listening, enabling, and caring. Its core values and mission respond to the needs of its community partners. Residents and visitors are encouraged to participate in or initiate new events, exhibitions, tours, and events. This means it is a museum of action that constantly changes. It acts for and with people, and the quantity and originality of projects proposed to or by residents and co-created with a small museum staff is remarkable.

The Winner of the Silletto Prize for Community Participation and Engagement 2024
[Kalamaja Museum](#), Tallinn, ESTONIA



Kalamaja Museum. Copyright: Meeli Küttim Tallinn City Museum

THE MEYVAERT MUSEUM PRIZE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Presented by Stijn Verstraete, Meyvaert/Haerens Group

The Meyvaert Museum Prize for Environmental Sustainability is conferred on a museum which shows an exceptional commitment to reflecting and addressing issues of sustainability and environmental health in its collecting, documentation, displays and public programming as well as in the management of its own social, financial and physical resources.

This museum uses its collections, educational programmes, and a beautiful vegetable and spice garden to address today's –and tomorrow's– societal challenges, including food traditions, building a shared understanding of food inequality and living together in challenging and environmentally minded times. Its commitment to environmental sustainability sustains how it works with different audiences, fosters responsible consumption, and provides its communities with a historical and positive outlook on the changes in technology and approaches to recycling and sustainability over the decades.

The Winner of the Meyvaert Museum Prize for Environmental Sustainability 2024
[Museum of the Home](#), London, UNITED KINGDOM



Family Friendly - Half term activities in Museum Garden. Copyright: The Museum of the Home

THE SPECIAL COMMENDATIONS

Presented by Amina Krvavac, EMYA Chair and Atle Faye, EMYA Jury 2024

Special Commendations are given to museums that have developed a new and innovative approach in specific aspects of their public service and from which other European museums can learn.

Six special commendations were given by the Jury in 2024. (see page 10 for photographs)

[ZOOM Children's Museum](#), Vienna, AUSTRIA

The first museum engages and enables audiences inside and outside the museum, fostering new skills through creative ways to teach young people responsibly and ethically and making the experience fun and memorable. Its co-curated exhibitions and workshops with local artists, engineers, and cultural mediators nurture children's curiosity, creativity, and self-expression, enabling them to reflect critically and discover the world's contemporary issues and trends.

[Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp \(KMSKA\)](#), Antwerp, BELGIUM

The following special commendation goes to an art museum that demonstrates a commitment to rethinking the art institution as a place for dialogue, feeling, playing, experimenting, and creating. Its education and public programmes show exemplary consideration towards not only making art spaces accessible but also raising disability and sensory accessibility awareness in contemporary society.

[Memorial of 1902 I Frank A. Perret Museum](#), Martinique, FRANCE

The third is a museum that has innovatively returned to object-based learning by centring the agency of the people's stories and memories connected to the objects. This is a particularly moving place to rethink the relationship between place, nature, and how generations work through difficult events. The museum's new focus on a cultural approach to recalling people's experience of a volcano natural disaster and its worldwide repercussions is admirable.

[National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design](#), Oslo, NORWAY

The following special commendation goes to an art museum that promotes critical reflection and sets professional standards for best intersectional practice. Its curatorial approach challenges the very canon that it has historically contributed to establishing as a national museum, fragmenting its narrative and interweaving the many cultural threads lost to art historical and visual-national memory.



THE SPECIAL COMMENDATIONS

[Museum and Memorial in Sobibór. German Nazi Extermination Camp \(1942-1943\)](#),
Department of the State Museum at Majdanek, Włodawa, POLAND

The fifth special commendation is a museum that believes in the power of strong personal narratives of remembrance, that human stories are central to ensuring visitors remember the hundreds of thousands who perished at this Polish extermination camp during the Holocaust. Using personal belongings found in situ proves an especially effective curatorial strategy to restore the victims' identity and humanity at this museum and memorial site.

[Museum of Making](#), Derby, UNITED KINGDOM

The sixth and final special commendation goes to a museum that is an example of how industrial heritage can be used in a participatory way to enhance the skills of its visitors and make STEM inclusive and connected to contemporary society. Visitors will find various exhibitions, events, workshops, and hands-on activities, making this manufacturing history museum a dynamic place for creativity, acquiring new skills, experimentation, and cooperation.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE MUSEUMS RECEIVING SPECIAL COMMENDATIONS IN 2024



ZOOM Ocean © ZOOM Children's Museum



The Museum from outside. © The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design



Evil Gallery © Fille Roelants



Museum entrance. © Museum and Memorial in Sobibor



Illuminated east facade of the Musée Frank A. Perret-Mémorial de la catastrophe de 1902, architect Olivier Compère, photographer Jean-Baptiste Barret



Young makers learn a new skill at the Museum of Making © Kate Lowe Photography - Derby Museum



ABOUT THE ORGANISER - EUROPEAN MUSEUM FORUM AND THE EUROPEAN MUSEUM OF THE YEAR AWARD

The European Museum of the Year Award (EMYA) was established in 1977 under the auspices of the Council of Europe to acknowledge excellence within the European museum community.

EMYA has proved to be the longest running and most prestigious museum award in Europe and provides an important platform for benchmarking, networking, exchange of reflections, experience and skills across the wider continent of Europe.

The European Museum Forum (EMF) provides the legal and organisational framework for the annual European Museum of the Year Award scheme (EMYA).

Overseen by the European Museum Forum, since 1977 EMYA has been dedicated to promoting innovation and excellence in public quality in museum practice, encouraging networking and exchange of ideas and best practices within the sector. EMF/EMYA works within an overall framework of a commitment to citizenship, democracy and human rights, to sustainability, to bridging cultures and social and political borders.

Museum candidates are either new museums, first opened to the public within the past three (4 years in 2022, 2023 and 2024), or established museums that have renewed their organisation and completed a substantial programme of modernisation and extension of their buildings and galleries.

Over the years the EMYA scheme has developed into a series of different awards, each with their own specific profile.





ABOUT THE HOST – THE MUNICIPALITY OF PORTIMÃO

After many years leading a nomadic existence, moving our offices (and our archives) to different cities across Europe, EMF/EMYA finally found a long-term home in 2018 in Portimão, in Portugal's Algarve.

The Municipality of Portimão is committed to democratic access to culture, which was reflected in Portimão Museum winning the Council of Europe Museum Prize in 2010. Dedicated to cultural participation in Europe, the Municipality's partnership with EMYA is a way to build on the success of their innovative museum and support the development of museums across the continent. The partners agreed that the Municipality, through the museum, would provide administrative support for the EMF and a home for the EMF/EMYA Archive.

In recognition of this support, the EMF has created the Portimão Museum Prize for a museum that, in the opinion of the jury, is the most welcoming and friendly of that year's nominated candidates. These are very important values for Portimão, which welcomes hundreds of thousands of tourists every year. The main quality the prize celebrates is a friendly atmosphere of welcome so that all visitors, no matter what their background, feel they belong in the museum. All elements of the museum – its human qualities and physical environment – contribute to the feeling of welcome, as do events and activities in and around the museum.

OTHER IMPORTANT SOURCES

[EMYA2024 on the EMF Website](#)

[EMYA – The Awards](#)

[Winners’ Brochure 2024](#)

[Nominees’ Brochure 2024](#)

[Municipality of Portimão](#)

[Portimão Museum](#)

[Conference Website](#)

[CoE Museum Prize](#)

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